

Report: Educational Fund

With applications received to the value of over \$900,000 and just under \$400,000 to dispense, the Advisory Committee was faced with a breath-taking challenge. While the list included three new organisations seeking modest amounts, the total value requested was still over \$350,000 more than last year.

It is unclear whether that reflects an increased number and a scale of projects planned, or increased costs of projects, or diminishing sources of funding or a mixture of all of the above. What is heartening is the obviously high level of educational work, both paid and unpaid, being carried out in our Synod community. The Faith and Deeds of James 2: 14-16 are indeed alive and thriving.

Deliberations were guided by the Purposes as set out by the Otago Foundation Trust Board Act (1992) and Synod's procedures for the Educational Fund. Therefore tertiary and secondary educational facility requests retained priority consideration, as did the Christian Education Commission groups in primary schools.

The collective wisdom and experience on the committee was complemented this year by the presence of Moderator Designate Bruce Fraser and the Rev Nyalle Paris from St Andrews Invercargill.

Two members, Rev Graeme Munro of Dunedin and North Otago Presbytery and Sue Thompson representing Otago and Southland polytechnics, have completed their seven year terms. They were thanked for the wise perspectives they brought to the committee over that time.

I wish to acknowledge the support and encouragement of our executive officer, Fergus Sime as he slowly eased me into this role. His prompt response to any query I raise is particularly appreciated.

Margaret G Cook
Convenor