

# TOUCHSTONE

E whaia ana te putaketanga o nga whakapono mo tenei ao hurihuri  
EXPLORING FAITH ISSUES FOR TODAY



## CHURCH LEADERS DEPLORE GAZA VIOLENCE

*At the height of Israel's intervention in Gaza last month, New Zealand church leaders signed a statement urging Christians to pray for peace and political leaders to bring about first a ceasefire and then a lasting solution to conflict in the region.*

Presbyterian moderator Rt

Rev Graham Redding says the joint statement, made at the prompting of Christian World Service (CWS), asks that we pray for the victims and perpetrators of violence and support CWS efforts to provide aid to the people of Gaza.

Graham says he was encouraged when a ceasefire

was declared but peace is more than a ceasefire.

"A longer term peace must be part of the equation. Jesus Christ broke the cycle violence. As his followers, praying for our enemies is the way Christians advocate and proclaim. This is not easy.

"There can be a tendency to

reduce complex issues to a simple formula and blame either Hamas for the bombing or Israel for its disproportionate response.

"The World Council of Churches website has posted statements by churches from all around the world. Our voice is one in the chorus of protest and

concern that I hope will give a stronger mandate to peacemakers and diplomats so they can find peace for a region that is gripped in a cycle of violence and counter violence."

*For the full text of the leaders' statement see Page 7.*

## NZ JEWS AND MUSLIMS DESIRE PEACE IN PALESTINE

By Marie Sherry

*New Zealanders with opposing views on the Israel-Palestine conflict agree on one point - the destruction and death of innocent civilians in the region must stop.*

In January Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ) president Javed Khan and Wellington Regional Jewish Council chairman David Zwartz both expressed hope the ceasefire in Gaza would hold and a peaceful resolution emerge.

Javed says the "bloody and brutal" Israeli attacks on Gaza during the past few weeks were unjustified.

"The excuse was that Hamas was sending those rockets across the border at Israel. This [Israeli attack] was totally disproportionate and it was so

heavy handed that it could never be justified," he says.

"There are other ways of dealing with that situation. I'm sure the Israeli Army was quite aware of where those rockets were coming from. They could have stopped them very quickly and not gone in and attacked civilians and defenceless women and children.

"They have totally destroyed Gaza. They have destroyed the infrastructure, the hospitals, and the universities. One and-a-half million people are living in a total rubbish dump basically."

Javed says members of his organisation and New Zealand's Islamic community are outraged by the actions of Israel, as well as the reaction of the New Zealand Government.

"The National Government's biased stand on the issue has tarnished the good

international reputation enjoyed by New Zealand under the previous Labour Government. It is a double jeopardy that the international community including the US, Australia and New Zealand, is continuing to condone such unacceptable violation of international humanitarian laws and rules."

FIANZ is praying the ceasefire will hold and that all parties will be able to conduct peace talks. Javed also hopes the incoming Obama administration in America will take more interest in ending the fighting.

David Zwartz believes Israel did what it needed to do in Gaza and avoided civilian casualties as much as possible.

"I really regret the destruction and the people who have died but I can fully understand why Israel took the

action that it did because of the unceasing rocket fire from Gaza into Israel and the breaking of the six-month ceasefire by Hamas on the 19th of December," he says.

"War is a bad thing at any time, but if you can think of a just war as being self defence, then that is a just cause.

"I'm very glad now that there is a new ceasefire and I hope that it will lead to new and different conditions that will prevent the situation from recurring. It's ruinous for the people of Gaza.

"It's really important for a new government to take charge over Gaza. Preferably that would be the same government that is in charge of the West Bank, because that was the situation before the Hamas took over," says David.

"We would have a



The service of inauguration, induction and commissioning featured a choir made up Fijian Methodists from Wellington, Wanganui and New Plymouth

## Lower North Island districts merge to form single synod

In December representatives from the three Methodist synods in the southern half of the North Island got together to officially put themselves out of existence. They gathered at Wesley Broadway Church in Palmerston North to commission a new 'mega synod' that will incorporate them and to induct its officers.

The Lower North Island Synod encompasses the former Hawkes Bay-Manawatua, Taranaki-Wanganui, and Wellington synods.

Rev Tony Bell is the superintendent of the new synod. He says the move to single synod should unburden the parishes of administrative chores so they can better focus on mission.

"Our intention was to establish a full time separated superintendent who could take over a lot of the business details that drive parishes doolally. The superintendent's role is also to resource the parishes so they can get on with the task of being Church in their communities.

"In fact, initially I will serve as at superintendent at 75 percent time otherwise my parish at Wanganui would be left in the lurch," Tony says.

In addition to a district superintendent and an eight person executive, the Lower North Island Synod will have three regional superintendents who will work to motivate and encourage local parishes. They are Rev Alan Upson in Taranaki, Rev Desmond Cooper in Wellington, and Jocelyn Boyes in Napier-Hastings.

"The intention is certainly not to stifle discussion by centralising decision making," Tony says. "Important issues will be handed down to the regional synod meetings for discussion.

"The synod executive has its first meeting in February and then the full synod meets on March 14th. We won't meet again as a full synod until August but between March and August, there will be regional synods."

Tony says he is expected to be a mobile superintendent and he wants to visit the different parts of the synod as early in the new year as possible. Plans are in place for visits to Gisborne and Hastings.

"We will need to find the resources to make the larger synod work. We have some ministry development funds but the need to find funding

will be on-going.

"We have purchased a car for the superintendent through the Catholic Church's Diocesan Car Fund Trust in Wellington, which enabled us to get it at about half its retail value. So we are already being creative with our resources."

In addition to the Methodist presidential team, a number of regional leaders from partner churches as well as Uniting Congregations executive officer Rev Peter MacKenzie were on hand for the new synod's induction service.

The service used an element from the service that marked the creation of the Methodist Central South Island Synod in 2005. Those attending the service each brought a stone, which were placed together to form a cairn, symbolising unity.

Tony says a particularly moving occasion for him during the service was when the Anglican Church's bishop of Rev Philip Richardson took his cross from around his neck and placed it on Tony. Tony and Philip have worked closely forging ecumenical ties in Taranaki and the gesture was a tangible symbol of their close relationship.

## New Methodist general secretary views Church's path ahead

Along with handling the practical nuts and bolts of running the Methodist Church, in-coming general secretary Rev David Bush wants to help the Church become more relevant and effective in the 21st century.

David says the Church must focus on what it has and what it can do rather than bemoan its shortcomings.

"It is easy, as a Church or as congregations, to focus on the fact that we have fewer numbers and resources than we once did, and then to feel powerless. The challenge is to look at those in need in our communities and ask how the values of the Gospel intersect with those needs.

"The Church has always faced obstacles but if we look for opportunities we will be able to use the gifts, grace, and ability that we've got."

An example David points to is the preschools some Tongan Methodist congregations in Auckland have started in partnership with the Department of Education.

They saw a need for good quality preschool education in their communities, which are some of the most difficult parts of Auckland. Starting the preschools has provided training and employment for a number of Tongan women.

"I strongly believe the message of the Gospel is still relevant and necessary in our society today. Our moral values and the sense of community the Church creates should be part of our social fabric. The Church must also be prophetic and challenge society when we become dehumanising.

David believes regional coordination will play an important role as the Church looks to create space for new things to happen.

"It may be that one or two churches in a city decide to promote new styles of contemporary worship, for example. Strategies created at the regional or synod level can sit alongside the initiatives of local congregations," he says.

"Small groups, such as Wesley's class meetings, are the best way for lay and ordained people to support one another. Synods have the capacity to be that sort of grouping.

"Synods have a better capacity to dream and vision than unsupported individuals. They have the resources to be more courageous and risk taking than congregations can be."

David believes holding Methodist Conference every two years rather than every year would be a positive step. It requires much time and effort to prepare for Conference, and people must focus on that rather than community initiatives. The current annual cycle does not provide enough time during the year to thoroughly consult on the major issues.

While some doubts have been expressed in recent years about the health of the ecumenical movement and the willingness of the parent churches to support Uniting Congregations, David says he does not see any diminishment in the Churches' willingness to work together across denominational boundaries. Especially in rural areas the need for Christians to support one another will increase he says.

See page 16



Rev David Bush

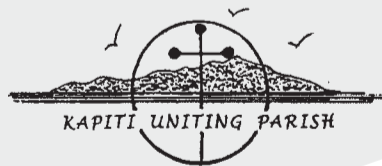


### The Gilmore Smith Memorial Scholarship

The Wesley Historical Society (N.Z.) offers an annual scholarship of up to \$1500 for a post-graduate student undertaking historical research related to Methodist history in New Zealand and/or the South Pacific.

Applications close on 31 March 2009.

For further details contact the Secretary :  
Rev. Barry Neal, 2 Upland Road, Huia,  
West Auckland 0604  
Email [thehuianeals@clear.net.nz](mailto:thehuianeals@clear.net.nz)



### MINISTRY VACANCY

The Kapiti Uniting Parish is 50km north of Wellington, on the sunny Kapiti Coast which is experiencing significant population growth. We have three worship centres, and are seeking to make an appointment of a Minister of the Word and Sacraments.

You would be working with an enthusiastic team to further our outreach programme and to nurture our existing members. We are seeking an energetic and lively person (or couple) who can grow with our Church.

Initial enquiries to :  
Bruce Johnston at 04 902 3771 or email at:  
[kapitioffice@paradise.net.nz](mailto:kapitioffice@paradise.net.nz)

Appointment is through the Methodist Church

All Saints  
Community Church  
Bryant Park, Hamilton

Children & Family Pastor  
20 hours per week  
Start a.s.a.p.

The job description and further information is available from Bob Barnes  
Ph (0) 07-849-5104 or (M) 027-274-9802  
or email [bob.barnes@clear.net.nz](mailto:bob.barnes@clear.net.nz)



Last month Waikato's Lake Karapiro was the scene for the world's largest waka ama regatta. Several teams from Whangarei's Te Puu Ao club took part in the event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WAIKATO TIMES

## Club embraces waka ama and kapa haka

*A club with hearty Methodist roots put in a winning performance at the national Waka Ama Sprint championships last month and is now looking forward to competing in the national kapa haka festival.*

The Whangarei-based club Te Puu Ao is the brainchild of Methodist minita-a-iwi Winiata Morunga. Winiata's daughter Recenia Kaka says Te Puu Ao means 'heart of the universe' or 'beginning of all beginnings'.

The club's kaupapa is to create a world that fosters champions and inspires magnificence. Many of those involved in Te Puu Ao have affiliation to hapu within Nga Puhi.

The Morunga whanau are Te Hikutu, which is based in the Methodist stronghold of Whirinaki, Hokianga. Recenia says that her father brought his children up to conduct karakia from Te Taha Maori's blue prayer and himene book.

"Te Puu Ao started out as a kapa haka club," she says. "Our first serious competition was in the Tai Tokerau regional championships in April, 2008. We were fortunate enough to win that competition, and that means we will be in Tauranga for Te Matatini, the national kapa haka championships in February."

The Morunga whanau met with other key whanau members Ralph and Auriole Ruka to create and to amalgamate waka ama (Polynesian canoe racing) with kapa haka.

"It is unusual for a club to compete in both waka ama and kapa haka but the waka is an important legacy from our ancestors so we decided to do it. Part of our journey now has been to see how we can unite the two disciplines under one kaupapa. We are also looking at other disciplines for youth such

as hip hop.

While teams from a full range of ages take part waka ama racing, Te Puu Ao's teams are all in the younger age groups. The club has a midget girls team and a midget boys team (seven to 10 year olds), an under 12 boys team, under 16 boys and girls teams, and an under 19 boys team.

Recenia explains that waka ama races are for W1, W6 and W12 canoes. W1 are single person canoes, W6 are six person canoes, and W12 are two W6 canoes joined together to create a 12 person canoe.

The Te Puu Ao waka ama teams are based at Tutukaka Marina in Whangarei. They generally practice after kapa haka rehearsals and in the build up to championships last month they were on the water every other day.

While the ethos of the club stresses participation over winning, the hard work has paid off. Te Puu Ao sailed off with a good medal haul at the NZ waka ama national regatta, which took place January 14-19. It is the largest waka ama competition in the world, and this year 3000 paddlers took part.

Te Puu Ao's midget girls team won a bronze in W12s, and its under 16 boys team 'The Puha Boyz' won gold in for both the 1000 metre and 500 metre races in the W6s. Under 16 paddler Tupu King also won gold in W1.

While the other waka ama teams might be able to have a break now that the championships are over, the members of Te Puu Ao have no time to rest on their laurels. They are the first team to perform when Te Matatini opens on February 19th so they are now busy practicing hard.



Board of Admin staff (from left) Peter van Hout, Peter Dent, Jo Smith, David Bush and Barbara Peddie are urging us all to get on our bikes for Bike Wise month.

## Get smart and use pedal power

*The staff of the Methodist Board of Administration is laying down a challenge to parishes, congregations and anyone else to see who is the most cycle-mad church group in Aotearoa.*

Last year a group of Board of Administration staff led by keen bicyclists general secretary Rev David Bush and financial services manager Peter van Hout put in a respectable performance in Bike Wise, an annual competition aimed at getting people out of their cars and onto bicycles.

This year Peter and David are once again heading up a contingent of cyclists who will try to bring honour to the Connexional Office in Christchurch by chalking up even more kilometres.

Whereas last year Bike Wise ran for two weeks, this year it runs for the entire month of February. Participants can ride wherever they feel comfortable – for just 10 minutes or for as many kilometres as they wish. Cycling is not confined

to work days or to your route to and from your workplace.

You can easily sign up to take part in the Bike Wise Battle by registering on-line at the Bike Wise website: [www.bikewise.co.nz](http://www.bikewise.co.nz). If you haven't signed up already, 'get on yer bike' so you can take part in as many days as possible.

Peter says the Board of Administration team is registered as 'MCNZ BOA' and you can follow their progress on the Bike Wise website. Peter is willing to help you register your team if you want to take up his dare and join the competition. Contact him at 03 366 6049 or [peterv@methodist.org.nz](mailto:peterv@methodist.org.nz).

The organisations with the highest percentage of participation in the Bike Wise Battle can win vouchers for a morning tea shout, bicycles, and other prizes as well as bragging rights.

Another option is to focus your efforts on Go By Bike Day, Wednesday Feb 18th.



**Methodist Trust  
Association**

Results to 31 December 2008

Income Fund A	7.04%
Income Fund B	6.20%
Growth and Income Fund	4.48%

Income Distributions for the quarter totalled \$2,272,970

Contact email: [info@methodist.org.nz](mailto:info@methodist.org.nz)

Established for the secure investment of the Church's funds.



**Presbyterian Support**

Your bequest can help ensure that the important work of Presbyterian Support can continue to benefit families for generations to come.

Freephone  
0508 86 4357

[www.ps.org.nz](http://www.ps.org.nz)

**Help make a difference by leaving a gift in your will**

# Creating community one neighbour at a time

By Kate Kennedy

*The September issue of Touchstone featured an article entitled 'Do you know your neighbours?'. It inspired me to write about my own experience of neighbourhood from my home in Motueka, near Nelson.*

When I left school in 1984, I headed for Wellington. One of the first jobs I had was working as a 'gopher' for a small publishing house (i.e. you 'go for' this and 'go for' that). Among my duties was to drive visiting authors around the city. I met some interesting people because the publishing house was the stable of many of the progressive academic, social and political voices of the day.

On several occasions I had the privilege to drive the Christchurch-based nun Sister Pauline O'Regan. It was 1986 and she had just published her book *A Changing Order*, in which she detailed her experiences of living in a state house in the Christchurch suburb of Aranui with two other Sisters.

They used their location in the working class neighbourhood to live the spirit of 'community' in a wider sense than they felt they could achieve within the church's traditional structures. The Sisters worked their way into the fabric of their neighbourhood through the simple act of being good neighbours. From this position they could understand and help to find solutions for the poverty and associated problems around them.

Sister Pauline was a deeply inspirational figure for me. She had the relaxed vigour of a woman half her age, and did not fit any of my youthful stereotypes of growing old.

I was only 18 then but I never forgot these meetings. I read her book and held her story in my memory for safe keeping. Now, 22 years later, I find myself living a life that has its roots in my recollections of Sister Pauline.

Five years ago, my closest friend and I bought a run-down 1950s house in a low-income neighbourhood in Motueka. Though it was all we could afford, we also chose the neighbourhood because we felt that we would fit in there and perhaps be of some use in the street. Since then we have cultivated connections with our neighbours and the wider community of Poole Street.

In its day, Poole Street was 'the' street to live on. This can be seen in the handful of large old homesteads sprinkled amongst the smaller houses and cottages. When we arrived,

many of the houses were on Maori lease land. Lease increases had created a financial strain in the area and some of the houses were quite dilapidated.

Since then many of the properties have become freehold, including ours but this has been costly. People who were struggling with the lease payments are now struggling with high mortgages.

Initially the houses on either side of us were rental properties and the tenants had many of the problems common to low-income neighbourhoods. Loud music, parties, alcoholism, drug addiction and domestic violence went on around us to the point where sometimes we felt like we were living in a war zone.

We introduced ourselves to our neighbours and broke the ice by taking them baking or eggs from our hens. Some of our neighbours had histories of conflict with previous neighbours, and were bewildered by our attempts to befriend them. We feel safe by keeping two large dogs that everybody knows we own!

The solutions to our social and economic problems lie in strengthening our communities. We have our own experiences of hardship. We understand that social problems flourish in the dark of isolation but can grow weaker in the light of connection and friendship. Although there have been times when this philosophy has been severely stretched!

Living here is my way of putting spiritual principles into action. You won't find us banging any drums but you will find us swapping veges through our newly-created food exchange (which already includes 12 Poole Street families) or practicing random acts of kindness.

In return we enjoy watching our efforts being returned 10-fold as the neighbourhood starts to mesh together and come up with practical solutions to economic and social deprivation. All this without the assistance of bureaucracy.

When I was a student activist there was a popular slogan: 'The personal is political'. That stands true for me today. The quiet successes that flowed from that house in Aranui have helped to create a life for myself that is fulfilling, connected and purposeful. I recommend it.

## Daily Bible reading plan available

To the editor,

Modern scientific and medical discoveries have dramatically improved the quality of people's lives but they have not brought the proverbial peace, prosperity and plenty one had would have assumed they would bring.

In spite of these advances, many people are unhappy and look to the future with trepidation, whereas a previous generation seems to have been happier and more content.

I think one of the main reasons for this is that today people do not read the Bible regularly as once was the case. Therefore, they lack faith and confidence for the future and the peace of mind and contentment the Bible's message gives.

A daily reading programme, enabling the

entire Bible to be read in a year has been produced in the form of an illustrated calendar. In order to help your readers experience the peace of mind and enjoyment of the Bible I would be pleased to send a free copy of the Bible Reader's Calendar without any obligation to anyone who cares to write for one.

I hope some Touchstone readers will make a New Year's resolution to read the Bible for themselves and to experience the wonderful hope it holds out.

Taste and see that the Lord is good and enjoy the reality of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil 4:7).

*Viv Alexander, 532 Virginia Road, Wanganui*



Editor's note: Touchstone cartoonist Jim (Brendan Boughen) was interviewed by Maureen Garing on her Radio NZ programme Spiritual Outlook on 7 December.

The interview is available as a podcast, which is available at <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/spiritualoutlook>.



## KITCHEN THEOLOGY

### What's cooking in 2009?

By Diana Roberts

*It's been a busy break. December 2008 was filled with family visits. Lots of festivities and food, laughing, talking, outings... and washing. The house emptied out early in the new year.*

Then it was time to cope with the sudden echoing quiet by getting on with the annual cull of books and belongings, weeding and feeding the garden, and turning the kitchen upside down and inside out. And time at last to read one of my Christmas presents: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver.

I had hinted that I wanted this book, as I admire the author's novels. They include *The Poisonwood Bible*, a strong, uncomfortable account of a missionary family in Africa; and *Prodigal Summer*, a celebration of fruitfulness. I find her latest book so challenging and rewarding that I want to share it.

It is not another foodie book, not another self-sufficiency story, not another account of a 'A Year in...'. It is the story of an American family who set out to find themselves a real culture of food. They define a genuine food culture as an affinity between people and the land that feeds them.

Barbara and her husband Steven (a biology professor) were concerned about the how modern food production, distribution and

consumption is affecting the health and well-being of Americans and the planet earth. Together with their two daughters they made a commitment to a year of eating locally, mostly from their own garden, the way NZers did a few decades ago. Barbara's chronicle of the year is accompanied by comments from Steven on political, scientific and sociological concerns; and daughter Camille offers recipes and reflections.

It was a year of balance, with a holiday fitted in; a year of learning, responding, caring, and working. It was not a straightforward or easy time but it was productive and nourishing.

It's the kind of year we could be considering in our parishes as we meet to plan the months ahead. The focus of the book is on relationships: food and people, people and the land, families, communities and nations.

Our Methodist year begins with a focus on relationships too, as we reaffirm in the Covenant Service the relationship between God the sustaining Creator and us, God's people. The Scriptures tell the story of that relationship expressed in God's covenants with the Children of Israel and the New Covenant of Jesus. Our task for the year is to faithfully honour these covenants – season by season, month by month.



## PRESIDENTIAL TEAM

## New beginnings in the new year

By Jill van de Geer and Ron Gibson

*Warm New Year's greetings to Touchstone readers! Our intention this year is to take month about at writing the Touchstone column. For this first one, however, we both wanted to greet people and share a New Year message.*

Ron has written the following reflection picking up one aspect of our presidential address which helps us reflect on the new year as it impacts on our individual lives.

### Passion and the new year

The presidential address at Conference 2008 was presented under the heading 'Passion and Compassion' to underscore two primary values of Methodism, or for that matter, of any Church wishing to share the limitless love of God as witnessed to by Jesus Christ. At the beginning of a new year it may be helpful if we all thought about the values contained within the term 'passion'.

It is all very well to be passionate about something but we are also aware that blind passion can be very destructive if it ignores reality and walks over the lives and feelings of other people. Political ideologies and ideologues are inclined to do this in promoting their causes. Christians are called to a sensitivity towards people that is passionate yet caring and constructive. It is respectful of other people and their beliefs and values.

The passion we need is an inner motivation to devote our energies and talents in service to others. To be passionate is not to stop thinking about what we are doing; it is not about irrational and blind behaviour. It is about the determination to harness our time, talents, and resources with clear purpose and conviction. To be passionate is to be committed.

### New beginnings

As we reflect on being passionate and committed we are aware that this is a time of new beginnings for many people. Our young people are coping with exam results and worrying about where to from here? They are off to new schools, university or launching themselves on a depressed job market.

Others are moving to new jobs or beginning retirement. We particularly remember presbyters and parishes who are about to begin new ministries. Times of transition are never easy and it is important that these new ministries are approached with enthusiasm and care for each presbyter and congregational member involved. Open and honest communication will help people cope with the new and unfamiliar.



Before Christmas Ron and I led the inaugural service at Palmerston North for the Lower North Island Synod, also inducting Tony Bell as superintendent. On January 28th we will share in the induction of David Bell (Trinity College principal), followed by Susan Thompson (Waikato superintendent) on the 30th, and Prince Devanandan (Manukau superintendent) on 4 February.

In between inductions we will attend the Service of beginnings at Wesley College and represent the Church at the 169th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, at Government House in Auckland.

We have been in dialogue with John Roberts and Gillian Southey of CWS and national Church Leaders to prepare a statement to send to the Government regarding the situation in Gaza.

We are very aware that members of Wasewase Ko Viti and the Auckland Hindi Fellowship are desperately concerned about the situation in Fiji following torrential storms and flooding. The Auckland Fellowship has collected a container load of goods to be sent to Fiji this week and Mission and Ecumenical will pay for the shipping. The Hindi Fellowship has focused its efforts on funding the essentials that young people will need to be able to begin the new school year.

Rev Tuwere is in Fiji this week and will consult with the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma to get an accurate picture of what is needed to help people through this disaster. Assistance will be co-ordinated by John Roberts through Mission and Ecumenical.

We are moving into a year of great uncertainty as commentators talk of worldwide recession that will inevitably touch all of our lives in some way. As people of faith, let's remember that the great joy of the Christian hope is that we can claim with confidence God is with us through all the changes of our lives, and that God's grace is 'enough for each, enough for all, enough for evermore'.

## Holding the earth in trust

By Jim Stuart

*Christian theology reflects critically on how we think about the relationship between God, the world and humanity. It asks who is God? What is God saying to us? How do we as Christians respond to what God is saying?*

While Christian theology can never assume it has the last word on the burning issues of the day, it nevertheless should enable Christians to respond to these issues in ways that are both transformative and responsible. What theology cannot afford to do is to focus all of its energy and time on narrow issues especially at times like today when the planet is in dire straits. That is why ecology or the care of the planet is the central theological issue facing us today.

A few years ago, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) began issuing a series of assessments of the growing threats to the planet. Its conclusions ought to concern all of us. In the last decade greenhouse gas emissions have increased at an alarming rate. These emissions, if unchecked, are bringing about long term and disastrous climate changes or what the report calls 'extreme weather events' such as the melting of the polar ice caps leading to significant rises in the sea level.

According to the IPCC we can expect a six degree temperature rise by 2100. The report stresses these are 'conservative estimates.' But as the human birth rate increases and competition for the planet's resources intensifies, the human race could be facing a future of apocalyptic proportions. The writing is on the wall: climate change is forcing us to recognise how profoundly our welfare as humans is dependent on the health and welfare of the planet.

These realities should challenge Christians to re-examine the key operative theological assumptions about God and our Christian practice that continue to permit the destruction of earth. Some of the forces leading to accelerating climate change may be rooted in bad theology. Put another way, the conventional

Christian view of the relationship between God and the creation may be seriously flawed.

What then are some of the theological initiatives we need to undertake? The Walk for the Planet identifies six initiatives: healing ourselves, healing our communities, healing our country, healing the land, healing the waters, healing the climate. The emphasis is on healing because theologically we are reclaiming an oft forgotten aspect of creation: our interdependence.

We cannot afford to live as if the other doesn't exist, as if what we do and how we live doesn't affect others and the intricate ecological balance of the national world. The theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin expressed this interdependence

in the following way: "Jesus must be loved as a world." In other

words, the planet won't survive if we continue to embrace an individualistic and short-sighted view of what it means to be human. There must be a systemic change from a paradigm of selfish individualism to a new kind of humanitarianism that emphasises our interconnectedness and dependence on each other and on the earth.

The Walk for the Planet initiative sets out to achieve two things. First, it reminds us that there is a common planetary agenda that transcends narrow private religious concerns, that calls for a public critique of the market forces that are destroying our common humanity and the planet. Second, it challenges us to revision ourselves, and participate in the struggle to heal the planet which is home to us all.

As Methodist theologian, Theodore Runyan observes: "Social holiness today includes not only our link to all present inhabitants of the planet but to future generations for whom, as stewards, we hold the earth in trust. There can be no holiness today that is not social holiness shaped by this task and no spirituality not nurtured and emboldened by the Creator Spirit."

As Christians, God invites us to play our part in bringing these changes.



walk  
for the Planet

## Bank bailouts risky business

To the editor,

We owe Michael Cullen a hearty vote of thanks for his explication, in the Jan 24-30 Listener, of the origins over the last 30 years of the current world-wide economic crisis.

His analysis is elegant in its simplicity and its perceptiveness. It provides ordinary citizens a framework within which to view the current situation, and to critique the solutions being advanced for its cure.

Clearly, as he notes, "old time socialists had to learn that market-based systems were by and large the most efficient means of creating wealth and economic growth." Equally clearly old time capitalists had to learn "the benefits of growth needed to be shared by the population as a whole."

He highlights the moral risk inherent in the current rush by governments to pump resources into the banking and financial systems when it was their credit policies that provoked the current mess. What will be achieved by re-inflating the current system and its excesses, given its

immoral failures of recent months and years?

Let's heartily applaud his conclusion: "We need a new social contract based on concepts of sustainability and justice." We could well add the distinctively Kiwi concepts of inclusion and equity, recognising the increased differences between the moneyed and the disadvantaged – which increased notably over recent years even here in New Zealand – as unfair, immoral, obscene, and ultimately unsustainable.

Has the present government got an equivalent or better framework for developing a more just and prosperous New Zealand? I am not holding my breath in expectation.

Their 100 days of pre-vacation activity lacked a distinctive focus. It reminded me of the personage in literature who was renowned for getting on his horse and galloping off madly in all directions.

Ken Rae, Porirua

# The World Wide Web is his parish

*Auckland lay preacher David Hines is 'doing a Wesley' and making the world his parish...on the Internet.*

Starting Christmas Day David began publishing sermons with a life-style message on his website [www.wesleyschair.com](http://www.wesleyschair.com).

David says the quirky title for the site was inspired by a NASA photo showing how cool the world looks from outer space. David has combined it with a photo of one of the actual chairs John Wesley used for his open-air preaching around England. Being rather short, Wesley found he needed the chair to make eye-contact with his huge audiences.

"My wife Marion, a group of friends from Pitt St Methodist Church in Auckland and I bought the chair at auction in Auckland, not knowing what

we would actually do with it. It became my inspiration. If Wesley needed a chair, I needed the Internet."

David has been preaching for about 50 years, 10 of them as a Methodist minister. He left the ministry in 1972, feeling he was not cut out for parish work, though he continued lay preaching and other church work. He was supply minister for two Auckland parishes in 2000-2001, and has been a journalist, writing for church and other publications.

At the age of 69, when most people are winding their work down, David wants to wind it up, and he's applied to come back into full Connexion.

"Marion can take some of the blame, for encouraging me in my preaching. She is a lay preacher too," he says.

"I want to be a minister again because I would like my work to be seen as part of the Church's work. People who respond to an Internet ministry are

probably outside the Church but the goal is to get them to come inside, so a worldwide parish needs to stay in touch with ordinary parishes."

David says if he gets back into the ministry, he will look for part time positions. At present he mainly preaches in the Auckland central parish. He is also co-ordinator of the Auckland central parish website [www.methodistcentral.org](http://www.methodistcentral.org).

"An Internet ministry offers exciting possibilities. The first two days I advertised the wesleyschair site on Google the ad showed up in 5000 searches and 200 people looked at our pages. One new article I posted received five visitors within the first 10 minutes it was on-line.

"The responses seem to come mostly from preachers who want somebody else's research to use for their own sermons. That's how it seems, because most of the clicks are for sermons for

the following Sunday.

David takes a punchy approach for his on-line sermons. One is titled 'Things you should tell your father'. It is about the prophet Samuel when he was a little boy and God called to him in the night. The message God gave him was a very tough one: he had to tell his foster father that he was inadequate as a father and a priest. That's David's interpretation of the text; it's a story about Samuel growing up and becoming independent of his father.

He says Internet sermons offer a good form of Bible study. Every text that is referred to has a link so people can read the whole text, and cross-references to other sites. David uses the Internet for much of his biblical research, and he encourages his readers to do the same.

## Methodist youth cross Tasman to boost their faith

By Cory Miller

*A contingent of 24 young Kiwi Methodists formed the largest delegation at the 2009 National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) held in Melbourne from the 3rd to the 9th of January.*

Invited by the Uniting Churches of Australia, the New Zealand delegation was headed by the Methodist Church's national youth coordinator Te Rito Peyroux.

Organisers cheekily called the convention possibly the greatest seven days since Genesis. Its theme was 'Converge: people gathering under one roof in God's presence'. About 2000 youth descend upon Melbourne to partake in worship, Bible study, festivals, performances

experience.

Some felt that attending the convention was a way to jump-start their faith journey, a place to find strength and guidance and to be brought closer to God. "I was feeling down and needed to recharge my batteries. I felt a pull towards NCYC and felt compelled to attend, to rejuvenate my spirit," says Filo Tu.

The delegates thought that the presence of many like-minded people would further strengthen their faith's foundations. "It was my first-time overseas and I wanted to explore, to meet new people and in the process strengthen my faith," says Jessica Rabone.

Traveling to Melbourne was an added bonus for many who had feet itching to travel the globe. "For many of the delegates it was their first time overseas without their families. Their ability to be independent was tested and in the process they gained maturity," says Te Rito.

NCYC went above and beyond the delegates' expectations, as they struggled to find just one highlight. "The experience was one big highlight but if forced I could narrow it down to three: worship, communities and mission," Filo says.

Submersion within Melbourne's communities showed the delegates first hand the meaning

of mission. They saw the church attempting to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and they were challenged to take action against the many social justice issues that were brought to light at the convention.



Delegates to NCYC gathered in Melbourne's Federation Square.

"My way of thinking has been changed and I am inspired to help out in the community, to go out into the world sharing God's message," says Christopher Tupou.

The delegates found a new belief in their ability to make a difference, as they learned something small can generate sufficient impact to create outward moving ripples that will touch others. "You do not have to be rich to make a difference, you just have to take action,"

Alilia Molitika says. After the convention all felt strengthened by God and as a result hungered for more experiences of faith. Len Alfred Hura-King says he still hungers for NCYC. "I miss the environment of the convention and would like to experience more, I now feel like I belong to God."

Many were moved with emotion at being a part of such a large group of people, and felt the warmth of the community through the mutual sharing of beliefs and experiences. "I felt the close community each day that I was at the NCYC" says Simulata Pope.

Armed with their new found strength the delegates all hope to continue on with the challenge, committing to God and sharing their experiences with others. They feel motivated to become more involved with their community showing the presence and the reality of God through their actions and the way they live their lives.

"After NCYC I want to remain more open-minded to take action and give things a go in the future, being more active in the community" says Lennard Rei.

### KEEP HOPE ALIVE IN GAZA



### HELP US RESPOND - DONATE NOW

Weeks of violence have devastated Gaza and left many of its 1.5 million inhabitants without food, water, shelter and medical services but these young boys at Jabalya camp eat because people around the world care enough to help. Many others are still waiting. Through Christian World Service's Gaza Appeal you can give them hope.

Christian World Service, PO Box 22652,  
Christchurch 8142  
PH 0800 74 73 72, [cws@cws.org.nz](mailto:cws@cws.org.nz)  
For more information see [www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)



**Ecumenical Institute of  
Distance Theological Studies  
(EIDTS)**

#### STUDY THEOLOGY

Courses in Biblical Studies, Theology  
Church History, Ministry and Mission,  
Music and Worship, and World Religions.

*Study from your own home - in your own time*

#### RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

**"Introduction to Pastoral Theology"**

July 7 - 9 in Christchurch  
Tutor: Rev Dr Mary Caygill

For further information and handbook contact:  
The Academic Registrar  
EIDTS, PO Box 12 286, CHRISTCHURCH  
Freephone 0800 667 969  
Email: [eidts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:eidts@xtra.co.nz) • Website: [www.eidts.ac.nz](http://www.eidts.ac.nz)



Restrictive security checks are a fact of life in Gaza.

## NZ Church leaders' statement on Gaza

*The leaders of New Zealand churches are deeply concerned about the dire situation in Gaza and support the call for an immediate ceasefire in the region*

The escalation of violence and associated increase in civilian casualties is intolerable. It is time for concerted action to end the suffering of the 1.5 million people trapped within the 360 square kilometers of Gaza with little food, water and medicine, and under almost continuous attack from the land, sea and air.

Before the collapse of the ceasefire in December, the borders of Gaza were tightly controlled and movement in and out very difficult. Now the conditions are much more lethal. The consequences of this unparalleled pressure cannot be underestimated. Already many innocent civilians have been killed and injured. People are living in perpetual fear and growing numbers of people are in desperate need of food and water as well as medical treatment. The trauma will have a lasting effect on everyone and is undermining any possibility of negotiating a just and sustainable peace.

To date the international community has failed to broker a lasting peace. We urge the New Zealand government to do all that it can through the United Nations and through its own diplomatic efforts to call a halt to Israel's military offensive and the Hamas attacks. New Zealand has an obligation to uphold the international community's 'Responsibility to Protect' populations from war crimes as agreed at the United Nations' Millennium Summit.

As followers of Jesus, who exercised his ministry of reconciliation in this troubled region, Christians are deeply concerned about Jewish-Palestinian enmity. While religion is often tragically used to fuel inherited hostilities, it can also be a force for shalom/salaam. It is our hope and prayer that all adherents of the three Abrahamic faiths in that region might truly seek the way of peace and reconciliation to which their scriptures bear witness.

We encourage church members and all people of goodwill to:

- Pray for the victims and perpetrators of violence in Gaza and Israel.
- Pray for the success of diplomatic efforts between Hamas, the Israeli Government, and the international community.
- Pray for peace and reconciliation.
- Urge the New Zealand government, world leaders and the United Nations to take effective action to work towards a just resolution of the conflict in the interests of long term security and peace.
- Support the Christian World Service and Caritas Gaza Appeals providing desperately needed food, fuel, water and medicines in Gaza.

*Jabez Bryce, Bishop of Polynesia, Anglican Church  
John A Dew, Archbishop of Wellington, Roman Catholic Church  
Rodney Macann, National Leader, Baptist Union of NZ  
Garth McKenzie, Territorial Commander, Salvation Army  
David Moxon, Bishop of the New Zealand Dioceses, Anglican Church  
Graham Redding, Moderator, Presbyterian Church  
Mia Tay, Clerk, Religious Society of Friends  
Brown Turei, Bishop of Aotearoa, Anglican Church  
Jill van der Geer, President, Methodist Church*

### Regional Youth Co-ordinator (Position re-advertised)

The Methodist Church in Canterbury has created a new and exciting youth focussed role, working with Methodist and Co-operative Venture youth leaders and congregations and encouraging emerging youth leadership. The position is full time for an initial period of two years.

#### You will need to be:

- passionate about youth and youth activities
- a good organiser
- an active member of a Christian church
- able to work and worship within the framework of the Methodist Church of New Zealand
- able to work with the diversity that exists within the Methodist Church, particularly cross-culturally

#### Ideally you will have:

- previous experience in working with youth and running camps and activities
- the ability to work with individuals and develop teams
- an understanding of how to work in community

For a full job description and application form, please contact Sue Spindler, email: sue.spindler@gmail.com, or phone 03 339-6647.

Applications close on Friday 27th February 2009.

# Need is great in traumatised Gaza

*After weeks of Israeli bombardment, the situation in Gaza is desperate. More than 1000 people have been killed, another 5000 injured, vital infrastructure has been ruined, and countless homes have been destroyed.*

CWS's emergency response network, ACT (Action by Churches Together) International has launched a massive US \$4 million appeal to assist the 1.5 million Palestinian people left struggling to survive. Even before this latest escalation of the violence, 80 per cent of Gazan families were dependent on humanitarian aid to live.

The priorities now are for food, medication and clean water. ACT International members are extremely concerned about the flooding of the sewage system, continued disruption of electricity and psychological trauma experienced by the civilian population, especially children.

Blankets are also critical. Director of East Jerusalem YMCA Dr Andre Batarseh says "People have run from their homes and sought shelter at schools or with friends or relatives. They have no cover during ice-cold nights. The blankets are life saving."

The Israeli offensive against Hamas began on December 27th. CWS partners in Gaza were able to provide some medical care to the growing numbers of injured, despite their medical clinics being destroyed in attacks on January 5 and 11. During the fighting ACT International received permission to send in three trucks with US \$68,000 in medical supplies, 12,000 cartons of high protein biscuits, and 20,300 litres of fortified mil. They are now sending in larger quantities of food, water, medicines, blankets, sanitation kits and medical care but much more is needed.

A fragile ceasefire on 20 January brought some relief but a ceasefire is only a first step. The people of Gaza have been fenced in since 1996, and Israel controls the air, land and sea borders. A total siege in force for the last 18 months has left Palestinians struggling at a subsistence level.

ACT International says "The silence from the guns has little meaning if the blockade continues. Lifting the blockade is the first real step to peace. We can't continue as if nothing has happened."

CWS has assisted Palestinian refugees for 50 years and is committed to providing long term assistance in Gaza and supporting efforts for a just solution that

addresses the root causes of the conflict and will enable Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace.

You can help by supporting the CWS Gaza Appeal: [www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz), phone 0800 74 73 72 or return the appeal coupon today.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### MANUREWA METHODIST CHURCH CENTENARY

The Manurewa Methodist Church is celebrating their Centenary on 28 & 29 March 2009.

If you are interested please contact the church office: PO Box 75-515 Manurewa, Manukau City 2243, e-mail: [manumeth@ihug.co.nz](mailto:manumeth@ihug.co.nz) or phone 09 266 5301 for further information.

*At last it has appeared  
For better or for worse  
My very first edition  
Of radical Christian verse.*

By John Miller

\$15 to 106 Brougham Street  
Christchurch 8024  
03 377 2961

### ADVANCE NOTICE

Paeroa Co-operating Parish will be celebrating

*100 Years*

of worship in the former St Andrew's Presbyterian Church over the weekend of August 1-2, 2009.

Former members of the Paeroa Methodist and Presbyterian Parishes interested in attending or wanting further details, contact:

Centenary Celebrations, PO Box 54, Paeroa 3600

**SPINDLER,  
Ethel Margaret (Margaret)  
nee Clarke.**

On 28th November at George Manning House, Christchurch, aged 81 years, dearly loved wife of the late Rev. Syd Spindler, dearly loved Mum of Andy and Catherine, Susanne and Alan, Jane and Ross; loved Grandma of Samuel, Rebecca, Gemma and Rob, Raukura and Phill; step-grandma of Jess, Wendy and Mark Stewart, and Mark and Hayden Campbell. A loved sister, aunty and great-aunty, and a treasured friend of many.

The funeral service was held in Christchurch on 2nd December, followed by a memorial service in New Plymouth on 5th December.

## The real Jesus

*for real people.*

*RCL lectionary sermons for busy preachers.*

*Two weeks before you need it.*

*Note our web address.*

*You'll keep coming back to it.*

*[www.wesleyschair.com](http://www.wesleyschair.com)*

# Walk for the Planet stands on many legs

*The Walk for the Planet (W4TP) will provide people a chance to contemplate our relationship with the earth, get in touch with and celebrate the natural world, and raise environmental concerns.*

While a committee in Christchurch launched the idea and is providing guidance and advice, the various stages of the walk and local activities are being organised by regional coordinators.

Few if any walkers will tread the full distance from Stewart Island to Wellington. Most will join W4TP in their local area. It is anticipated that the largest numbers will take part when the Walk arrives in major towns.

Large parts of the W4TP itinerary have been chalked out but gaps remain in some legs, particularly those at the end of the journey. W4TP organisers encourage church people, environmentalists and others to get involved and join those who are organising activities in their region, or take the initiative and create an event to accompany the walk.

The Walk for the Planet website provides more information on the event and an on-line registration form where you can sign up yourself or your organisation. See [www.walk4thepplanet.org.nz](http://www.walk4thepplanet.org.nz).

Organisers have stressed that W4TP itself should not have a harmful impact on the environment so any travel via fossil fuelled transport will be offset by planting trees.

## Rakiura/Stewart Island

Local organiser Bev Osborn says while W4TP will be launched on Ash Wednesday, Feb 25, local people will host a Pancake Tuesday lunch and sell pancakes to the public. Proceeds will go to an environmental cause.

On Ash Wednesday a tree will be planted and there will be a walk – possibly in Rakiura National Park – that ultimately arrives in Halfmoon Bay.

Bev hopes to have kayaks, dinghies, and other boats escort the ferry carrying walkers when it leaves Stewart Island and when it arrives in Bluff.

## Southland

Regional coordinator Sister Judith Robinson has mapped out legs of the Walk beginning in Bluff. Judith and an Invercargill-based committee will organise the Walk as far as Gore. She is looking for someone to coordinate it from Gore to Balclutha.

Judith expects local people to take part in limited sections of the walk, for example, over the four kms from Edendale Hill to the Edendale township.

Some Invercargill congregations are planning events for Sunday, February 29th. These include All Saints Anglican Church, which will hold an Eco Expo

and walk along the Waihopai River. In Invercargill walkers will either stay with billets or at Te Tomairangi, the Catholic marae.

## Otago

Plans for W4TP are quite advanced for this stage of the walk. It will travel from Balclutha to Lake Waihola on Friday, March 6th and the next day into Dunedin. The Dunedin City Council will provide transportation for people who want to travel to Lake Waihola to walk into the city.

The Dunedin organising team includes veteran of the Hikoi of Hope Rev Wiremu Quedley, city councillor Fliss Butcher, environmentalists, and people from a variety of churches.

Local coordinator Rev Greg Hughson says the Walk should arrive at Hillside Road Methodist Church in South Dunedin late in the afternoon of March 7th. From there it will walk to the Octagon where Mayor Peter Chin will greet it. An outdoor service is planned at First Presbyterian Church the next day.

As it travels north of Dunedin, the Walk will pass the Orokonui Ecosanctuary.

On the way to Oamaru overnight stays will be in Karitane, Hampden and Kakanui. A supporting event will be held in Central Otago, including a walk.

Rev Sue McCafferty is coordinating W4TP in Oamaru. Sue says good news stories the Walk will highlight include Oamaru's recycling centre and its colonies of yellow-eyed and blue penguins.

As it crosses the Waitaki River on its way to Waimate, the Walk will raise the environmental concerns about excessive demand for water for irrigation and hydro power generation.

## Canterbury and Marlborough

Many of the legs on the top half of the South Island are yet to be finalised. W4TP organisers are still looking for a coordinator to put plans in place for the stretch between Waimate and Temuka.

Ashburton-based Rev Alan Judge is organising the Walk between the Rangitata and Rakaia Rivers.

Walkers will stay at Ealing (near Hines) on March 24,

Ashburton the next night, and Rakaia on the 26th.

Rev Jan Fogg of the Hornby/Riccarton Methodist Parish is coordinating the Walk from Rolleston into central Christchurch, which falls on Earth Hour Day, March 28th. An ecumenical service will be held at the Christchurch Cathedral the following day.

No plans are in place for the other legs of the journey though a group of walkers has pledged to make the trip from Amberley to Cheviot. Transit New Zealand has advised organisers not to have walkers along most of the coastal highway south and north of Kaikoura.

The Methodist Harriers have volunteered to run the section from Cheviot to Kaikoura, and W4TP organisers are looking for cyclists to cover the distance from Kaikoura to Ward.

While no one is yet coordinating events in Marlborough, the Wesley Centre in Blenheim will provide a meal and

possibly accommodation.

Nelson supporters of the walk are expected to hold a church service focused on environmental issues and may organise a walk to join up with the main body in Picton.

## Wellington

A service will be held at the Anglican Cathedral on Easter Sunday and it is not yet decided whether W4TP walkers and organisers will meet with politicians to express their concerns about the environment.

**The Walk for the Planet website provides more information and an on-line registration form. See [www.walk4thepplanet.org.nz](http://www.walk4thepplanet.org.nz)**

## Contacts

To participate in Walk for the Planet contact:

Bev Osborn (Rakiura/Stewart Island)	03 219 1506
Sr Judith Robinson (Invercargill)	03 217 8987
Rev Greg Hughson (Dunedin)	027 212 1048
Rev Sue McCafferty (Oamaru)	03 437 0064
Rev Alan Judge (Ashburton)	03 308 7778
Rev Jan Fogg (Christchurch)	03 348 5519
Rev Mark Gibson (Christchurch)	03 980 5002
Gillian Southey (Christchurch)	03 366 9274
Maureen Joyce (Blenheim)	03 578 8831

## CWS supports Walk

*To launch its new campaign on climate change, CWS has chosen to offer its strong support to the South Island initiated Walk for the Planet.*

Many CWS partners in developing countries are already facing environmental challenges, and with the changing environment affecting communities here in Aotearoa, the Walk has been identified as a positive action to draw the links within the global village and to help

people understand how damaging some economic and development policies are in the long term.

It is hoped that this action will inspire new efforts in churches and within the wider community to live more responsibly and engage in the collective action needed for change.

The necessity for such actions was made clear by Tet Naraval from CWS partner, Developers Foundation, when she visited New Zealand in December. Developers Foundation is based in a province of the Philippines, which was hit hard by Typhoon Frank earlier last year. Tet reported that old people there blame the widespread destruction on the loss of

mangrove storms. after cle Mangrove fish stock the only juvenile the sea CWS in its eff Tet says as little recognis own beh of the p of trying

walk  
for the Planet



# Gathering good news stories of ecological hope

By Mark Gibson

*A key purpose of Walk for the Planet is to see and hear local stories of ecological degradation and healing.*

The Lenten journey is one of facing up to the disharmony of our lives and seeking God's gracious transformation and healing. Easter involves both crucifixion and resurrection. You cannot have a good news story without

first there being a destructive reality that is acknowledged and addressed.

On Easter Day in Wellington those who participate in the Walk for the Planet will celebrate the stories of ecological hope and resurrection that have been gathered along the way from Rakiura to Picton. We are also keen to receive stories from other towns and regions that the walk does not pass through.

We encourage parallel events in local areas where people can tell stories and celebrate initiatives that represent a restoration of right relationship with the earth.

One small story of hope can be found in Kennedy's Bush on the Port Hills in Christchurch. In the brief period of time

that human beings have lived on Banks Peninsula we have wrought considerable damage to its bio-diversity. From the time of European settlement the impact has been particularly devastating.

Once a sterile and barren volcanic island, Banks Peninsula providentially evolved into a place teeming with life. When the first European settlers arrived it looked very much like Rakiura does today.

Now, however, the five or six plant species that evolved here in unique isolation are now endangered. Through milling, burning and introduction of species most of the forest has been destroyed in one 15,000th of the time that it took to create.

This massive loss of habitat has had greatest impact on native bush birds. Half of the species originally found here have been wiped out.

In partnership with the Christchurch City Council a small Christian conservation group A Rocha (Canterbury) is actively involved in pest control in Kennedy's Bush. There is now growing evidence that the korimako (bell-bird) population there has grown 80 percent over the last couple of years, and that conditions in the forest have improved so much that nesting birds species once prevalent here but long gone will be able to be reintroduced. In the next few years the aim is to reintroduce several species.

## Walk seeks to question, heal our relations with the planet

By Jan Fogg

*One of the aims of Walk for the Planet is to celebrate the diversity, productiveness and beauty of our New Zealand environment.*

During Lent, Walk for the Planet will track through some of the best but also some of the most challenging farmland on the planet. The walkers will pass through dairy farms, dry-land cropping and stock farms, plantation forests, and vineyards. The will walk alongside and travel over waters that produce oysters, crayfish, mussels, scallops and a variety of fish species. Those same waters are home to the great whales, dolphins, and sea birds from the albatross down that attract ecotourists.

The primary producers of the South Island of New Zealand are amongst the most efficient and highly skilled in the world. Yet there is always the question, 'How are our farming and tourism methods affecting the sustainability of our land and waters?'

We must strike a careful balance as we give thought to this question. Consider, for example, the global financial crisis and commodity price rises that have seen the price of staples like rice and wheat soar by up to 80 percent in some countries. It would not be justice to simply decry the efficient way food is produced in this country. Urban and rural people alike are called by God to be good stewards of everything around us. We must all give consideration to the sustainability effects of every action.

It can be argued that the Church has encouraged the anthropogenic contribution to climate change – that God's love for all things can get lost in God's love for people. Therefore we must bring out the significant sections of the scriptures that are sensitive to the environment and opposed to the exploitation that humans have wrought on the planet. We must speak beyond the idea that God seeks the salvation of humans and tell out the Good News that God's salvation is for all creation.

Walk for the Planet hopes to help that process by speaking through the action of feet on the soil and in the water, slowing the pace of life; and by hearts filled with love and concern for the future of this place we are part of.

## W4TP • ITINERARY

*Walk for the Planet takes place over Lent 2009 and will travel the length of the South Island. Details for some stages of the walk have yet to be finalised.*

Ash Wednesday Feb 25  
Friday Feb 27  
Saturday Feb 28  
Sunday Feb 29 (rest day)

Walk launched on Rakiura (Stewart Island)  
Cross Foveaux Strait by ferry  
Walk Bluff to Invercargill  
Ecumenical service in Invercargill

Monday Feb 30-Thursday March 5  
Friday March 6, Saturday 7  
Sunday March 8 (rest day)

Walk Invercargill to Balclutha  
Balclutha to Dunedin  
Ecumenical service in Dunedin

Monday March 9-Saturday March 14  
Sunday March 15 (rest day)

Dunedin to Oamaru  
Ecumenical service in Oamaru

Monday March 16-Tuesday March 17  
Wed March 18-Thursday March 19  
Possible mid-walk rest in Timaru with local seminar  
Saturday March 21  
Sunday March 22 (rest day)

Oamaru to Waimate  
Waimate to Timaru  
Timaru to Temuka  
Ecumenical Service in Temuka

Monday March 23  
Tuesday March 24  
Wednesday March 25  
Thursday March 26  
Friday March 27  
Saturday March 28  
Sunday March 29 (rest day)

Temuka to Ealing  
Ealing to Ashburton  
Ashburton to Rakaia  
Rakaia to Dunsandel  
Dunsandel to Islington  
Islington to central Christchurch (Note Earth Hour day)  
Ecumenical service Christchurch Cathedral

Monday March 30-Friday April 3  
Saturday April 4  
Sunday April 5 (rest day)

Christchurch to Cheviot  
Cheviot to Kaikoura  
Ecumenical service in Kaikoura

Monday April 6-Thursday April 9  
Maundy Thursday April 9  
Good Friday April 10 (rest day)  
Saturday April 11  
Easter Sunday April 12

Kaikoura to Picton  
Foot washing service at Picton waterfront  
Ecumenical service in Picton  
Cross Cook Strait by ferry  
Celebration/rally in Wellington.



...es which used to protect the land from  
Only 9 per cent of mangroves remain  
...arances for commercial fish farms.  
...es were the breeding ground for local  
...ks, which are reducing rapidly. "Now  
...fish you can buy in the markets are  
...ones that used to be thrown back in  
...for being too small," says Tet.  
...s is supporting Developers Foundation  
...orts to restore the mangroves which  
...will make a significant difference in  
...as five years. The communities  
...e that they need to take action on their  
...half no matter what happens in the rest  
...rovince or country. After four years  
...to get government permission for the

replanting one community just went ahead  
because they did not believe they could afford  
to wait any longer. "Development must be in  
harmony with the environment," explains Tet.

Efforts by communities like those involved  
with Developers Foundation can help reclaim  
the earth and the oceans for a sustainable  
future. "We could simply write a report but  
that has already been done so many times.  
Perhaps we can create more change by  
walking," says CWS campaign coordinator,  
Gillian Southey. **For information on the climate change  
campaign check out in late February or  
contact CWS at PO Box 22652, Christchurch.**

## God's promise, our responsibility

*The first Sunday in February is celebrated as Covenant Sunday. This is a Methodist tradition; we cannot find a clearer proof of this than Charles Wesley's hymn:*

Come, let us use the grace divine,  
And all, with one accord  
In a perpetual covenant join  
Ourselves to Christ the Lord.

What does this imply? A covenant is a promise made by two people or groups of people. In this case it is understood that each Christian individually promises to serve God and to love him, and in all circumstances to continue in that service to the best of his or her ability.

In return, God promises to love and protect the Christian and to accept the service offered.

Why did the Wesleys see this teaching as so important? Surely it was because in their day the majority of Protestants, including Anglicans, adhered to the strict Calvinist doctrine of predestination. In this teaching the Christian was pre-ordained to salvation: nothing the individual

did could alter this.

If you were a true Christian, it was because you had been chosen before you were born. If you were not pre-ordained, no efforts you made would enable you to become one of the elect souls.

The Wesleys were fundamentally opposed to this idea. They believed that God's grace and acceptance were available to all those who truly desired it and were willing to work toward it. This was why they spent so much time travelling about and preaching to people who had no connection with the Church and had had no opportunity to hear God's promises.

Over the years this has become the generally accepted teaching among the majority of Christians but in Wesley's day it was revolutionary. Hence the covenant service, in which the congregation promises to love and serve God in whatever situation in life they find themselves and express their trust and faith that he will accept them.

The lectionary recommends the reading of Jeremiah 31\_31-35, part of which says:

"This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The difference that God makes in this promise compared to the earlier covenant (see Deuteronomy 7) is that there the people were commanded to keep God's laws but they did not necessarily understand them within themselves. Now God promises to make each person who wants to serve him understand the law within their own hearts and minds and accept it in their own individual circumstances.

This is a great promise on God's part, and a great responsibility on ours. Let us pray that we may always remember it so that we may serve our Lord to the best of our ability always.

"All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep this covenant and his testimonies" (Psalm 25:10).

Kathleen Loncar reflects on Covenant Sunday

## Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



*January 15 has always been a special day for me because it marks the day Martin Luther King Jr was born in Atlanta, Georgia 80 years ago. Who at that time would have imagined the significance of that day for the future of not only the United States but also the worldwide Christian church?*

A contemporary and colleague of King, James M Washington, once observed that "a strange providence guided the course of his life... King's leadership embodied the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the times, a powerful moment in the struggle for freedom. We believed King's life, and the movement he led, constituted a powerful testament of

hope."

Three events in King's life guided his destiny. The first was the invitation of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama to become their 20th pastor. On October 31, 1954 King began his first ministerial appointment.

The second event took place a year later on December 1, 1955 when a 42 year old black seamstress, Rosa Parks, refused to surrender her seat on a Montgomery bus to a white man. She was arrested and her determined 'No' became the rallying cry of the civil rights movement.

The third event was the appointment of King to lead the Montgomery bus boycott in response to Park's act of civil disobedience. King was just 26 years old. A Baptist colleague said at the time, "Young King is brilliant but inexperienced and not prepared for the huge stage on which he finds himself."

But providence had led to King to this time. For 381 days, King led a successful, non-violent boycott against an unjust and racist system. Living through this time transformed King into an internationally known Christian proponent of nonviolent social change.

I first encountered Martin Luther King in 1963 when, I, a young Methodist minister, travelled with others to Washington, DC, to a civil rights rally in front of the Lincoln Memorial. That day I listened to King's words, "I have a dream today... a dream of freedom and justice... a dream that a day will come when all of God's children - black and white, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants - will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, free at last, free at last: thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

As I write this, the politics of violence and cynicism once again dominate the

world's agenda. Israel and Palestine are caught up in a deadly struggle, the war continues unabated in Afghanistan, hunger stalks Africa, and around the world more and more people struggle against poverty and despair.

As King reminded us the night before his assassination, "God has allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know... that we as a people will get to the Promised Land."

So on January 15 I remembered Martin Luther King and the dream of love and non-violence, a dream of hope and healing, a dream of justice. And I remembered an old 'holiness' hymn that we sang in those days, 'Keep your eyes on the prize - hold on.' It was an inspiring message then and I still have my eyes on the prize!



Uniting Congregations

## Supervision vital in the contemporary church

Marilyn Welch - Anglican Representative on Standing Committee

*Today exercising ministry is both a challenge and a privilege. The challenge of working in a church that is struggling to pay for ministry is very stressful for those whose livelihood is dependant on that stipend.*

Often the focus of ministry becomes fundraising rather than mission. Aging buildings may take a large share of the income or maintenance is simply not done.

Our society is becoming more litigious and accountability is the name of the game. Protocols that were acceptable even a decade ago are no longer appropriate for those in ministry and there is a fine line between safe and unsafe practice. Whilst a minister's intentions are well grounded, the recipient of that ministry may perceive the offering as inappropriate. Most denominations now require those in ministry to have police checks

and attend workshops about boundaries and the 'cans and cannots' of ministry.

These all add stress to those exercising ministry. Having a clinical/pastoral supervisor with whom you can reflect on your ministry practice is one excellent way of ensuring what you are doing is safe, effective and ethical. Good supervision enables those exercising particular roles within the church and community to grow both as people and as practitioners.

Being in a Cooperative Venture has its own unique challenges. Ministers must relate to different denominations, each with its own particular ways of operating. A trained supervisor can facilitate a process of discerning how this complex relationship is affecting the minister and his/her ministry as well as their personhood. They can also help prioritise the various

ministry and administrative tasks and decide which of these can be delegated.

The five Partner Churches take supervision very seriously. Some make it mandatory for clergy, licensed ministers and those working with children and young people to be in supervision. Whether it is a requirement or not, the benefits of supervision are significant both to the individuals in ministry and to those whom they minister.

Parish Councils who pay for their ministers to attend supervision are being responsible in offering a partnership of accountability. Supervision also provides an overview of the minister's personal and professional development requirements and recommendations for on-going training and formation.

Throughout the country supervisors who have been trained

in the CAIRA model (Collegiality; Accountability; Identity; Responsibility; Authority) provide affordable professional supervision which has been recognized by the churches. CAIRA supervisors are part of a church-based national structure and must commit themselves to ongoing training and regular meetings with colleagues as well as annual re-licensing

Other service providers also train professional supervisors. Your denomination will probably have a list of persons who are recognized within that denomination to offer supervision.

Supervision is a gift; a privilege which says that the church wants to ensure safe, ethical and effective ministry to congregations and communities as well as ensuring those who minister in the name of the church are also being their very best.

## Church by the Seashore makes creative waves

*The creativity and commitment of a small congregation in rural Manukau has inspired a young minister and he, in turn, is doing all he can to provide them the support they need to carry on their work.*

‘Alipate Uhila is the probationer presbyter at Pukekohe Methodist Parish. The parish has congregations in Pukekohe, Karaka, and Clarks Beach.

The Clarks Beach congregation is called Church by the Seashore, and, while it is under Methodist oversight, it is truly a community church. Its members come from a range of denominational backgrounds, and they focus on being a positive force in their community.

‘Alipate says a few years ago the Church by the Seashore was struggling with just a few active members. Today it is thriving with up to 20 attending services. He attributes the turnaround to the congregation’s creativity and its connection with the community.

“For many congregations creativity has come to mean using data projectors, DVDs or other new technologies in their worship. But the Clarks Beach congregation focuses its creativity in arts and crafts and other activities that include both children and adults. It is also open to creative, informal styles of worship,” he says.

“The congregation’s other source of strength is its community outreach. The members have a wealth of talents and skills and they use them for ministry and

mission in the community.”

A key person in the Clarks Beach congregation is Ruth Manning. Officially the parish steward, Ruth says she is best described as the local dog’s body. Whatever her title, her energy and passion are clear.

She explains the Methodist origins of the congregation: “Rev Everill Orr had a bach at Clarks Beach. He initiated the church in 1953. It was originally built on land that is beach access so it was moved to its present location. It has always been very much as a community church,” Ruth says.

“We collect food for the food bank and we hold lots of activities that involve people from the community who do not attend church. For example, we have a library that is open on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30. Some of our books are donated and our volunteer librarian Pat Owen gets others from the Waiuku library.

“We also have a homework club on Thursday afternoons. Several retired teachers help out. They are not all members of the congregation.

“In September we had a spring flower service and we delivered 40 bouquets to people in the community, mostly to elderly people who cannot get to church.”

The Church by the Seashore also serves as a community hall for Clarks Beach. It is the town’s polling place during elections, and a number of groups such as ratepayers and the local business



*For its Christmas display the congregation imagined that Jesus was born today.*

association hold their meetings there.

Art plays a big part in the life of the Clarks Beach congregation. Another of its weekly activities is Wednesday afternoon ‘art and drop in sessions’ for mothers and children.

Ruth says the low key approach of the art sessions is a way to get people in touch with the church in a way that is not necessarily religious. A key person in this area is Liz Harrop, a leader of the art team.

The artwork is not just for outsiders, however. The congregation has made a

dazzling array of banners and displays, which add to its creative worship atmosphere.

‘Alipate says he is excited about working with the Church by the Seashore because it displays vision, passion and action.

“Sometimes a church has one or another of these but the Clarks Beach congregation has all three. Sometimes it is hard to keep up with them. My role is to act as a facilitator so they can use their gifts.”

## Beckenham Trippers do fellowship on the road

*It's 7a.m. on November 13th and cars are arriving in the car park of Beckenham Methodist Church. The air is full of greetings and laughter. Yes, the time has arrived for the Beckenham Trippers weekend trip to Lake Tekapo.*

With all 35 Trippers present and the vehicles loaded, it's off to the breakfast stop. A picnic breakfast is part of the Trippers’ tradition. At Rakaia the gas cookers come out to make toast and pancakes.

Replete, the Trippers head off to an alpaca farm out of Geraldine. They learn about alpacas, the uses of their fleece, and breeding programmes. Morning tea is a chance to meet the alpacas and feed them.

Once the travellers arrive at Lake Tekapo they settled into their backpackers accommodation. Then it was two days of sightseeing. Mt Cook looked inspiring without a cloud in sight. Some people tramped in the Hooker Valley, others did an organised trip across the lake to the foot of the Tasman Glacier with icebergs for company, and some hung out at the Hermitage pretending to be rich American tourists.

At night there was a trip to Mt John Observatory to gaze through telescopes at planets, stars, and stars in the making. Imagining the distance the light they were viewing had travelled was a mind blowing experience.

Another round of sight seeing and bargain hunting followed the next day.

Beckenham Methodist Church Trippers began in 1996 when Graham and Lyn McHarg suggested that the congregation do a weekend coast-to-coast trip, and a total of 39 took part. They watched the sun rise from Sumner Beach and set from the beach at Hokitika. On the way across the main divide they had breakfast at Kowhai camping ground, morning tea at Arthurs Pass, and lunch at Moana before they arrived at their accommodation.

Since then they have visited Orokonui, Cromwell (twice), Mokihinui, Fairlie, Waimate, Punakaiki, (twice), Hokitika again, Moeraki, Ranfurly, and Lake Tekapo.

Graham says until 2003 the trips were held at Labour Day weekend. Since then they have changed to Canterbury Show weekend in November as it is easier to get accommodation. They leave on the Thursday the day before Show Day and return on Sunday.

“We have stayed at motels, private houses, and old nurses homes. We have taken over Hotel Ranfurly and entire backpackers. We have visited a farm of rare sheep breeds, Macraes gold mine, Oamaru stone quarry, Glow Worm Dell, and had a go at curling just to name a few of our activities. All members receive a bound personalised itinerary of our trip,” Graham says.



*A party of Beckenham Methodist Trippers ready for morning tea at Mt John Observatory.*

### God is gradually disappearing from the NZ scene.



What would happen if Christian values were wiped out? In this unique book George Bryant makes a plea for a renewed, better society based on six core values. For the sake of our future every Kiwi should read this book.

*“A landmark book which asks the awkward questions we tend to shy away from”*  
(Bernard Moran)

Order from • Whau Publications, Box 7031, Maungatapu, Tauranga \$27.95 plus \$4 p & p

## Wesley Jones

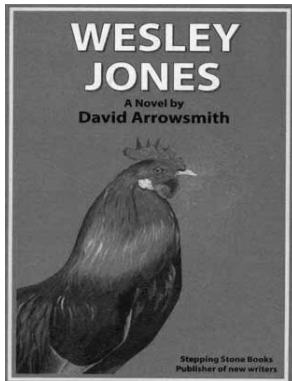
*Wesley, who tells the story, is 17, living on a poultry farm in small town New Zealand. His family emigrated from Yorkshire in the late 1950s and is strongly Methodist, especially his Dad, Reg, with whom Wesley has a typical adolescent love/hate relationship.*

Indeed the novel's first line is Wesley thinking, "How can I shut that bugger up before I explode?" The scene is set for a volatile relationship soon made worse when Reg discovers Wesley's girl friend, his first real love, is Lebanese Catholic girl Mary.

For 200 pages the novel explores Wesley's relationships with Mary, Reg, Ron the 'man of the world' farm hand, sister Rebecca and 'available' Rose Bennet.

The year is 1970 and Wesley is in his final year at college. Man has just landed on the moon and it is a story of a boy and a world coming of age together.

Does it work? Yes and no. For me, also in the 7th form in 1970, it brought back many memories – the music, the morals, the issues, and yes the prejudices are as I remember. I enjoyed the trip down memory lane.



Has he made the transition by the end of the novel? Again yes and no.

There is a lovely scene where Wesley is brought home drunk by the police and after what he calls a "holy shoot out" where he and Reg argue by trading Biblical quotes,

I struggled though with some of the jumps in dialogue style and narrator, however. One minute Wesley is all staccato sentences and slang, the next almost poetic in his eloquence. There are also some flashback scenes where father Reg is suddenly the narrator.

Perhaps these abrupt changes in tone reflect how Wesley himself vacillates between boy and man.

Reg puts his arm round Wesley "come inside, me lad and have a cup of tea" and they sit down at the piano belting out hymn choruses together. He and Reg have reached an understanding – Wesley learns he is Reg's only surviving son out of five and finally understands why Reg wants so much from him.

With his love life I'm not so sure. Mary dumps him twice. Wes finally begins to realise that Mary is not the one for him, not simply because she is a Catholic but because, as sister Rebecca is always pointing out, they really have nothing in common.

But then, it's out of the frying pan into the fire – the book ends with new love Rose prattling on happily about how they will marry and have lots of children. Wesley, a whole year older but not a lot wiser, once again seems lost in another person's expectations of him.

Well worth a read for anyone who was a teenager in the 60s or who wants to understand those who were!

David Arrowsmith

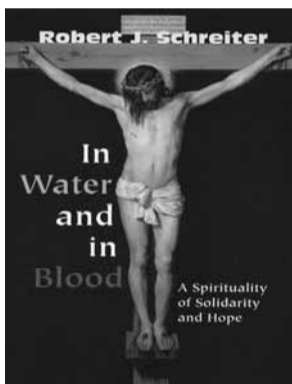
Stepping Stone Books, 204 pgs  
Reviewer: Alison Molineux

## In Water and in Blood: a Spirituality of Solidarity and Hope

*In a service of Holy Communion at the Methodist Conference 2008 I noted the words of administration for the wine: "The life of Christ," in place of the traditional "The blood of Christ." New expressions can bring fresh insights, but before this change becomes permanent I suggest that those preparing liturgy read and reflect deeply on this book.*

The author, a Catholic priest, published the first edition in 1988 in an attempt to relate the spirituality of the blood of Christ to the contemporary situation. In his preface to the revised edition he notes that in the intervening 20 years the language of redemption, suffering, sacrifice and expiation has been closely scrutinised, especially in Western theological circles.

These themes are filled with the imagery of blood, raising concerns, particularly in feminist theologies, about the domination and violence that accompany such images. In major international 'hot spots' of conflict and injustice religion is often paired with violence. In these



The paradoxical life and death symbolism of blood is strongly present throughout the scriptures – in covenant, cross and cup – embodying themes of conflict and community, hope and solidarity.

In Chapter 1 Schreiter looks at the several levels of meaning in the blood ritual of the first Passover, further

situations understanding the language of sacrifice and atonement becomes important in building the platform for social reconciliation, says Schreiter.

He offers a re-examination of the biblical meanings of blood in 12 texts and themes as a means of entry into this challenging area.

developed in subsequent chapters on the blood sacrifices which confirmed the covenant of the Hebrew people with their God, and the complex rites and regulations formulated in Leviticus.

The blood-soaked warrior and the winepress of Isaiah 63:1-4 are seen as protest images, in some ways prefiguring Jesus. These foundations give the author the background to the New Testament texts in the Gospels, Epistles and the Book of Revelation, which centre the spirituality of blood more directly on the blood of Christ.

I'm not surprised that there has been a new edition of this title. Not only is it written with care and clarity, but the social, symbolic and sacramental dimensions of the blood of Christ offer a life-giving response to the globalising process of violence.

It is time for us to give more attention to such a powerful and pervasive image. This book provides a rich resource for reflection and study during the season of Lent. Blood is after all thicker than water.

Robert J Schreiter

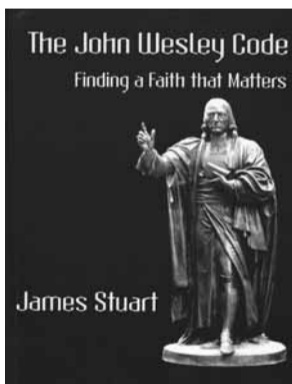
Orbis, 2006 (Revised edition) 137 pgs, \$37.50  
Reviewer: Diana Roberts

## The John Wesley Code: Finding a Faith that Matters

*A great many books have been published concerning John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. These include works on his life and his theology. So why another book? And what distinguishes this one from the many others that have been published over the years?*

What Jim Stuart seeks to do is "identify those characteristics of Wesley's life and work and the emergence of early Methodism that were particularly subversive of the dominant paradigm of the age."

The book has four sections. The first sets the context by exploring four principles embedded in the practice of early Methodism: experience, consensus and vision. The second section explores the theological emphases of Methodism: providence, compassion, grace, and unconditional love. The third section identifies the characteristics of a Methodist: a warm heart, an open mind, a catholic spirit, and a whole gospel. In each section the author explores these matters at some depth but without overwhelming the reader with too much detail. The final section of the book sets out to show how the enduring themes of Wesley and the early



part have ignored Wesley and distanced themselves from their rich heritage.

The relevance of that heritage for today is explored in this book. Stuart sees the genius of Wesley in the way he shaped a movement amongst the poor in response to the devastating impact of the industrial revolution of his time. The picture of John Wesley and his theology that emerges is engaging and challenging for the people who

Methodists might affect our practice, inspire our theology, and renew our lives as Methodists today.

Stuart has a sound analysis of present day Methodism, which, he says, is characterised by a pervading amnesia regarding the origins and spirit of what was once the Methodist movement. Methodists for the most

would call themselves Methodists today.

Methodists, says Stuart, need a new appropriation of Wesley's vision based on a new understanding and appreciation of Wesley and the vision that gave birth to Methodism. Only then, under the guidance of the Spirit, can we reimagine that vision and engage with the needs of people and society in the present age.

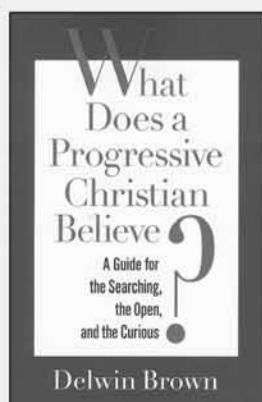
The Methodist Church of New Zealand is currently focussed on its institutional life. This book challenges us to open out from that and catch a new vision inspired by the life and theology of John Wesley that, taking account of his weaknesses as well as his strengths, speaks to our time.

This is a scholarly book, but don't let that put you off – it is written in an accessible way. I've waited for the publication of this book for what seems a long time. It's been well worth the wait. As a Methodist I will return to it time and again for inspiration and vision.

The book is enhanced by nine engravings by William Hogarth graphically portray aspects of life in Wesley's Britain, is well indexed and has a useful bibliography.

James Stuart

Philip Garside Publishing, 2008, 211 pgs  
Reviewer: John Roberts



### WHAT DOES A PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN BELIEVE?

Prof. Delwin Brown writes about what it means to be a pluralistic, compassionate, open-minded, justice-seeking Christian today. \$34.00\* \*plus p&p



### SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Kiwi priest and spiritual director, Sue Pickering provides a thorough, practical introduction to this topic for both clergy and lay people. Readers are encouraged to recognise God's presence, deepen prayer and move out in service as God leads. \$44.99\*



### OH LIGHT

Beautifully designed book of writings by NZ people with disabilities, reflecting on spirituality and religion. \$25.00\*

Order now from

**Epworth**  
BOOKS

[www.epworthbooks.org.nz](http://www.epworthbooks.org.nz)  
[sales@epworthbooks.org.nz](mailto:sales@epworthbooks.org.nz)

PO Box 17255, Karori, Wellington 6147  
157B Karori Road, Marsden Village  
Karori, Wellington 6012

Toll free: 0800 755 355 Ph: 04 476 3330



FOUR

HOLIDAYS

As we light Advent candles, so does Hollywood, trying to dazzle us, not with hope, peace, joy and love, but with *Bad Santa* (2003), *Polar Express* (2004), *Deck the Halls* (2006) or *Fred Claus* (2007). This year's Christmas cracker, *Four Holidays*, gave little bang for its buck.

Brad (Vince Vaughan) and Kate (Reese Witherspoon) are an upscale San Francisco couple. Footloose and fancy free, they concoct a uniquely selfish holiday ritual, that of avoiding their families, parents both divorced, come Christmas. The plan is based on pretence, the lie that they are undertaking charity work in some exotic overseas locale.

Plans precede a pace, until Christmas Day, when San Francisco International Airport finds itself becalmed by fog. One live to air TV news crew later, and Kate's cell phone is ringing, four families demanding four Christmases, complete with four 'Please explains'.

Brad and Kate commence a torturous cinematic journey, from Brad's working class father to Kate's fervently religious

mother, from Brad's game playing mother to Kate's well-heeled family dinner party. History forces them to unwrap their relationship, only to discover that pretence, lies and avoidance are actually habits deeply ingrained in them both.

Director Seth Gordon directs a plot that celebrates caricatures and comes laden with inconsistencies. A star-studded cast – including Jon Favreau, Jon Voight, Robert Duvall, Mary Steenburgen and Sissy Spacek – add little Christmas glitter. Reese Witherspoon does master the innocent double-take, Vince Vaughn the verbosely banal patter, and Robert Duvall a wicked laugh sure to set your two front Christmas teeth on edge. Despite their reputation, including five Oscars, there is simply too little to like, much less care about, in any of these four families.

Some moments of genuine humour are mixed with flashes of excruciatingly selfish human behaviour. *Four Holidays* becomes a window onto a selfish and isolated existence, in which personal pleasure trumps community

responsibility. Boxing Day can not come quickly enough, both for them and for the watching audience.

Surely a New Year will offer some new resolution. Sadly, the ending, some 12 months later, shows that little has been learnt. Brad and Kate remain just as selfish and just as isolated. *Four Holidays* is a depressing reflection on a depressing society, set to dampen the Christmas cheer of all save society's most cynical. The Grinch might award it four stars, but I will stick with two.

Which, come to think of it, is perhaps why so many people actually do light those four Advent candles. They become tiny flickers of prayerful hope for the habitual avoiders, peace for the relationally separated, joy for all those lacking Christmas cheer and love for the isolated.

Steve Taylor is senior pastor at Opawa Baptist Church and lectures in gospel and film at Bible College of New Zealand. He is the author of 'The Out of Bounds Church?' and writes regularly at [www.emergentkiwi.org.nz](http://www.emergentkiwi.org.nz).

### Matthew's Christmas story

The New Year has arrived bringing new joys, new fears, new challenges and new opportunities. Remaining where we were is not an option. In literature *Verbs* are considered the strongest words. *Verbs* apply to *action* and being *verbal* relates to *words*. Here's wishing you a verb filled, verbal New Year. *Moving, doing* and *caring* are fine verbs to begin the year with – find the missing verbs from the Bible.

#### MOVING - DOING - CARING

When thou didst __ through the wilderness	M _____	(Ps 68:7)
As he __ along, they spread their garments	__ O ____	(Lk 19:36)
He __ them all out of the temple	____ V ____	(Jn 2:15)
A swimmer spreads out his hands to __	____ I ____	(Is 25:11)
David __ before the Lord...	____ N ____	(2Sm 6:14)
The Lord was __ in the garden	____ G ____	(Gn 3:8)
Joseph __ of wheat sheaves	____ D ____	(Gn 37:7)
Saul's daughter Michal __ David	__ O ____	(1Sm 18:20)
Barnabas took Mark with him and __ to Cyprus	____ I ____	(Ac 15:39)
Elijah girded up his loins and __ before Ahab	____ N ____	(1Kg 18:46)
And Miriam __ to them	____ G ____	(Ex 15:21)
John __ a baptism of repentance	____ C ____	(Mk 1:4)
Showed them garments Dorcas had __	__ A ____	(Acts 9:39)
The good shepherd __ for the sheep	____ R ____	(Jn 10:11-14)
The wise man __ his house upon rock	____ I ____	(Lk 6:48)
Paul and Silas were __ and singing	____ N ____	(Ac 16:25)
Sarah __ to herself	____ G ____	(Gn 18:12)

Answers march, rode, drove, swim, danced, walking, dreamed, loved, sailed, ran, sang, preached, made, cares, built, praying, laughed.

© RMS



Greg Hughson (left) receives his life membership in OUSA.

## Popular university chaplain now student for life

The Otago University Students' Association has named popular chaplain Rev Greg Hughson and long serving staff member Anna McMartin its newest life members.

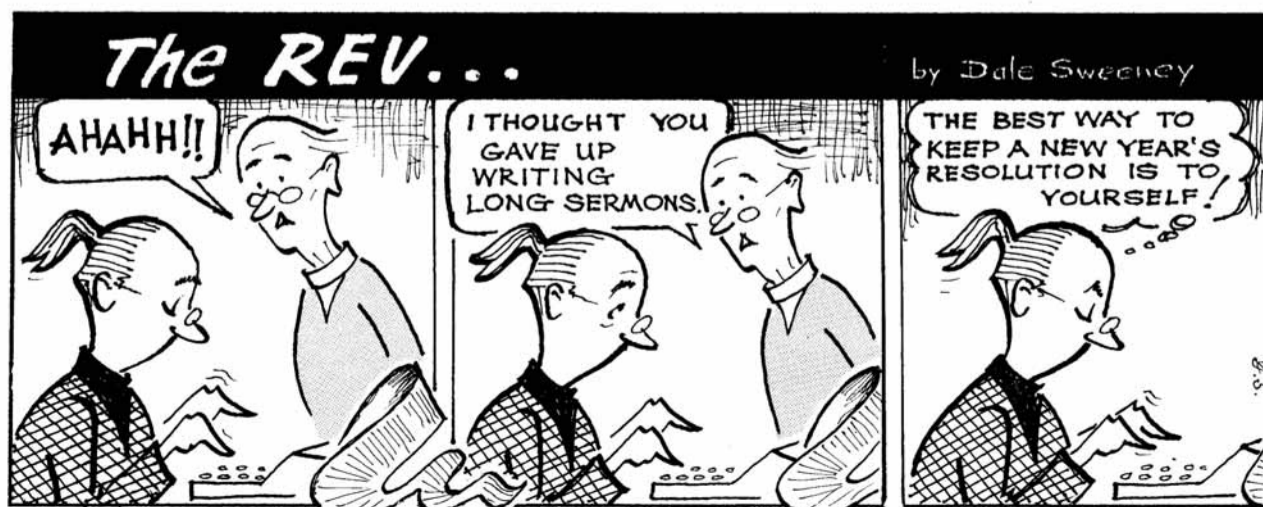
Greg Hughson and Anna McMartin, along with outgoing OUSA President Simon Wilson, were named as life members in a special ceremony in December.

Simon said "Mr Hughson has been a supporter of students since he began his role in February 2000". He cited Greg's role in supporting friends and families of bereaved students and his ongoing work to create a Muslim prayer space at the University.

"He shows enormous respect and support for us in our role as the students' association and in his work for our members. We are delighted to be able to reciprocate by bestowing on him our highest honour" Simon said.

Anna McMartin held many roles within OUSA. She has managed the OUSA Student Support Centre. She played a pivotal role in developing OUSA's pastoral role and was a vocal advocate for students. Anna currently works for the Ministry of Education in Wellington.

OUSA's constitution allows it to bestow life membership on two candidates per year, in addition to the president. Life Members of the Association include former Dunedin mayor Sukhi Turner; Dunedin barrister Judith Ablett-Kerr; former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank Rod Carr; Ebraima Manneh, politician in The Gambia, and the Hon. Justice J. Bruce Robertson of the Court of Appeal.



# Young People

Birkenhead Samoan Youth group performed at the North Shore Pasefika Festival.



*First and foremost I would like to say 'Happy New Year' to all our Touchstone readers. All the best for 2009.*

While most of us were winding down at the end of last year getting ready for Christmas holidays, one group of young people had to work double time to get ready for an exciting event that was celebrated in Auckland's North Shore.

The Birkenhead Samoan Youth group of the Zion Hill Methodist Church were getting geared up for the second North Shore Pasefika Festival (the first was held in 2006). This event was organized by the North Shore City Council and took place at Hato Petera in Northcote on November 29th.

Some of the profiled entertainers who performed at the festival were our very own Rosita Vai, Cydel, Groovehouse as well as up-and-coming talent Crossbreed to name a few. Another notable act was the talented Birkenhead Samoan Youth.

A leader of the group, Edna Te'o, says the event was a great experience and really showcased the talents of young people. Not only did they perform Samoan cultural dances on stage but they also participated in the festival's touch rugby tournament, which was part of the organisers' plan to get North Shore youth involved and active.

Edna and Peti Meki are the co-leaders of the Birkenhead Samoan Youth group. Christopher Taatu is the secretary, while the supporting committee is made up of Alfred Brewster, Olofa Brewster and Meki Meki. There are approximately 25 members in the group, and they range in age from about 11 to 30 years old.

They meet every second Friday of the month at the Zion Hill Methodist Church, which is currently under the care of Rev. Suivaaia Te'o. A bonus for the Birkenhead Samoan Methodist Church was that their Methodist Women's Fellowship was able to set up a fundraising food stall selling BBQ meals and sausages

during the festival.

Overall the festival was a great experience for the Birkenhead Samoan Youth group – an awesome opportunity to get out and minister to their local community by performing and simply being involved in a community event. This event is set to become an annual celebration so lets hope 2009 is even bigger and better!

Well done to all the members of the Birkenhead Samoan Methodist youth. Keep up the good work!

If you have any events or stories you would like to share, feel free to drop me a line on [mdrobertson08@gmail.com](mailto:mdrobertson08@gmail.com) and I will contact you asap.

By Mataiva Robertson

## Birkenhead youth end year with a bang

# Kidz Korna!

Welcome to the first edition of Kidz Korna for 2009. Christmas celebrations seem a long way away already but I hope you all had a really good time with your friends and families. Most of you will have celebrated the birth of Jesus with a nativity play or special carol services in your churches. The congregation at Baring Square Methodist Church in Ashburton have sent me news of what they did in their church to celebrate Christmas.

Welcome to this month's Kidz Korna!

## The Baring Square Christmas Pageant

The Baring Square congregation went back in time to the year 1 BC for their Christmas presentation. The pageant was a mixture of live acting and video clips. It was written and produced by the congregation's minister Rev Peter Taylor. It was a spoof TV programme made for Heaven's Paradise TV Channel called 'What in Heaven's Going On?'

News reporter Sarah Fim, played by Monica Leadley, fronted a special debate between the Archangel Gabriel (Carmen Leadley) and Chief Fallen Angel Lucy Ferr (Sonya Leadley).

Breaking news in the show was the announcement from God (Ashley Tweed) that the Messiah was going to be sent. The studio guests found the conditions under which he was to be sent unacceptable but God explained that was the only way.

Others in the cast included Archangel Michael (Harry Watson), Ariel the Minister for TV reception (George Watson), Cherry Bim, an outside reporter (Ashley Tweed), and Minister for the Arts (Andrew Tweed).

This was an interesting and exciting change from the usual Christmas productions.

## Book Review

### The Master's Companion

A Christian Midrash by Jerilyn E Felton

This is a story about some of the events in the life of Jesus-but with a difference. At the beginning of the story Jesus is out walking when he finds a little black dog with one white paw.

The dog is hungry and sick. Jesus heals her and from then on the little dog, named Merea, follows Jesus wherever he goes. Merea is with Jesus from the beginning of the story up to the time of his resurrection.

This is a delightful story for older children to read for themselves and for families to share together. Throughout the book the writer uses an ancient storytelling method called Midrash. Midrash is an ancient Jewish way of looking at stories in the Bible in a more creative way. This does not mean that they are not true, just more imaginative.



The cast of the TV show (from left): Archangel Gabriel (Carmen Leadley), Sarah Fim (Monica Leadley) and Chief Fallen Angel Lucy Ferr (Sonya Leadley) in the studio.

## THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION

### How good are you at adding up?

The answers to these questions are all numbers. When you have worked them out add up the total and send it to me. There is a \$20 voucher for the first correct entry drawn and 10 points for all other entries. All entries must be received by February 12th 2009.

- 1) How many commandments did God give to Moses?
- 2) How many disciples did Jesus call?
- 3) The number of days the Bible tells us God took to create the world?
- 4) How many Gospels are there?
- 5) The number of wise men who looked for Jesus?
- 6) How many brothers did Joseph have?
- 7) How many chapters are there in the book of Romans?
- 8) How many days did Jesus spend in the wilderness?

Send your answers to [dlennox@nettel.net.nz](mailto:dlennox@nettel.net.nz) or Doreen Lennox, 4/22 Wellington Street. Hamilton 3216



Davinia's husband Phil Taylor and daughter Janice Hooper were in Munda for the opening of the hall.



Davinia Taylor Memorial Hall is the heart of Helena Goldie Hospital's nurse training programme.

## Hospital building honours Solomon Islands missionary

**A new hall funded by the Methodist Women's Fellowship of NZ has been dedicated at Helena Goldie Hospital in Munda, Solomon Islands to mark the service of former missionary Davinia Taylor.**

Before she was married, Davinia served as a nurse in Munda for six years beginning in 1950. Later she and her husband, Rev Phil Taylor served for another nine in Bogainville.

After she passed away four years ago the MWF executive asked the managers of Helena Goldie Hospital how Davinia's life and work could be remembered. They responded that a building at the hospital's Nurse's Training Section would be most suitable.

Currently nurse aids are trained at the Helena Goldie Hospital. After their two year course they return to their own districts to set up clinics. Beginning in 2010 it is hoped that the hospital will have its first intake of students who will be trained as registered nurses.

In attendance at the opening of the hall were members of Davinia's family. They included Phil Taylor and his daughter Janice Hooper. Janice was born at Helena Goldie Hospital more than 40 years ago this was her first trip back.

Phil says Mark and Elizabeth Leeming from the UK Methodist Church have been appointed to develop the hospital's new training role. "Elizabeth and Mark are registered midwives and they have been working on an advanced curriculum. The Memorial Hall will be a key facility enabling this to happen. There is a large hall for classes, a library, a kitchen and two flush toilets," Phil says.

Phil says The NZ MWF and supporting congregations can be very encouraged by their efforts in providing the hospital with a fine facility.

"The day of opening was set for 10a.m. on November 27th, finished or not. We arrived five days earlier with much work to be done. Builder Peter Barikana, who trained in Hamilton in the 1970s, and his staff worked past midnight getting the rest of the floor down and the walls and ceilings painted. We were grateful the ceiling fans were working.

"Rev Hari Bea received the key from Peter and dedicated the building. A happy crowd followed him in. It was my pleasant task to hand the building over to the medical superintendent, Dr Dina Sailo," Phil says.

"I want to pass on the deep

appreciation of not only the medical staff but also the officers of the Church Assembly for this building. My daughter and I were asked to cut the cake."

Phil says it was a thrill others of his family, Thelma and Tony Thompson and his wife Barbara, were also present.

"When Davinia came to the Solomons in 1950 she was one of many self giving young New Zealanders who served as nurses, teachers, accountants, engineers and various tradesmen. War had caused havoc and destruction and we had the dream of rebuilding and helping the Solomon Islanders catch up. Davinia would be surprised to find her name on this building as she could point to many others who equally gave of their best."

Today the only overseas personnel at Helena Goldie are Dina and his wife, both of whom are doctors from South India. Phil says the hospital is suffering financially and staff are not sure when their next salary payments will arrive.

"I suspect many will continue working for nothing but will spend more time in their gardens. We came home greatly encouraged that the hospital and the church are being well led and the people are in good heart."

## Scholarship for historians of the South Pacific

**Applications are now open for the second annual Gilmore Smith Memorial Scholarship.**

Funded by the Wesley Historical Society, the scholarship provides up to \$1500 a year to a post-graduate tertiary student. Applicants must be undertaking historical research related to Methodist history in New Zealand and/or the South Pacific.

The Wesley Historical Society assists the research and publication of Methodist history in Aotearoa and the South Pacific in order improve our understanding of interactions among Maori, Pakeha, Pacific Islanders and other ethnic groups.

Last year's Gilmore Smith scholar Lynne McDonalds says she was honoured to be the first recipient of the award. The money helped her visit Australian archives and copy archival documents.

Lynne's graduate studies focus on missionary work on Choiseul in the Solomon Islands from 1905 to 1968. Her interest in the topic was sparked when she married Graham, son of Reverend Alister and Alice McDonald who were Methodist missionaries on Choiseul from 1953 to 1963.

"There were three contending denominations present on Choiseul – Methodist, Catholic and Seventh Day Adventist – and I am examining the lives of these missionaries and the work they did. Using archival sources from all three denominations, I am attempting to unravel the complex relationships of the missionaries with the Choiseulese and with each other.

"It is easy to tell the story of the Seventh Day Adventist church burned to the ground by 'the Methodists' or Father Pelletier writing to Alice McDonald unapologetically about his church's proselytising in Methodist villages but what were the reasons for and implications of these and other less well-known events and interactions?"

Lynne is using archives in Australia and New Zealand for her study. She says she is grateful to archives staff and the ex-missionaries and others who have granted me access to diaries and correspondence.

The Gilmore Smith Memorial Fund was set up in honour of two late members of the Wesley Historical Society, Rev Les Gilmore and Frank Smith.

Applicants for the scholarship are expected to draw on the historical resources of the Methodist Church of New Zealand. These could include Methodist Church archives and oral history.

Applications should include a one-page outline of the research proposal and must be accompanied by a supporting letter from a supervisor or university lecturer.

For further information contact Wesley Historical Society Secretary Barry Neal at 09 811 8054 or email **Applications are due to the WHS secretary by 31 March, 2009.**

## Papers Past an on-line treasure-trove of history

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Jo Smith

**Researchers all over the world are rubbing their hands together with glee upon using the New Zealand National Library's Papers Past website [www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz).**

The website is a fantastic research tool that can be accessed from your own home, as long as you have a computer with broadband connection. Or you can use public library computers to access it.

Papers Past contains nearly 1.2 million individual newspaper pages though this is just a small proportion of the National Library's newspaper holdings. Pages from more than 40 titles of newspapers are included on the website. The cut-off date for newspaper titles on the site at this stage is 1920.

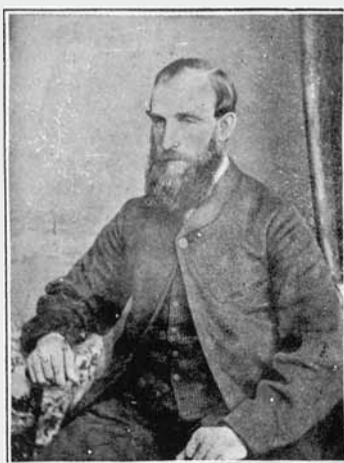
The National Library relaunched the Papers Past website in September 2007 with a new functionality that allows users to search the full-text of

some of the newspapers.

The introduction of Optical Character Recognition software means that it is possible to search for a name or phrase in many of the newspapers that have been digitised. Family historians are particularly excited by this software because it enables them to find previously unknown information that can shed new light on their family members' lives.

The 30 titles which have Optical Character Recognition include papers such as the Grey River Argus, the Otago Witness and the Ellesmere Guardian.

There was a much more detailed reportage of local events and personalities in newspapers in the 19th century. And Papers Past can be used to find out about those who were involved with the New Zealand Methodist Church, or Methodist parishes.



Details of Otago missionary Thomas Ferens' life can be gleaned from Papers Past.

A search on Papers Past for the surname 'Ferens' turned up 2916 references. Thomas Ferens was involved in the Waikouiti Mission Station in the late 1840s as a lay preacher and his diary which covers this period of his life is held in the

Methodist Archives. (See Touchstone May 2007).

Narrowing the parameters of the search to the name 'Thomas Ferens' and dates between 1848 when he arrived in New Zealand, and 1885 when he died, 34 references to his name in articles could be located using the Optical Character Recognition programme. Two Otago papers have been digitised in Papers Past with this software – the Otago Witness and North Otago Times.

One reference was for Thomas Ferens' participation in the laying of the Wesleyan Trinity Church foundation stone in Dunedin in 1869. The article even included a list of what went in the time capsule laid below the stone.

Another reference was to a court case in 1876. Thomas Ferens' daughter Sophia was assaulted, and the court case

was reported very fully in the pages of the North Otago Times.

As well as searching by name or phrase, complete issues of all newspapers on the site can be browsed. It is possible to enter a date and a newspaper (that has been digitised), and read the complete issue. This is particularly helpful when looking for context – to show what else was going on at the same time.

While researchers are looking forward to more newspapers being added to the Papers Past site, and being able to look at them in the comfort of their own homes, microfilms of historic newspapers can still be viewed throughout New Zealand, not just at the National Library, but at local public libraries.

However, the National Library's on line resources are truly inspiring.

## Ko e Popoaki 'Ofa Meihe Faifekau Sea

Rev Setaita TKinahoi Veikune

'Oku ou tomu'a fakafeta'i ki he 'Otua 'i He'ene tauhi'ofa 'oku fai ma'a tautolu 'o tau tū'uta lelei mai ai ki he 2009. Kaungā kalisitiane 'oku ou faka'amu pē ke u tomu'a fakahoko 'a'eku fakafeta'i lahi ki he 'Otua 'i He'ene tokoni mo tataki kuo fai ma'ae Vahefonua Tonga 'o Aotearoa talu hono tanupou. Ko e ngāue mālō kuo fuesia 'e Rev Kilifi Heimuli talu meihe kamata'anga 'i hono lotua mo

ngāue'i 'o e Vahefonua Tonga pea pehē ki he Kaungāsea Tevita Finau 'i he ta'u 'e tolu kuo maliu atu. 'Oku tau fakamālō foki ki he faifatongia 'a e Sekelitali Rev Hausia Taufu'i pea mo e Tauhi Pa'anga, Paula Taumoepeau, pea mo kimoutolu kotoa 'a e kau faifekau mo e ngaahi kaingalotu..

'Oku tau kaungā fononga 'i he mahina ni mo 'eku lotu mo kole ke hiki mu'a 'a'etau

fakahoko fatongiá 'o tñaki atu kiai 'eni: (a) ko e ngaahi fatongia fakalaumälie, akofakafaifekau mo e ngāue fakafaifekau mo e kau setuata (e) fakapapau'i 'a e tükunga mo e tu'unga takitaha 'o e käingalotu Tonga mo e peulisi 'oku nau takitaha kau kiai. (f) fakapapau'i 'a e tükunga mo e tu'unga 'o e käingalotu mo e Peulisi Tonga kotoa pē mo 'ene fekau'aki mo e Vahefonua Tongá.

'Oku matu'aki pau ke hoko atu 'a'etau felotu'aki mo ngaue fepoupou'aki., pea 'oku ou faka'amu pē 'e lahi ange 'a e feohi 'a kitautolu 'a e kau faifekau mo e kau setuata, pea fakalahilahi 'etau feloongoaki 'i ha'aku 'a'ahi atu mo 'etau kau taki.

Fakatauange ke tau fe'iloaki fiefia mo ma'u ha feohi lelei 'i he ngaahi lotu, ako mo e fakataha 'a e Vahefonua Tongá meihe

Tu'apulelulu 19 'o e mahina ni (Ako 'a e Kau Faifekau), Ako 'a e kau Fakamafai ke fakahoko 'o e ongo Sakalameniti, Falaite 20 Kakai Fefine, mo e Vahefonua Kakato meihe Falaite ki he Sapate 20 – 22 Fepueli. Manatua aipē he ngaahi feingalotu mo e ngaahi ma'ungakelesi ke 'ohake ki he 'Otua 'a e Vahefonua Tonga.

## Fakataha Lahi Vahefonua Tonga

'Oku fakamanatu atu 'a e fakataha lahi 'a e Vahefonua Tonga 'o e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'u Silá ní 'oku kamata he Falaite 'aho 20 ki he Sapate 'aho 22 'o Fepueli 2009. Ko e fakatahá ni 'oku fakahoko pē ki he feitu'u maheni 'aia ko e 'Apisiasi ko Lotofale'ia, 34 Orly Avenue, Mangere.

Ko e 'uuni me'a mahu'inga 'eni 'oku kole atu ke fai ha tokanga 'aupito kiai:

1. **Ako 'a e Kau Faifekau**  
'E fakahoko 'a e Polokalama Ako, mo Feohi 'a e kau Faifekau Tonga kotoa pē he 'aho Tu'apulelulu 19 Fepueli meihe 9.00am – 4.30pm ki Tokaima'ananga, Otara. Ko e polokalama ako ko 'eni 'oku tatau pe 'a hono mahu'inga mo e Fakataha Vahefonua Fakafaifekau. Koia ai 'oku matu'aki fiema'u ke ma'u 'ehe faifekau Tonga kotoa pē.

2. **Ako 'a e Kau Fakamafai Sakalameniti**

'E kamata he 6.00pm 'o e Tu'apulelulu aipē 'i Tokaima'ananga aipē 'a e Polokalama Ako ma'ae kau malanga 'oku fakamafai' i ki hono fakahoko 'o e ongo Sakalameniti 'o e Papitaiso mo e 'Ohomohe. Ko kimoutolu kotoa pē 'oku kau ki he kau fakamafai ke mou kätaki 'o feinga mai kiai. 'Oku kau 'a'etau pole ki he ngaue fakasetuata pe malanga ki he feilaulau' i 'o hotau ngaahi fatongia 'e ni'ihí 'i he taimi 'oku ui ai kitautolu 'ehe siasi mo e Vahefonua ke fai hotau fakakoloa., tatau aipē pe ko e hä 'a e fuolua hono fakamafai' i kitautolu mo tau taukei fēfē. Fakatokanga' i ange ko kinautolu pē 'e kau kakato ki he polokalama ako ko 'eni ko kinautolu pē ia 'e foaki 'a'enua tohi fakamafai 'ehe konifelenisi mo fakangofua ke nau kei fakahoko 'a e ongo ouau toputapu ko 'eni. 'Oku lele hokohoko

pe he ta'u 'a e Polokalama Ako ko'eni.

3. **Fakataha 'a e Vahefonua Tonga 'a e Kakai Fefine**

'Oku tu'ulāhoko pē 'a ho'omou fakataha he taimi pau 'oku mou maheni kiai he ho'atā Falaite 20 Fepueli ki Lotofale'ia. 'Oku 'osi fetu'utaki atu pē ho'omou sekelitali ki ho'omou fakataha.

4. **Ngaahi Fakamatala pe Lipooti Fakasiasi**

Mou kätaki mu'a 'a kinautolu 'oku fatu 'a e ngaahi fakamatala mo e ngaahi lipooti 'o feinga' i mai hano tatau fakakomipiuta (electronic). Ko e lelei taha ke kamata 'a e fakamatala mei Siulai 2008 'o ngata mai ki Sanuali 2009, pea 'omai ai 'a ho'omou kau ma'u lakanga mo ho'omou ngaahi fiema'u. Ko e ngaahi fokotu'u ke fakapapau' i ko e ngaahi fokotu'u pē ne 'osi tali 'ehe fakataha'anga kuata pe ma'olunga 'oku kau kiai 'a homou kaingalotū. Manatu' i 'a e ngaahi pepa ne 'osi tufa atu he fakatah kuo 'osí 'e fai hono tu'utu'uni aofangatuku pe 'ikai he fakataha ko'eni.

5. Ko e tu'asila ke lī mai kiai 'a ho'omou ngaahi fakamatalá ko e Sekelitali Vahefonua Tonga, 2 Leadley Lane, Tawa, Wellington 5028. Ka 'ikai ia pea ko e email ko e tfinau@gmail.com; pe ko e fax ko e (04) 2327783. Mou kätaki 'o feinga' i mai 'a e ngaahi lipooti ke u ma'u he 'aho 13 'o Fepueli 'o 'oua na'a tömui ange ai. Ko e tokolahi 'o e kau ma'u fakataha takitaha meihe kaingalotu 'e fiema'u ke mou lesisita mai 'o ngata 1.00pm 'o e Falaite 13 Fepueli 'o tatau pē 'a e lalahi mo e iiki pea pehē ki he fakafofonga kakato mo e fakakaume'a.

Ko 'eku 'u fika telefoni ko e (04) 232 8486 (h); (04) 2327759 (w); 0272314678 (m).

## 'Oku 'iai 'a e me'a mahu'inga 'oku 'ikai ke 'iloa. (Tohi Ngaue 19:1-7)

Fai 'ehe Faifekau Sea Rev. Tevita Kilifi Heimuli

'Oku femo'uekina 'ae Siasi Metotisi 'ihe fokotu'utu'u 'ae ngaahi akenga pe ko e fa'unga ke fakafotunga'aki'ae siasi mo hono kakai 'ihe kaha'u vave mai Pea ko e liliu fotunga lahi eni ka hoko mei he ngaahi me'a 'oku tau maheni ki ai, hange ko e fakapekia 'ae Komiti kihe Ngaue faka-faifekau ( Committee on

Ministry.)kae fetongi'aki 'ae Komisiona ke ne fai 'ae ngaue ni. Pea kau atu ki he ngaahi fokotu'utu'u liliu fotunga ko eni 'ae tali'ae Gay mo e Lesbian, kau fakasotoma ke nau taki ngaue 'ihe siasi, pea teu' i kinautolu mei he 'Api ako fakateologia 'ae siasi...(Trinity Theological College.)

'Oku kau foki 'ihe ngaahi me'a 'oku fai ki ai 'ae laulea 'ae fokotu'utu'u ke holoki hifo 'ae lahi 'oe ngaahi Vahe Fonua ( Sinoti) 'o fakataha' i atu ngaahi vahe fonua ke taha pe. 'Oku 'iai 'ae ngaahi 'uhinga kehekehe 'oku fai'aki 'ae liliu ni, ka tau vakai mu'a ki he ola 'oe Tohi Kakai kuo toki hili atu, ki he holo lahi 'ae toko lahi 'oe kakai lotu Metotisi..

Ko e toko lahi taha ko e Siasi 'Ingilani, hoko hake ki ai 'ae Katolika, pea fika tolu hake 'ae Siasi Pelesipita ia. Ko e ngaahi siasi ko ia 'oku nau tu'u fefeka he'enua Tokateline pea 'ikai ke nau tali 'ae fakasotoma.

Ko e 'uuni me'a kuo u lave ki ai 'i 'olunga ko e konga pe ia 'oe ngaahi me'a 'oku hoko he siasi,

Kapau ko Kalaisi 'oku 'Ulu 'ihe siasi; ko e ha 'oku fotunga pehe ai 'ae siasi ia? Ko e taha 'ae ngaahi me'a 'oku ne uesia 'ae fa'unga 'oe siasi Metotisi ko e fakahu mai 'ae Lao 'oe Totonu 'ae Tangata ke ngaue'aki 'ehe siasi kae tuku 'ae

Konisitutone (Lao) 'ae siasi na'e tuku'au mai meia Sione Uesile ki hotau kuonga maama lusa ni.

Tangata Tonga mo e fefine Tonga lotu Metotisi, tu'u ke ma'u 'ia Kalaisi Sisu, mo'ui ai, fou ai, langa hake ai pea fai mo e fa'a fakafeta' i. Pea tau feinga kitautolu ke tau ngaue fakataha mo talaki



Rev. Tevita Kilifi Heimuli.

'ae Ongoongo Lelei 'o Sisu Kalaisi 'i Aotearoa ni. Pea ko e me'a tepu ko e 'iate kitautolu 'ae 'Eiki ke Ne fai hotau tatakai. 'Oku fiema'u leva ke tau ma'u 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni ke nofo'ia 'etau mo'ui pea ha hono fua 'ihe 'etau lea, ngaue mo e fakakaukau he ko e me'a ia 'oku 'ikai ke

'iloa 'ihe kau Taki toko lahi 'oe Metotisi. Ko e ha 'ae Folofola 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni ki he Siasi?

Ko e kau ako 'i 'Efeso, na'a nau 'ilo pe ki he papitaiso 'i hono fai 'e Sione pea na'e te'eki ai ke nau ma'u 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni. Ko e me'a ia na'e 'ikai ke 'iloa 'ihe 'enua mo'ui, pea te'eki ai ke nau a'usia. Ko ia na'e papitaiso kinautolu 'ehe 'Apositolo ko Paula ki he huafa 'o Sisu pea 'ihe hilifaki 'e Paula hono nima kiate kinautolu pea hoko mai 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni kiate kinautolu pea nau kamata lea 'aki 'ae ngaahi lea kehekehe mo palofisai.

Si'oku kaunga Pilikimi 'ihe 'Eiki; kuo 'osi 'i mamani 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni pea ko e me'a fakafotuitui 'a hono tali; ka 'o ka fa'ofale 'ae Laumalie Ma'oni'oni 'ihe 'etau mo'ui pea 'e ha hono fua 'ihe to'onga mo'ui 'ae kakai 'oe siasi. Tokanga ke 'oua na'a mole 'ae me'a ni mei he 'etau mo'ui. /Emeni.

## MCNZ General Secretary looks ahead

From Page 2.

*"As Methodists we want to see that our understanding of the Gospel and God's relationship with us as one of generosity and openness is part of new ecumenical projects.*

"The other contribution we bring as Methodists is our tradition of social and political activism. Methodists were involved in the earliest unions and in the anti-apartheid movement. Today this includes the movement to support social

justice regarding human sexuality.

"Less than a generation ago, the vast majority of people held the view that anything other than heterosexuality was somehow wrong. Now science, medicine and more recently theology have shown us that this is not necessarily the case. Sexuality is a continuum and people are naturally at different places along that continuum.

"The Methodist Church of New Zealand has opted to order its life

according to the Human Rights Act, which opposes discrimination on the basis sexuality among other things. Therefore sexual orientation should not be a ban or barrier to ordination," David says.

"As in every issue where there is a profound difference of opinion, we are committed to actively dialog and listen on this topic."

David says the key issue for the Church is to allow people to experience

the transformational love of God and that means presenting the good news in ways younger generations can hear and relate to. That is something we as Methodists understand from our beginnings in the risky boundary breaking ministry of John and Charles Wesley.

"If I can help the church take risks in mission, then I will be well pleased," he concludes.