

Greetings to the Methodist
Church in Conference

17th Oct. 1961.

Sub: Statistrike 1961

There is great danger that the good custom of fraternal greetings from one church to another may lose its value through the ~~exchange~~ ^{exchange} of commonplaces, ^{phrases} without any real Christian content. If I become guilty of such ~~content~~ an example through my short address I apologise for it now. I truly hope it will not be the case.

The fact that I have been asked to convey to you the good wishes of our church presupposes a common bond of interest in the past. I am happy to remind you of such contacts in the past:

1) There is e.g. the strong evangelical outlook & expression in both our churches. Both the Meth. & the U.G. Kirk hold in esteem the practice of regular prayer meetings & evangelistic campaigns as expressions of our devotion to Christ and our sincere desire to make converts for the Gospel.

2) There was the historic gathering of

leaders of your Church and our Church (as
2 of 8 participating churches) at Lathes
last year when personal friendships were
formed which by the grace of God we pray
may continue to grow in depth & honesty.

3. There were recent press reports of exchange
of pulpits in some congregations of the
meth. & the D.R.C. and of the 2 churches
organising opportunities of common worship.

4. A number of ministers on the Reef have
had the special privilege of still
closer ^{regular} fellowship ⁱⁿ the meetings of our
Ecum. Study Circle during the past
12 months.

Although we are glad that there are
increasing signs of ecum. fellowship we
feel very deeply ~~that the lack of~~ the slow
progress of such spiritual intercourse. The
task and challenge placed before the
Christian Church in S.A. and Africa as a
whole is so tremendous that we cannot
afford as churches to keep up sinful
divisions or petty differences which are doing
endless harm to our common Christian witness
and our missionary labours.

And although our Transvaal D.R. Church,
~~we~~ through its withdrawal from the W.C.C.,
has severed one of the official links with
the other Protestant churches in S.A. in a
common membership of S.A. churches - a
fact which I personally deeply deplore -
I would most earnestly make this appeal
to this gathering that you do not become
discouraged, but that you would make
this a matter of your most urgent prayers
that God will open up through all of us
new avenues of fellowship ^{and} discussion,
of worship and prayer. Therefore I would
plead with you: do not wait for such
opportunities to come your way - create
them in the love of Christ, through
your personal friendship and fellowship
with ministers & members of the D.R.
Church.