**COUNCIL FOR ECUMENISM REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD/TE HĪNOTA WHĀNUI 2018**

# COUNCIL MEMBERS 2016-2018

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| **Tikanga Pākehā**  | **The Very Rev’d Anne Mills (Chair) The Rev’d Michael Wallace**  |
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| **Tikanga Māori**  | **The Rt Rev’d Ngarahu Katene The Rev’d Jacynthia Murphy**  |
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| **Tikanga Pasefika**  | **The Rev’d Orisi Vuki Mr Rupeni Oli**  |
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| **Co-opted**  | **Ms Emily Colgan (WCC rep)**  |
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| **General Secretary**  | **The Rev’d Michael Hughes**  |

The Council reports to General Synod Standing Committee and maintains contact with the Tikanga Pākeha Inter-Diocesan Ecumenical Group, and other relevant Anglican groups and organisations, and also with other appropriate denominational and inter-denominational groups.

Since General Synod/te Hīnota Whānui in 2016, the Council for Ecumenism has met in March and September of 2016, March and September of 2017 and March 2018 in the TUIA Boardroom, and by Video conference in June 2016 and June 2017.

# Inter-Diocesan Ecumenical Group Report 2016-2018

## Personnel

Since the 2016 IDC the following people have participated in the IDEG: Nyasha Gumbeze (Auckland), Andrew McKean (Waikato and Taranaki), Stephen Donald (Waiapu), John McCaull (Wellington), Charles Tyrrell (Nelson), Helen Roud (Christchurch), Michael Wallace (Dunedin, Convenor).

## Meetings

We’ve met: August 2016, February and August 2017 and February 2018.

Our meetings in February have been by video conference, the August meetings in Wellington.

## Revisiting our purpose

The group reviewed the tasks and responsibilities of IDEG as noted in the Inter Diocesan Conference Reference Information May 2014 and made some recommendations to IDC to clarify our purpose and move some tasks to the Council for Ecumenism. We hope that IDC will agree to these changes at its 2018 meeting. We also ask that IDC change the group’s name from IDEG to Tikanga Pākehā Ecumenical Group.

## Ecumenical Relationships

Each time the group met we heard about ecumenical relationships in the dioceses. We have encouraged participation in ecumenical activities such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (between Ascension and Pentecost), Advent and Ash Wednesday celebrations. We’ve shared stories and concerns about Co-operating Ventures, Cathedral heard reports about national ecumenical endeavours eg updates on the National Dialogue for Christian Unity and on bilateral dialogues.

Heard reports on programmes and activities of the Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches.

We acknowledge the good ecumenical work that Cathedrals do especially around Advent and Ash Wednesday, to commend the Cathedrals concerned, and to challenge other Cathedrals to consider doing such work.

## Interfaith relationships

In August 2016 IDEG studied and discussed the World Council of Churches/Vatican/World Evangelical Alliance document: *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct* [https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligiousdialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multireligious-world](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religious-world)

After studying the document IDEG wrote to all Pākehā Bishops and Diocesan Registrars commending the document and suggesting to parishes the concept of hosting a Ramadan evening meal with Muslim neighbours in parish facilities. We decided that encouraging Iftar hospitality would be our annual focus for 2018. In 2018 we sent an email encouraging Iftar hospitality to Pākehā bishops and diocesan registrars.

IDEG saw that Commonwealth Day is an opportunity for interfaith celebrations, we encourage dioceses to take up this opportunity.

## Guest speakers

In August 2017 Adrian Skelton Executive Officer of the Uniting Congregations Aotearoa New Zealand came and spoke to us about Co-operating Ventures.

For the August 2018 meeting we will invite a representative of the Diocese of Polynesia to tell us about ecumenism in Tikanga Pasefika.

 **DIALOGUE REPORTS**

# Anglican/Methodist Covenant

The Anglican Methodist Dialogue group has continued to meet and work, particularly on the ‘interchangeability of ministries’ proposal that was withdrawn at the 2016 GSTHW due to a process issue. After revisiting this decision, CFE in consultation with the Dialogue Group sent a package of papers on interchangeability to all EU’s requesting discussion before GSTHW 2018. Two reports were received by CFE for consideration. As this report went to print CFE was in consultation with the Dialogue group to see how we might progress this proposal.

The group continues to discuss our common life and the ways the Covenant affects our life and commitment to one another.

# Anglican/Baptist Dialogue

Attempts at further progress had been difficult without a consistent national representative to dialogue with. Decision was made to put possible connection attempts on hold and see if anything arose naturally, a new connection with Baptist Union President was made in June 2015, communication remains open between ecumenical officers, but no further progress has been made.

**Anglican/Lutheran Dialogue**

A series of events was held in 2016 to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of Luther.

# Anglican/Catholic Dialogue

**ARCCANZ Report by Rev’d Richard Hancock, Acting Anglican Co-Convenor**

ARCCANZ meets twice a year, once in March and once in October. At the March meeting (usually at Vaughan Park - the Anglican Retreat Centre on the North Shore) we always begin with a half-day retreat alternatively experiencing the different spiritual traditions we bring.

In 2016 the retreat was led by The Rev’d Iain Gow, the new director of Vaughan Park. We began with a moment of silence for Bishop Barry Jones (recently deceased Roman Catholic Bishop of Christchurch and Co-Convenor of ARCCANZ). Then using his own experiences, especially from the Camino Trail, Iain got us reflecting on our own pilgrimage through life and faith.

In 2017 the retreat was led by Fr John Allardyce on praying with icons.

In March 2018, Archbishop David Moxon helped us by exploring what he understood to be the spirituality of Pope Francis, based on a reflection around Franciscan Spirituality and Ignatian Decision Making.

At each of our meetings we consider something significant in our churches, to help us understand each other better and to learn issues of concern. Our normal pattern is to have one person from each church present a response to a paper, statement, encyclical, letter, etc, followed by discussion. We share daily worship. At Vaughan Park we have an Anglican Eucharist, at the Mercy Spirituality Centre a Roman Catholic Mass.

In March 2016, we considered

1 An article from The Christian Century circulated to members by Rev’d Charles noting that 2017 marked 500 years since Martin Luther published his 95 theses for discussion, this being the trigger for the Reformation, and asking what churches were doing to mark it. This lead to a wide-ranging discussion but no direct action.

2 Misericordiae Vultus – it was introduced by Fr Paul Williamson, with an Anglican response from Rev’d Richard Hancock.

The October 2016 meeting had to be cancelled due to meeting clashes for members.

In March 2017, it was noted that the Rev’d Richard Hancock and Fr Paul Williamson are acting as Co-Convenors until a Catholic Bishop is appointed to ARCCANZ, at which time two respective bishops may take this role. (In early 2018 a new Catholic bishop was appointed to Christchurch and we hope to hear about a replacement soon.)

1 A Skype call took place with Bishop Moxon in Rome, who shared three major topics coming from ARCIC III:

* Authority
* a Mary Document
* Receptive Ecumenism

2 We also heard of the four issues the Archbishop of Canterbury and Pope Francis have committed to work on together:

* Anti-slavery and human trafficking
* 2015 Paris accord on climate change
* Refugee crisis
* South Sudan civil war

Main topic of discussion was Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’*. In this first encyclical Pope Francis, by not using the first words in Latin for it’s title, but the words in the Umbrian dialect from St Francis’ *Canticle of the Sun,* appears to have found a way of getting round the more elite Latin. This encyclical received considerable publicity as it deals with the environment. One point on which we differed was the issue of birth control and the size of the human population. Dan Stollenwerk offered a scholarly reflection with responses from Bishop Ross Bay and Rev’d Pat Scaife.

In October 2017, the main topic was a IARCCUM (International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission) meeting. We considered Homilies from both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope, and a statement on *Growing Together.*

In August 2017, Rev’d Richard Hancock had received from Rev’d Michael Hughes a printed book *Final Report of ARCIC II 1983-2015 ‘Looking towards a Church fully reconciled.’* This was tabled and it was considered that the historical information was so valuable for those engaged in dialogue that every member should have a copy. This was organized through the Catholic Bishop’s Conference and the office of the General Secretary.

In March 2018, the main topic was a response to an article brought to our attention by Fr Vaughan Leslie. *Perceptions of Ministry, and Facilitators and Barriers of Self-Care, Amongst Roman Catholics and Anglicans in Full-Time Ministry,* fromHomiletic and Pastoral Review Magazine*.*

Sadly this article, mainly written from a North American Roman Catholic perspective, had used members of the ACNA, the Anglicans in the USA who have broken away from the Episcopalian Church. The Roman Catholic members of ARCCANZ had not recognised this, but it didn’t stop a wide-ranging and frank discussion, as we considered the issues of clergy self-care. It was noted that the survey was done entirely among North American males, and that for any study to be useful for our church it would need to involve clergy from a far wider background, for instance in culture and gender. Fr Vaughan Leslie contributed from the Roman Catholic perspective, he has made a study of this; Rev’d Richard Hancock responded from the Anglicans with a personal reflection over 50 years ordained ministry. Dr Moeawa Callaghan made a valuable contribution with some information about a study of Maori Women *Kai Karakia,* which raised awareness of cultural and gender concerns.

We are also working on trying to deepen the Anglican Roman Catholic inter-church involvement in Lent. At the moment a combined Ash Wednesday service is held widely, but it was thought we could continue this with some additional evening worship through Lent. Some material is being prepared which will be presented to the bishops.

In summary

It is a privilege and joy to be a member of ARCCANZ, the members have become friends. In faithfulness to our different churches we are committed to walk more closely together, doing as much as we can together. The thrust of our work is to understand each other more profoundly and encourage our churches to work more closely together. The Communion which joins us is far greater than that which divides.

Final Note

It seems to me that it would be a shame not to use the expertise of Archbishop David Moxon on ARCCANZ. I would be happy to give up my position to enable this to happen.

# Anglican/Presbyterian Dialogue

This group met once in 2016 and the Council has just received reports from the Presbyterian

Church since on matters of an ecumenical nature such as “We say Yes! Statement on Justice.”

# Interfaith

A draft document outlining the purpose/goal/intent for interfaith engagement was presented to CFE. The reference for this was the PB Catechism #62 and some amendments to appointment/accountability process. With the amendments, CFE approved this document as a guideline theological foundation and appointment/accountability process for interfaith engagement.

A Bill to amend CFE Canon for ecumenical and interfaith engagement and responsibilities will be bought to this 2018 GSTHW.

A website of interest might be the WCC document called ‘Christian Witness in a multi-religious world’

[https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogueand-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religiousworld](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religious-world)

 **NATIONAL ECUMENICAL ENDEAVOURS**

# National Dialogue for Christian Unity (NDCU)

The New Zealand Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches have agreed to form an ecumenical entity to pursue closer ties and share understandings. In 2018 the Presbyterian Church became a member. The Salvation Army is currently an official observer church. The dialogue will lead to formal ecumenical collaboration among the churches and other groups in society that want to see progress on issues that are a concern of all New Zealanders.

The Anglican representatives on this body are: Archbishop Philip Richardson (Exec), Bishop Muru Walters, The Very Rev’d Anne Mills (Exec), and Rev’d Michael Wallace.

NDCU executive met with the General Secretaries of World Council of Churches (Rev’d Dr Olav Fykse Tveit) and Anglican Communion Office (Archbishop Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon) and other representatives including meetings with Party leaders or representatives in Parliament on 8th August 2017. The Annual Forum is held in Wellington in March and the Executive meets twice each year.

This group has also taken responsibility for the Bi-annual School of Ecumenism which will next be early in 2019.

# United Congregations of Aotearoa/NZ (UCANZ)

UCANZ welcomed a new Executive Officer in 2016, Adrianne Skelton. Part of his mandate was to help Partner Churches and UCANZ Standing Committee understand the financial pressures facing UCANZ Congregations, especially around national and regional levies. A working group from UCANZ was set up to determine some Terms of Reference for this task and then Partner Churches asked to appoint some representatives to work with UCANZ on this issue. Over the last 18 months a review of the **Partner Support Fund** (PSF) was undertaken by a working group consisting of current UCANZ co-chair David Hall, former chairs Marilyn Welch and Geoff Donovan, and Executive Officer Adrian Skelton.

The review was requested by the Biennial Forum in October 2015 because:

* Local churches receive up to four invoices from UCANZ and Partners
* Presbytery and Synod levies are significantly increased
* PSF calculation lacks a transparent basis
* Some congregations are confused about the purpose of the various assessments

The group has come up with a recommendation that is radical yet simple in concept, and brings the benefits of *transparent* assessment for local churches – just what the 2015 Biennial Forum requested. This concept when ratified by the Partner Churches will be phased.

Act of Commitment and Unity by Stages (SRER3)

During the last year CFE have asked the Bishops of their view of the historic ‘Act of Commitment and Unity by Stages (SRER3)’ for Cooperating Ventures and if it is still seen as valid given the House’s change over UCANZ/ CVs in preference to local LEPs. The Bishops did not wish to back off from the Act, as while the CV model might now be problematic the commitment to work ecumenically still exists as before, just being explored in new ways and forms. They noted the Unity by Stages approach affirmed means that the end can’t be seen from the beginning, hence the commitment to progress by stages, and looking for where things develop next ecumenically. So, currently the end is not an organic union but developing relationships.

A future discussion about community churches/ ecumenical oversight/ new ecumenical expression/ new models/ partner retrenchment from working together may be appropriate.

The Bishops wrote:

*“Dear UCANZ,*

*Following discussion at an Anglican House of Bishops meeting regarding recent experiences of local ecumenical partnerships, the Bishops were of a common mind that they had preferred, and will for the foreseeable future have preference for, working on developing LEP's rather than new Co-operating Ventures (CVs).*

*The LEP model, while drawing on learnings and templates from UCANZ and CVs, was seen as much less complicated, and more easily negotiated and agreed between the local leadership.*

*This approach in no way undermines the current commitment to existing CVs, and UCANZ as a governing body, but does make transparent the Anglican Bishops current view on future local ecumenical developments.”*

**TIKANGA REPORTS (only 1 received)**

# Tikanga Māori Report by Rev’d Jacynthia Murphy

The Kīngitanga has strengthened its ecumenical ‘Kāhui Wairua’ by actively engaging with Te Hāhi Mihinare (Anglican), Te Hāhi Wēteriana (Methodist), Te Hāhi Perehipitiriana (Presbyterian), Te Hāhi Rātana, Ringatū, and Pai Mārire at its annual gatherings. It culminates every year in an Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving and Daily Devotions at the Koroneihana (Coronation) on Tūrangawaewae Marae, in Ngaruawāhia. Ngā Hāhi come together to pray for and seek God's blessing on something we all hold in common and treasure dearly, the Kīngitanga, whilst honouring each tikanga (protocols), kākahu (dress) and waiata (song). This solidarity of ngā Hāhi is the most outward public ecumenical tradition in Te Ao Māori to date. It is worthy to mention, that Waitangi Day also attracts an ecumenical effort to bring all New Zealanders together in celebration of the united consensus for peace and wellbeing.

In response to the Anglican Missions Board’s Decade of Mission in late 2015, Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa launched their ‘Minita-a-Whānau’ program that seeks to take mission teachings out of the classroom, boardrooms, and exclusive Hāhi Mihinare gatherings, and into the homes and marae of all iwi, hapū, and whānau. Minita-a-Whānau is also aimed to equip those who are otherwise not attending mainstream churches and helps to bridge the ecumenical divide that exists simply because of the ‘domestic’ nature of the program. This is proving to be a successfully intentional effort to work ecumenically, in particular, on marae.

With the high number of suicides in young Māori men an ecumenical campaign has been launched to help combat these losses. Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian, launched an ‘Operation SOS’ roadshow to Save our Sons, Stop our Suicides, and Support our Sisters. Equally, the evangelical church echoes this strategy with their own ‘Man Up’ campaign to “strengthen men to become better fathers, husbands and leaders in their home and community”. The collective campaigns are not restricted to Māori and includes Pākehā and Polynesian communities too. We know that the strength of this success is in working collaboratively, and that means working ecumenically.

A group of five Māori travelled to Myanmar to participate in the Mission Conference of Asia that engages ecumenical bodies from Asia and the Pacific. The conference speakers highlighted the need to overcome our religious intolerances of diverse traditions. Whilst there are no life-threatening intolerances in Aotearoa per se, the discussions around difference, sovereignty, and language, would resonate for us the cultural divide this country endured in the 19-20th centuries. As per the Kīngitanga and Minita-a-Whānau, Māori seek to overcome even our tribal differences to honour the Christ that lives in each and every one of us.

**INTERNATIONAL ECUMENICAL ENDEAVOURS**

# World Council of Churches (WCC) Meeting of the Ecumenical Officers Network by Rev’d Michael Wallace

I attended the WCC Meeting of the Ecumenical Officers Network, held at the Bossey Ecumenical Institute just outside of Geneva, Switzerland. I went to represent this Church, as a member church of WCC, and in place of the Chair of the Council for Ecumenism, the Very Rev'd Anne Mills.

The stated purposes of the Network meetings are: to share information, to engage in discussion related to WCC programmes (especially the current Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace), to study and reflect on current themes in the ecumenical movement, and to strengthen the Network of colleagues with responsibilities for ecumenical relations in member churches.

There were around 40 Officers, or representatives present from 40 different member churches, in 30 countries. Other Anglicans present were from Canada, England, Scotland, Nigeria, United States of America, and Brazil. Itself quite a broad representation of Anglicanism, but able to easily talk and work together with the common commitment to ecumenical mission. Other denominations, other than Anglican/Methodist/Baptist, also represented included Orthodox, United, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Hussite, Reformed, Evangelical, Mar Thoma, and variations thereof.

The programme included daily offices of ecumenical worship, facilitated by the permanent WCC worship team, including a service of Orthodox Vespers which I was asked to assist in leading with an Orthodox Bishop and Deacon from Cyprus. Conference sessions were led by WCC staff on key Programme Areas, including the International Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (the post-Busan Assembly focus of the WCC), Ecumenical Youth Programme, Diakonia and Public Witness, Ecumenical Studies (based at Bossey), the Global Christian Forum, the 2017 Lutheran Anniversary, Inter-Religious Dialogue, Faith and Order, Communications, and a Session with the General Secretary, Rev'd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit.

There was also a day spent in the WCC centre in Geneva, during which we met in regional groups with WCC staff responsible for our region (for us that’s Asia), and met with several specific programme staff, including from Violence and Children's Rights, Health and Healing, Ecumenical Water Network, Scholarship Funding, WCC Income Development, and Women in Church and Society.

**Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)**

### Reverends Jacynthia Murphy and Robert Kereopa along with Neill Ballantyne attended the Asia Mission Conference (AMC) organised by CCA on 12-16 October 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar. Over 600 participants came from member churches, councils, ecumenical partners, missionaries, missiologists, theologians, theological students, interfaith leaders and others from Asia and around the globe. AMC’s theme *Journeying Together: Prophetic Witness to the Truth and Light, in Asia* coincided with CCA’s enduring theme *Our Common Evangelistic Tasks in Asia* as it celebrated its 60th Diamond Jubilee held on 15th October in Franc Auditorium in Ahlone Township of Yangon.

# GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary, Rev’d Michael Hughes, acts as the initial Convenor and then ongoing Secretary to the Council, in fufilment of the Canon, and serves the Council in various administrative and representational ways in place of an Ecumenical Officer.

# The Very Rev’d Anne Mills

Council Chair

Feb 2018