

National Dialogue for Christian Unity holds inaugural meeting in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand are forming an ecumenical entity to pursue closer ties and share understandings. They held an inaugural meeting for the National Dialogue for Christian Unity (NDCU) on 25 February in Wellington.

Participants said they hope that the NDCU will lead to formal ecumenical collaboration among churches and other groups in society that want to work together on issues concerning all New Zealanders.

In addition to meeting during the day, participants attended a Service of Celebration at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Wellington.

The formal establishment of the NDCU represents a significant and very hopeful development in ecumenical relationships in Aotearoa New Zealand, said Archbishop Philip Richardson, bishop of Taranaki and archbishop of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. "Friendships between churches have been strong, so to give structure and form to these is cause for rejoicing."

The ecumenical initiative is a sign of a new hope, agreed Rev. Prince Devanandan, director, Mission and Ecumenical for the Methodist Church of New Zealand. "Since the conference of churches was abandoned, nearly a decade has passed," he explained. "The churches that are committed to Christian unity — Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic — have continued their dialogue to reach this historical moment."

Dr Mele'ana Puloka, World Council of Churches (WCC) president for the Pacific, attended the forum and brought greetings on behalf of the WCC.

“Today is a day of celebration. It is a day of hope. It is a day of new beginning. The God of Life is always at work among us; we see this as the National Dialogue for Christian Unity becomes a reality in this inaugural meeting,” states the greeting.

WCC general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit will be visiting WCC’s member churches and others in Aotearoa New Zealand in October.

See also: [WCC member churches in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)