

Human Sexuality & the Methodist Church of New Zealand Timeline 1980s - 2015

Date	Event	
1984	Conference asks F&O to examine & report on the Church's "theological & biblical position in relation to lesbianism & homosexuality & the consequences of that position"	
1985	"The Church & Homosexuality" F&O Discussion Paper - going beyond 1961 - further paper requested from conservative viewpoint Public Questions "strongly supports" Homosexual Law Reform Bill (decriminalisation) - dates Methodist support to 1961	
1986	<i>Homosexual Law Reform, New Zealand</i>	
1990	David Bromell (openly homosexual Baptist minister) begins supply ministry in Dunedin	
May 1990	General Purposes Committee receives application for David to be received into Full Connexion - report prepared for Conference - GP recommends reception of David into FC in 1991	
November 1990 (Dunedin)	Conference debates whether homosexuality is a bar to reception into ordained ministry - many diverse opinions - continue study on issue	
May/June 1991	1 st National Gay Christian Conference, Queen's Birthday, Auckland	
November 1991 (Wanganui)	"Human Sexuality & the Church" study received and discussed - no agreement in Taiwi so no decision made	Ashley Sedon 'comes out of the closet'
November 1992 (Auckland)	Faith & Order encouraged to complete its work on issues of human sexuality, including identification of the common ground in the Church	
1993	<i>Human Rights Act, New Zealand</i>	
November 1993 (Christchurch)	Conference agrees to order life and practice within the intent of the Human Rights Act - notes	Conference records

	it stations presbyters on the basis of matchings with parishes and should not change that practice	appreciation of David's ministry
May 1994	F&O discussion papers completed: "Homosexuality" & "Human Sexuality"	
November 1994 (Whangarei)	Condoms at Youthtrek debate	
November 1996 (Auckland)	Notice of Motion Samoan Synod: ordained practising homosexual ministers not to be appointed to positions of leadership/responsibility within MCNZ - no recommendation	
November 1997 (Wellington)	Conference agrees to receive David Bromell into Full Connexion - stationed as Superintendent of the Christchurch Central Mission	
	Wesleyan Methodist Movement formed	
	Commission on the Diversity of the Church established by President - Interim report (June 1998)	
November 1998 (Christchurch)	Conference adopts Evangelical Covenant & agrees in principle to form Evangelical Synod	
	Evangelical Synod Establishment Work Group formed	
November 1999 (Auckland)	No consensus at Conference re Evangelical Synod - decision 1998 Conference stands - so further dialogue to take place	
July 2000	Formation of Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand (WMCZ)	(resignation of presbyters 2000 & 2001)
November 2000 (Hamilton)	Conference agrees to formation of Evangelical Network	Ashley Sedon superannuates
2001	The Vahefonua Tonga Policy on Homosexuality signed by MCNZ President & Dr A. Mone	
2001-2003	Otago Tongan Methodist wrangle & court case	

	- judgement no legal claim on property by those who left MCNZ - interpretation of church doctrine a matter for Conference not a civil court (July 2003)	
August 2003	“Learning to Listen - Listening to Learn” F&O report on ordination of gay & lesbian persons	
November 2003	Conference agrees to proceed with ordination of gay and lesbian people provided a Memorandum of Understanding created and accepted	David Bromell resigns from ministry
November 2004	Memorandum of Understanding signed Ordination of Margaret Donald (first ‘out’ gay person to be ordained in the MCNZ)	
<i>December 2004</i>	<i>Civil Union Act, New Zealand</i>	
February 2005	President: MCNZ will not stand in way of presbyters who apply to be Civil Union celebrants; parish councils make decisions about use of buildings for civil unions	
November 2005	Diana Tana nominated as President - no consensus at Conference so Presidential team (John Salmon & Mary West) do a second year	
	Hui Poari: “Would Taiwi accept a gay or lesbian person as President or Vice President?”	
16 November 2005	GLAM (Gay Lesbian and Methodist) formed	
November 2006	Presidency Review Group report – Taiwi Strategy asked to facilitate wide discussion & ensure a response shared with Hui Poari during 2007	
November 2007	Conference agrees to conversation & consultation on “Leadership & Human Sexuality”	
November 2008 (Manukau)	Taiwi Strategy advised Te Taha Maori that because no consensus within Taiwi, Taiwi unable to accept a gay or lesbian person for Presidential office	

	1 st GLAM Lunchtime Communion service	
November 2009 (Christchurch)	Alex Webster & Susan Thompson "Towards Dialogue" paper (encouraging conversation)	
2013	<i>Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Act, New Zealand</i>	
May 2013	President's Pastoral Letter: Methodist presbyters & marriage celebrants may officiate at same-sex marriages if they choose; parishes can make own decisions about use of churches & premises	
December 2013	Pastoral Committee asks whether clergy & candidates who are in sexual relationships should be married	
November 2014 (Hamilton)	F&O offer to further explore issues pertaining to sexual ethics	
December 2014	PAC Workgroup set up to prepare comprehensive theological statement of current issues relating to human sexuality & leadership within Taiwi	

Susan Thompson March 2015