



Message from the Moderator

 Presbyterian Church
of Aotearoa New Zealand

Waitangi Day

31 January 2020

This Treaty of Waitangi message builds on my corresponding message from last year ([read it here](#)). The facts are all there, drawn from historical accounts of the signing of Te Tiriti of Waitangi, 6 February 1840.

I acknowledge the deep grief and loss of the tangata whenua (Maori) that will never be healed or restored again. I feel, also, the hearts and attitudes of the Crown, the generations that are regarded as Te Tiriti partner. And, I know the position of others, like me, who arrived to the shores of Aotearoa as immigrants (manuhiri, visitors), and our part in the nation's journey. It appears complicated, and that it will never be a perfect settlement. There are many and deep injustices and corruption. There is too much pain and suffering, which has left a scar on the land and on the people.

But, what is the way forward?

The Waitangi Tribunal is one means of redressing the wrong. And, there must be other ways of moving forward as a united nation. The answer is always in the people, the people, the people.

We cannot turn back the clock. We can only go forward and move on in a deliberate path as a united nation. We must all contribute and be involved as citizens who love and care for each other, and for the land.

I believe that we have made progress in 180 years since the Treaty was signed. It is said that New Zealand is the envy of many nations around the world in regard to the status and recognition Te Tiriti offers Maori.

My perspective is very Christian: "love your neighbour as yourself". My answers are steeped in my faith in Jesus Christ and so, in my view, everyone is my brothers and sisters. It may seem idealistic and simplistic. But, I believe that the answer lies in the attitude and perspective that we can live and coexist as family, as neighbours, as whanau, as tangata tahi - as one people.

We will journey together, bear one another's grief, stand together, live side-by-side, and understand one another. This is my utopian answer to our journey in this God-given land of Aotearoa, New Zealand. We are the people, the people, the people. The generations of today can build an even better future than what is before us now.

Ke ora tatou i te aroha o Ihu Karaiti.

May we live in the love of Jesus Christ.

Be sacrificial for each other. Be unconditional in love for each other.

Blessings

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