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February 23, 2011

Rev. Martin Baker,
Assembly Executive Secretary,
The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand,
Level 1, Terralink House,
275-283 Cuba Street,
Wellington, New Zealand

Dear Rev. Baker,

It is with sadness in our hearts and concern for the people of Christchurch that we write to you today following the earthquake that struck the city and surrounding area on February 22. The loss of life and massive destruction of property is a great tragedy which we know you, your colleagues, Anglican Church members and new Zealanders in general have moved quickly and compassionately to address. Please accept our deepest sympathies at this time of immense human suffering and social upheaval.

The visual images of the destruction in Christchurch that we've viewed on the internet are shocking and a testament to the severity of yesterday's seismic cataclysm. But equally as powerful are the scenes of New Zealanders helping New Zealanders in a time of great need – people risking their lives to enter collapsed structures to try to save others trapped inside, people tending to the injured on sidewalks and offering words of comfort as they await transport to medical facilities. These are images of God's compassion and love at work through the hearts, minds and hands of the people of Christchurch.

May God bless you and the people of Christchurch in this time of great distress and need and give you strength to do the work that needs doing. Please be assured that United Church members across Canada hold you warmly in their thoughts and prayers.

In Christ's compassion,

Moderator
Mardi Tindal

Nora Sanders
General Secretary, General Council



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