



World Council of Churches

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Geneva, 23 February 2016

Rev. Tevita Nawadra Banivanua
President
Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma
Epworth House
G.P.O. Box 357
Suva, Fiji

Dear Rev. Banivanua,

“The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfils the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them.” (Psalm 145:18-19)

I write to you in grave concern, having learned of the devastation caused by Cyclone Winston as the storm passed through Fiji. As details emerge, the widespread destruction is overwhelming. I understand that evaluation of damage is still on-going with the most remote islands.

Undoubtedly your church faces a crisis, with loss of places of worship and with members of the church having lost homes and livelihoods. Health care following the storm is critical. I am aware of the many ways in which the ministry of the Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma will be needed, not only to address immediate practical needs, but to offer spiritual leadership and pastoral care. Be assured that the prayers of the World Council of Churches are offered for your church and for your leadership in such a testing moment.

The global fellowship of churches understands itself as “one body with many parts.” The challenges you face are felt by churches around the world and they stand with you in solidarity in this moment of crisis.

The faith that we hold is one of hope even in darkness. I am confident even in this moment of discouragement and grief that you will find strength in God’s unfailing love and compassion.

Yours in our Common Lord,

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary