



World Methodist Council

First Friday Letter

September 2011

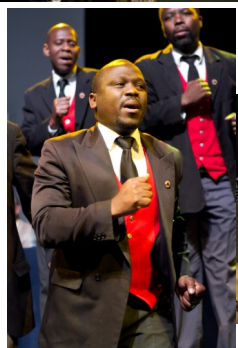
This letter is sent to members of the World Methodist Council by Dr. George H. Freeman General Secretary.

Please direct all comments and inquiries to him at info@worldmethodistcouncil.org

*or by letter to P. O. Box 518
Lake Junaluska, NC 28745 USA*



Images of the 20th World Methodist Conference and World Methodist Council Durban, South Africa



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Council Elects New Leadership

The World Methodist Council, meeting in Durban, South Africa August 1-3, 2011, elected new leadership for the 2012-2016 quinquennium. Bishop Paulo Lockmann (Methodist Church of Brazil) was elected as the President of the Council and follows Dr. John Barrett who has served as president for the past five years. Bishop Ivan Abrahams (Methodist Church of Southern Africa) was elected the Council's General Secretary and follows Dr. George Freeman who is retiring after ten years in this position. The leadership elected by the World Methodist Council for the next five years is as follows:

General Officers

<i>President</i>	Bishop Paulo Lockmann (Brazil)
<i>Vice-President</i>	Bishop Sarah Davis (Jamaica)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr. Kirby Hickey (United States)
<i>Immediate Past President</i>	Dr. John Barrett (United Kingdom)

Regional Presidents

<i>Antigua</i>	Dr. George Mulrain
<i>Ireland</i>	Mrs. Gillian Kingston
<i>India</i>	Mr. Joshua Rathnam
<i>United States</i>	Bishop G. Lindsey Davis
<i>New Zealand</i>	Rev. David Bush
<i>Korea</i>	Dr. Won Jae Lee
<i>Nigeria</i>	Archbishop Michael Stephen
<i>South Africa</i>	Rev. Lauren Matthew

Standing Committee Chairpersons

<i>Ecumenics and Dialogue</i>	Dr. Robert Gribben (Australia)
<i>Education</i>	Dr. Amos Nascimento (Brazil)
<i>Evangelism</i>	Bishop B. Michael Watson (United States)
<i>Family Life</i>	Bishop Theresa Snorton (United States)
<i>Social and International Affairs</i>	Rev. Kim Reisman (United States)
<i>Theological Education</i>	Dr. J. C. Park (Korea)
<i>Worship and Liturgy</i>	Dr. Jorge Lockward (Dominican Republic)
<i>Youth and Young Adults</i>	Ms. Christy-Anna Errington (United Kingdom)

Operational Committees

<i>Budget and Finance</i>	Ms. Ruby Beech, Chairperson (United Kingdom)
<i>Personnel Committee</i>	Bishop William Hutchinson, Chairperson (United States)
<i>ATV Investment Committee</i>	Mr. Byrd Bonner, Chairperson (United States)

Elected Staff

<i>General Secretary</i>	Bishop Ivan Abrahams (South Africa)
<i>Geneva Secretary</i>	Bishop Heinrich Bolleter (Switzerland)
<i>Youth and Young Adult Coordinator</i>	Mr. John Thomas III (United States)



Bishop Ivan Abrahams



Bishop Paulo Lockmann

The World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women elected **Ann Connan** (Australia) as their President. The World Fellowship of Methodist and Uniting Church Men elected **Larry Malone** (United States) for a second term as their President.

The World Methodist Council approved a new **Constitution** and new **By-Laws**. Following review by the Copy-Editor, the Constitution and By-Laws will be sent to heads of Member Churches, Council members and will be posted on the Council's website:

www.worldmethodistcouncil.org.

The Council received written reports from the Methodist/Salvation Army International Dialogue entitled "*Working Together in Mission: Witness, Education and Service,*" and the Methodist/Roman Catholic International Dialogue entitled "*Encountering Christ the Savior: Church and Sacraments.*" In addition, a "*Synthesis Document*" was received which highlights over forty years of the Methodist/Catholic Dialogue reports, showing points of agreement, areas under discussion, and differences to be addressed as this Dialogue continues. These three documents can be found on the Council's website: www.worldmethodistcouncil.org under "News and Events."

Council Resolutions

All resolutions from the 2011 World Methodist Council meeting will be posted on the Council website, www.worldmethodistcouncil.org following transcription and editing. Resolutions will be sent to member Churches of the Council for sharing and for action.

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Pray for Lyn and Joseph

During the World Methodist Council meeting, two Council members had to seek medical attention for a detached retina. Lyn Burden (Australia) and Joseph Dowlingsoka (United States) continue to recover at their respective homes and continue to be under their doctor's care. Scar tissue is hindering Lyn's healing process and her doctor is treating that. She is free to continue her regular activities. Joseph learned that the speed at which the retina detached caused a fold to form horizontally across his eye and is causing him not to have vision in that eye. There is also a cataract on that same eye and his doctor is sending him to a specialist. Please continue to pray for healing and restoration for Lyn and Joseph.

Council Responds to Situation in Fiji...

The following statement has been issued in response to the government of Fiji's refusal to allow the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma to hold their Conference this year:

METHODIST FAMILY CALLED TO RESPOND TO FIJI

When the World Methodist Council met earlier this month in Durban, South Africa, there was joy and applause at the announcement that the government in Fiji would allow the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma to hold its Conference this year. The Conference has not been able to meet since 2009 when the Church was accused of violating the public emergency regulations imposed by the military coup, which had overthrown the government of Fiji in 2006.

For the past three years the Church has been banned by the government from holding its Conference, as well as the annual choir festival of the Church held in conjunction with the Conference. In 2009, nine Church leaders were arrested for allegedly breaching the public emergency regulations, including the Church's President, General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary; however, none have ever been brought to a trial due to repeated delays and postponements in the court system. Further, the Church's weekly radio program was banned and the Church was ordered not to hold a service of induction for its President and General Secretary.

Under the provisions of the public emergency regulations, permission had been given in writing for the Church to hold its Conference this year. The Church complied with those regulations by limiting the Conference to no more than three days and by submitting the agenda for the Conference to the government in advance. However, when the government learned that the President and General Secretary would continue in Church leadership, they cancelled the Conference as well as all Church meetings, including those at the local church level.

The World Methodist Council is deeply concerned about the actions the government of Fiji continues to take against the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma, which constitute a clear violation of the fundamental human right to religious freedom. The Council calls on the global Methodist/Wesleyan family to earnestly pray for the Church and its witness, that the government leaders allow the Church to meet and conduct its rightful business, and that a peaceful rule of democracy occur.

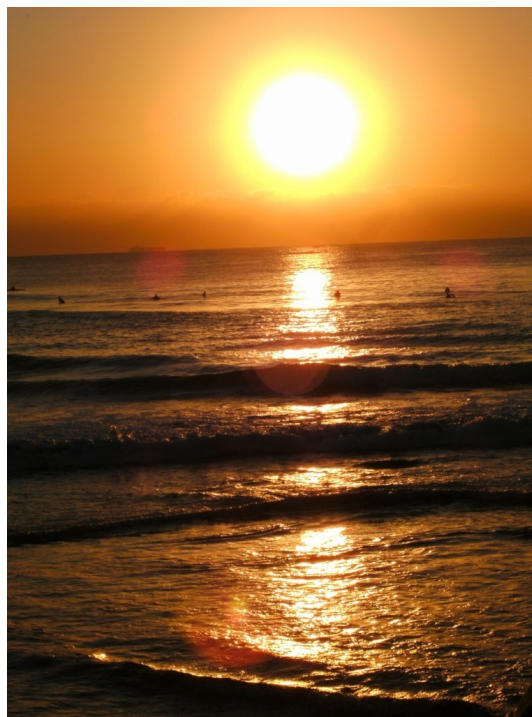
We call upon the member Churches of the World Methodist Council to join us in sending letters of support to the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma in care of Rev. Tevita Banivanua (methodistchdgs@connect.com.fj). Additionally, we strongly encourage the 500 individual delegates of the World Methodist Council to do the same. We further recommend letters be sent to Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama expressing concern that the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma has not been allowed to hold its Conference in three years and asking that this ban be lifted. Finally, we ask that the Churches in Fiji be in dialogue with the government regarding the future.

*Bishop Ivan Abrahams, General Secretary Elect
World Methodist Council*

Rev. Kim Reisman, Chairperson

Social & International Affairs Committee, World Methodist Council

*Dr. George Freeman, Retiring General Secretary
World Methodist Council*



Sunrise on Indian Ocean—August 9, 2011
Durban, South Africa

George and Virginia say “Thank you!”

The past ten years have been an incredible journey for us. God has blessed us beyond our imagination as we have been privileged to experience the Church around the world, feel the joy that comes from Methodist people who know Christ, come in contact with vibrant, meaningful worship, and be blessed to pray with and for this movement. We are thankful for the meaningful relationships and prayer partners we have from so many places.

Your gift to us, a \$10,000 contribution to South America Mission for the support of our daughter and son-in-law, Angela and Ken Massey and their children, Sam, Georgia and Ty, is greatly appreciated. We are most thankful for your generosity. The Masseys have served on the mission field in Bolivia with South America Mission and currently in the Home Office. They have a heart and a passion for the people of South America to come to know Christ as their Savior. Thank you for your gift in our honor which will enable their continued ministry.

We will continue to live in our home at Lake Junaluska in retirement and look forward to following the Council’s work and progress in advancing the cause of Christ around the world!

George and Virginia Freeman

Dear World Methodist Council Family

Thank you so much for your incredible generosity. We are truly honored and humbled to be the recipients of such a large gift in honor of the service of George and Virginia Freeman. Please know that the money will be used to further God's kingdom in South America through our work with South America Mission. We are extremely grateful for each one of you and pray God's blessing upon you as you work to bring glory to God all over the world.

*Your partners in service to the Lord,
Ken and Angela Massey*



The Market—20th World Methodist Conference
Durban, South Africa