

Church investment funds in good heart despite downturn

Greg points out that in September the Official Cash Rate (OCR) was 8.0 percent. Now it is 3.5 percent, and there is talk it will drop to 2.5 percent. Bank deposit rates have followed the cash rate down. This affects both the individuals who belong to the Church and the Church's own investments. "From the MTA's perspective, back in August we could see a correction was coming so we locked in our Income Funds investments for two to three years at higher interest rates. While the distribution rates from the Income Fund will track down a bit, this year we expect them to be 1.5 times higher than the OCR. The OCR is currently at 3.5 percent and we expect the

June 2008 it gave an average annual return of more than 16 percent. This compares to an average annual return of 10 percent, which was the benchmark for large investment funds such as superannuation schemes. "Fortunately the Growth and Income Fund is well diversified and has virtually no exposure to the Collateralized Debt Obligations (CDOs) and mortgage-backed funds that are now returning 50 cents on the dollar. "Nevertheless, we are looking at a loss of 6 to 7 percent for Growth and Income this year. We will not know the exact degree of loss for the year until June. The means anyone who wants to withdraw funds

before June is subject to a 10 percent withholding until the final evaluation is done." The drop in the Growth and Income Funds puts it back to the point that it is two years ago. Though it is a significant dip, Greg says the world's stock exchanges are now looking at reductions of 20 to 40 percent. "Over the long term we expect returns to Growth and Income to be positive. The Church cannot gain the benefits that are available from the commercial world without suffering the reversals that sometimes occur. In a context where many investors have seen their capital completely lost or seriously depleted, the Church's funds are in very good heart."

Greg says for more than a decade the Growth and Income Fund's performance has been "riotous". In the nine years to

Trinity College has hit the ground running in 2009. The College has inducted its new principal, Rev Dr David Bell; the newly established Trinity College Council has drafted a strategic plan; new ordination students have gathered from around the country; a lay education programme is set to commence; and the diploma in Practical Theology, closed last year, is once again being taught.

Trinity College manager Nicola Grundy says for those in the ordination programme the academic year always begins with an orientation programme. This year the orientation programme began with a covenant service followed by a trip to Northland with members of Te Taha Maori. On the February 5th, three Trinity College staff members, David, Nicola and Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta, 10 ordination students and three Te Taha Maori members, Tumuaki Diana Tana, Lana Lazarus and Bella Ngaha, travelled to Paihia, Bay of Islands. There the students engaged in an in-depth discussion with members of Te Taha Maori before participating in the events surrounding Waitangi Day. This was to give students a better understanding of the role Methodist missionaries played in the signing of the Treaty and help them understand our history from the perspective of Te Taha Maori. The group attended the Waitangi celebrations on February 6th. The following day they left Paihia and passed through Kawakawa and Moerewa on the way to Pakaraka Church, a historical Anglican settlement in the eastern



Accompanied by members of Te Taha Maori, Trinity College students and staff visited Manguku Mission Station (left) and Waitangi. On Waitangi Day Te Taha Maori Tumuaki Rev Diana Tana led prayers during the ecumenical service (right).

They continued on through Kaikohe onto Horeke Road arriving at Manguku. After spending time at Manguku they travelled back through Horeke Road to Taheke where they viewed the site that used to be the deaconess cottage. From Taheke they moved on to visit the Waima Oak then carried on through Omanaia, Rawene, Whirinaki, Pakanui and ending at Opononi. "On our way home to Paihia we made a brief stop in Kaikohe to debrief about our experiences, impressions and theological understandings. On Sunday 8th February we shared in worship at Paihia and Russell." Nicola says.

This was not the first time Trinity College had attended the Waitangi celebrations but it was the first time students and staff have gone further than Waitangi to the important Methodist sites in the Hokianga. A highlight was the visit to Manguku, a Wesleyan mission station and settlement in the eastern

New governing board charts Trinity College future

A responsive, flexible and sustainable learning environment that prepares 200 to 300 people a year for lay, deaconate and presbyterial ministry in the Methodist Church. This is the vision Trinity Methodist Theological College has for itself and it aims to achieve it by 2011.

At Conference 2008 the Methodist Church reconstituted the Trinity College Council to be the board of oversight for Trinity College. Building on work that had taken place before Conference, and prior developments, the Council has drafted a strategic plan that lays out the direction the College will take over the next two years.

A key element in the strategic plan is to develop contemporary theological and ministry training programmes that can be taught at a number of locations around Aotearoa/New Zealand. This includes programmes designed to meet the needs of Maori and Pacific people in this country. The strategic plan's other goals are to partner with various theological training providers as well as synods and parishes to deliver those programmes, and to provide fair financial support to those enrolled in the programmes. Trinity College Council chair Catherine Gibson says the strategic plan aims to create a nation-wide

Methodist "learning environment" rather than narrowing the emphasis to training at Auckland campuses.

"The training can take place anywhere. Trinity College will negotiate partnerships with local parishes and other trainers around the country. "We are using the image of a learning environment to get away from the idea that Trinity College is 'that place in Auckland that trains 10 presbyters a year'. Though distance learning will be an important part of the programme, you cannot do everything at distance. It is very important to retain face-to-face work and that is why partnerships with parishes will be an important part of Trinity College's efforts."

Among the programmes Trinity College will continue to promote and develop are Lead Worship courses for lay leaders, and courses taught through the Ecumenical Institute of Distance Theological Studies (EIDTS). The College will also look at strengthening partnerships with the University of Auckland's School of Theology and the Anglican Church's St John's Theological College. "Trinity College has a commitment to working with others where possible and feasible and to fulfilling its ecumenical commitments."

Although Trinity College's Meadowbank campus will continue to be its base, the notion of a learning environment means it will offer courses at parishes and other sites around the country. "We must also ensure the College has a good capital base and that we have financial systems for students that are fair to all. Re-establishing the Trinity College Council is a good opportunity to look at how cost-effective financial systems are and whether they are meeting the needs of students," Catherine says. Trinity College principal, Rev Dr David Bell is now consulting with other Pacific leaders in the Church to get an idea of how the College can best meet the needs of their communities. Catherine says the college appointed Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta to its teaching staff last year, and he has brought a depth of knowledge about Pacific peoples' perspectives on theology and ministry. When Trinity College's Ministry Training Unit closed last year, the diploma programme in Practical Theology it delivered was suspended. This year the college has reinstated the diploma and attaining it will be part of the ministry training of all new Methodist presbyters. Currently Trinity College's strategic plan for 2009-2011 has the status of a working paper. All groups within the Methodist Church will have a chance to comment on it over the next two months before it is finalised.

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A Touch Of Class

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Annie will be serving supper on Friday evening. Her beautiful food and excellent presentation will make this evening a must. Half of the net proceeds from the Sale will be donated to the Canterbury Charity Trust Hospital.

If you wish to make a donation of high quality linen or china, please contact Pat League on 351-8814.

Visit to Methodism's NZ birthplace chance to explore Treaty



Accompanied by members of Te Taha Maori, Trinity College students and staff visited Manguku Mission Station (left) and Waitangi. On Waitangi Day Te Taha Maori Tumuaki Rev Diana Tana led prayers during the ecumenical service (right).

Hokianga that operated from 1828 to 1855. It was at this site that many Hokianga chiefs gathered to sign the Treaty, more than at Waitangi. David says Trinity College staff and students were privileged to be part of a four day event and to share Diana and Lana's personal stories and insights. Nicola noted, "We came away feeling that we had shared in a very special experience. For many of the Trinity College community this was the first

occasion, and we gained a greater awareness of the role of the Church and the Treaty. How do we acknowledge our role looking to the future? Next year, is the 170th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Weteriana has had an important role in the past; we need to be there in the future. It is our intention to be at both Waitangi and Manguku in 2010.



where the Spirit is aflame

Are you interested in leading worship? Are you a lay preacher looking for new ideas?

Trinity College is offering you the opportunity to join with students of the college for a Lead Worship Year One programme. This is the first time we have been able to offer this programme in the Trinity College programme in the Auckland area with a Trinity College tutor.

The programme is a 13 week programme, to be held at Pitt Street Methodist Church and being led by Rev Dr Lynne Frith. The first session begins on 2nd March 2009.

COST: \$5.00 per week

TO REGISTER: Contact Marissa Alix

Phone: 09 521 2073 or email: malix@stjohns.auckland.ac.nz

Semester 1 - 2009 Background reading topic

2-March	Intro to the Lead Worship Year 1
9-March	Profile of a worship leader
16-March	The spirituality of the worship leader
23-March	Prayers in worship
30-March	Music in worship
6-April	Inter-semester break
13-April	Inter-semester break
20-April	Children in worship
27-April	Resources of the church year in worship
4-May	Images of God used in worship
11-May	Adults who worship
18-May	Using multi-media creatively in worship
25-May	Theology in worship
1-June	Queens Birthday
8-June	Worship as practical pastoral
15-June	Review



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It's not all about us

To the editor,
I was encouraged this week to see several articles in the February edition of Touchstone relating to the environment, focusing particularly on Walk for the Planet. The global ecological crisis is indeed one of the defining issues of our time, and the church must engage in it. Jim Stuart is right that "the realities [of the global ecological crisis] should challenge Christians to re-examine the key operative theological assumptions about God and our Christian practice that continue to permit the destruction of the earth."
Jim rightly points out that we need a broader understanding of the interdependence between the present generation, the earth and future generations. Though the worldview he describes may be more enlightened than one focusing on the salvation of individual souls, it still leaves humans at the centre.
Through the current ecological crisis, God is calling us to a deeper re-examination of the scriptures. The Bible shows that the earth belongs to God and was created to glorify God. It is not ours, and was not made primarily for our benefit. Ecologists say it

would be possible for us to engineer a world with many fewer species yet still able to sustain a sizeable human population. In other words, if kakapo, kiwi, snow leopard or golden-rumped elephant shrew went extinct we could still survive. But how then would "the Lord rejoice in His works" (Psalm 104:31)?
The environmental movement struggles to articulate a worldview that values species apart from their use to humans yet, without this worldview, ecosystems will continue to be degraded. Because we recognise a Creator who loves his creation, Christians are in a unique position to offer a coherent environmental ethic that gives value to all creatures.

To do this, we need to remember we live among a myriad of creatures that were all declared good by their Creator (Gen 1), and recapture a vision of God's kingdom that includes a restoration of all that God made (Col 1:20). Only then will we realise the goal Jim Stuart describes, and become the agents of reconciliation that God has called us to be.
Richard Storey, Chair, A Rocha Aotearoa NZ

Garden variety community building

our house. A near neighbour has taken up the idea and she puts out a box when she too has extra vegetables.

Last autumn a lady along the street presented us with a jar of feijoa jam, which she had made with our fruit, saying she was going to do what we were doing. A month ago there was a note in our letter box accompanying six eggs from another neighbour.
There are now more smiles in our street, a tiny help in these straightening times. These days produce more opportunities for strengthening communities don't they?
Vera Dickinson, Motueka

Challenging family

working overtime to feed the desperate hungry of the world.
The young reporter scribbled away in shorthand and Monday morning's newspaper had a headline: 'Minister of Church hammers minister of Crown'. It was spread around the country by the Press Association and shook Parliament too.
I expressed my excitement at work on Monday morning but was told Les was just an ex-jailbird. I was very confused until I realised why.
Yes the Clements family were and are truly wonderful people.
John Miller, Christchurch

refer to Kevin Clements becoming the chair of Peace Studies at Otago University. I will never forget his father Les Clements preaching at Central Methodist Church, Invercargill.
My late father Fred Miller MBE was New Zealand's longest serving journalist and he had brought a cub reporter to church that Sunday. In his service, Les quoted a minister of the Crown who claimed that New Zealand's consumption figures were evidence of the goodness and prosperity of the country. Les delivered a powerful challenge to that, claiming the real goodness in New Zealand should be seen in our primary industries

Write a letter to Touchstone!



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WE TOLD YOU SO!

Financial crisis stirs visions of a better global economy

By John Roberts
Secretary
Mission and Ecumenical

will return to protecting their industrial and agricultural sectors. They may have generated a lot of words, but there was little action in response. The Doha round looks increasingly doomed to failure.

BELEM – a city in the Amazonian rainforest of Brazil that was host to the World Social Forum (WSF) held 27 January to 1 February. The WSF is the face of the world's anti economic globalisation movement. It meets in different places each year. With unrestricted entry some 100,000 people from 150 countries attended Belem, participating in events under the theme of 'Another World is Possible. The WSF was timed to coincide with the WEF's meeting in Davos so alternative views could be put before the world.

At Belem the presidents of Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay put the blame for the worldwide economic turbulence on developed international capital flows, an international monetary system based on regional reserve currencies, citizens' control of banks and financial institutions, progressive taxation schemes both at national and international levels, prohibition of speculative funds and non-regulated markets, eradication of speculation on primary products including food, and elimination of tax havens.

It was proposed that a reformed and democratised United Nations put reform of the financial system at the centre of its work. Belem also recognised that the crisis is not just financial. There are multiple crises affecting the environment, social and political structures, food and energy supplies. Rogate believes that in pressing for reforms at different levels, civil society organisations and churches around the world have a lot to contribute.

NZ Fijians send relief to flood-affected towns

Head of the Methodist Church's Fijian Advisory Committee (Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi) Rev Peni Tikoinaka went to Fiji last month to be on hand when a shipment of relief supplies arrived in Suva.

The supplies consisted of clothing donated by the Hornby/Riccarton Methodist Parish and books donated by Riccarton High School. They were destined for Peni's own village of Nasautoka, outside of Suva.

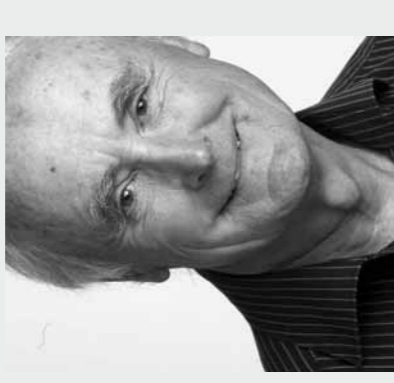
Although the worst of the severe flooding took place in the western part of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu, eastern areas were also hit. Peni says Nasautoka is near a river and though he has seen it rise many times he has never seen it reach the heights it reached in January. Two girls from the village were killed in a mudslide during the torrential rains.

"People gardens have been destroyed so their first priority will be to replant them," Peni says. "We are very grateful to the people of Hornby/Riccarton parish and Riccarton for the generosity," Peni says. Fijian Methodists in other parts of the country also gathered money and supplies for people displaced by the flooding. Mission and Ecumenical secretary Rev John Roberts says two containers loads of non-perishable food, clothing and school supplies were sent from Auckland with Mission and Ecumenical paying the freight costs.

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The 'new' New Zealand

By Ron Gibson



It has been a great privilege to participate in several induction services in different parts of the country. However, at every point in the experience, I have been vividly reminded of the demographic transformation which characterizes contemporary New Zealand.

One of the most dramatic changes that has taken place in recent times in New Zealand is the influx of new migrants from the central Pacific – Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Niue, Rotuma, and Vanuatu in particular. In addition, and even more recently, there has been an influx of peoples from South East Asia – Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong to name but a few. Others have come from Zimbabwe or South Africa or Sri Lanka as refugees from violence and political persecution.

While some have come as political refugees, others have come out of economic despair, some have come in the hope that New Zealand will provide better opportunities for their children, better health care, and new hope for a better future.

But as with all migrants, they bring with them their culture, and behaviour. Yet our new citizens remind us that there is a multiplicity of world views and a multiplicity of spiritual journeys to be followed. In a Church which is more multi-cultural and diverse than at any other time in its history in Aotearoa, we are becoming more interdependent than ever before. In a sense we are travelling towards the vision of the prophets and psalmists of ancient Israel and subsequently the early Christian vision of a time when people of all languages and nations would be gathered together into a united family. Embracing new

theologies, new cultural norms and a global perspective enables us to become world citizens who live for the well-being of all humanity. This Church is charged with making that vision happen. An inclusive Church welcomes all regardless of ethnicity, language or cultural norms. It does not seek to make us all alike – either to think alike, or behave alike, or worship alike. But at the end of the day we all stand together in acknowledging the centrality of Jesus Christ and in sharing the compassion and limitless love which is there for all of us.

We all have a place at the table. Mission and Ecumenical secretary Rev John Roberts says two containers loads of non-perishable food, clothing and school supplies were sent from Auckland with Mission and Ecumenical paying the freight costs.



Kids Friendly churches open arms to families

By Cory Miller
Making churches friendly and inviting for children is one of the initiatives the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand is using to reverse the country's rapid decline in church attendance.

In 2004 eight Auckland churches worked under the guidance of Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser to develop the 'Kids Friendly' best practice standard. "Together we explored what it meant to be Kids Friendly, why and how it should be," says Jill Kayser. The pilot project was a success and now 39 Presbyterian and United congregations across the country bear the Kids Friendly label. Another 47 are working towards Kids Friendly status.

The initiative was the direct response to research that found New Zealanders respond positively to churches who intentionally connect with and serve their communities. The Presbyterian Church felt that a focus on children was something missing from many of its churches. "The 2006 census found that 50 percent of the population identifies as Christian, yet Church statistics have found that only five percent of the population attends church. This suggests that a potential 45 percent of our population is interested in the Christian message but are disillusioned with the institutional church," says Jill.

Kids Friendly provides resources so churches can minister effectively to children and families, and thereby increase their exposure

and participation in the Christian faith.

Jill says there are many reasons to provide a Kids Friendly environment. God's Kingdom of heaven belongs to the young and Jesus commands us to let the children come to him and be taught about God's love. Children can also be amongst our greatest teachers. They have honesty and love for life that brings freshness to our lives and congregations.

"It is vital to intentionally minister to children and teach them through example because without them there will be no future church. Research shows that people are most likely to come to faith between the ages of five and 13. Therefore the earlier an investment is made in children's ministry the greater will be the rewards. Children must be empowered to make a difference in the world by letting them have a voice.

"Everyday, not just Sundays, offers opportunities to share faith and create a sense of belonging where young and old alike are valued. "Churches committed to children's ministry and community outreach will discover continual growth, as they dream new dreams enabling them to reach out to secular New Zealand."

The process of becoming Kids Friendly starts with a contract, although there is no single way of being a Kids Friendly church. The initiative is not prescriptive. Rather it is a guide to equip churches to



Top: Pip Kayser (left) breaks bread at a St Heliers service. With her are Allison Bliss, Fran Sawtell, and Rev Pauline Stewart.

Prayers for worms, pets & parents at kids-centred service

By Cory Miller

Beneath the warm summer sun, upon the bright green of Dingle Dell Reserve in St Heliers Bay, Auckland young and old gathered last month to share in the park-day worship led by Rev Pauline Stewart.

The Kids Friendly congregation of St Heliers Church and Community Centre believes in the vital contribution children and their families offer. Children were included in all aspects of the service and had the freedom to participate and express themselves.

Located near the heart of Auckland, St Heliers Presbyterian Church caters to the needs of its urban community. Pauline avidly supports the Kids Friendly programme, and her passion for children is evident in the rapport she has with the young people.

The mission statement of St Heliers is

'Reaching out and welcoming in' and the congregation acts it out by making welcome every child of God.

Eighteen years ago St Heliers was a quiet urban church with unfulfilled potential. It has now evolved into the Biblical ideal of a church as a source of hospitality and service, recreating the medieval image of a church at the centre, where all roads converge.

Today the church is now a bustling hive of activity with 31 employed staff, numerous volunteers and 60,000 people coming through annually. More than 70 programmes are offered through the church, as well as pastoral care and support to meet the needs of the community.

"St Heliers could not exist without the commitment, prayers, faith and generosity of those people who provide the backbone of our church," says St Heliers elder and

Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser. Church worship lies at the heart of the church's mission, yet for many worship can be inaccessible. Therefore St Heliers seeks to provide meaningful worship through a variety of services. These include preschool "tea party" church and teenage 'rock cafe' church.

The congregation's 9am service developed with a Kids Friendly focus. It is a growing event that is intergenerational and creates relationships between young and old. The worshipping congregation and those in contact with St Heliers through other aspects of the community centre are able to converge at this service. Despite its chaotic appearance – with children set loose, late arrivals and unpredictable music – it is a fun-filled event that is inclusive of everyone.

See Page 7

Food bank partnership delivers the goods

An exciting new partnership arrangement between LIFEWISE and the Waitakere Methodist Parish showcases the former Methodist Mission Northern's unique approach to supporting local initiatives in the community.

For 14 years, the LIFEWISE Centre food bank service has supported families in response to requests from government and community agencies, and from individuals directly. The LIFEWISE Community Services team reviewed the service in September 2008, and, in keeping with LIFEWISE's forward-looking objectives, decided the service model needed to be transformed to ensure those in need were catered to effectively and efficiently.

To achieve best results for those receiving food parcels, the review team recommended that a partnership be formed with the Waitakere Methodist Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach. The Outreach service provides around 1700 food parcels per year via an established home-delivery system, so it was the ideal partner for LIFEWISE. The food bank is now operated wholly from the Waitakere Methodist Parish, and the Parish continues to support existing LIFEWISE clients. In turn, LIFEWISE provides an annual grant to cover the costs involved.

What makes the Waitakere Community Outreach distinctive is that it delivers food parcels directly into the homes of clients, supplying food essentials to individuals and families who may not have access to transport. Delivery drivers are committed parishioner volunteers. They are also a friendly face and often make a client's day.

The collaboration has also created an important link between LIFEWISE and parish-based activities, a focus LIFEWISE would like to further develop to ensure the wider needs that lead people to the food bank are being addressed.

LIFEWISE and the Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach will review the service going forward, and the future alliance could potentially include an affiliated social worker to maximise the current services, something the parish has been unable to offer up until now. LIFEWISE community services general manager John McCarthy says, "The expertise of a shared social worker between the two services would improve the quality of life of many existing clients by ensuring the things that lead people to need food bank support in the first place are being focused on and managed. Our commitment is to turning lives around and creating independence - step one has been the collaboration with the Waitakere Methodist Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach, which we are thrilled about, and step two will ascertain how we can further develop our partnership with this parish initiative."

Parish superintendent Kenneth Smith says "The working relationship with LIFEWISE has been a positive move for the Waitakere Community Outreach. Expanding the client base with the LIFEWISE contacts has certainly strengthened the outreach programme. We enthusiastically look forward to possible new developments with LIFEWISE in the future."



From left: LIFEWISE Centre service manager Corie Haddock, Victor Davies, Helen Smith, LIFEWISE general manager community services John McCarthy, Waitakere Parish superintendent Rev Kenneth Smith.

St Heliers Kids Friendly

From Page 6

children pray the best prayers we have ever heard uttered within these walls. Their prayers are full of simple hope and trust, and the needs of siblings, parents, teachers, things in the news and themselves. Listening to the children can be one of those this-is-why-we're-doing-it moments," says Jill.

As St Heliers' worship at Dingle Dell Reserve, a statement stood out that summarised simply the spirit of outreach that is central to the congregation's mission.

"Welcome people, welcome young and old. Share the love, enjoy each other. God's love is present in the love of other people."

Activities at St Heliers are not limited to Sunday. Every day of the week is full of programmes. The staff aim to integrate the culture and identity of the Christian Gospel into all community activities.

"Small miracles" is a pre-school programme developed in response to the need young families have for high quality early childhood care and education. Each day it includes an opportunity for children to stand in a circle with their teachers to say grace and to pray. "Among the prayers for ants, worms and assorted household pets, I have heard these



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Water the world's next crisis?

In launching Lenten worship resources for World Water Day 2009 Christian World Service is inviting congregations to reflect together on the vital part water plays in our lives and the right of all people to safe water.

The United Nations observes World Water Day on March 22 and this year is focusing on "Shared Waters - Shared Opportunities". The theme explores the rivers and lakes that are shared by two or more countries.

Nearly 40 percent of the world's population depends on trans-boundary water sources. Underneath the surface of the earth there are over 270 known trans-boundary aquifers. Many countries are facing increasing scarcity of water and unless greater efforts are made these trans-boundary waterways could spark greater conflict. The UN estimates that by 2025, 1800 million people will be living in countries and regions facing absolute water scarcity and two-thirds of the world's population could be living under stressed conditions.

Many of CWS's partners are working to protect water and ensure that water is managed in such a way that every person has what they need to survive.

The worship material entitled "For there is no food and no water" explores the experience of the Israelites struggling to survive in the wilderness and some of the concerns of these partners.

It is available from the CWS website: www.cws.org.nz or cws@cws.org.nz. CWS also has the documentary, Water, who owns it? available in VHS and DVD format. This highlights the struggle for poor people seeking to secure a safe and adequate water supply.

NEW WEBSITE CONNECTS KIWI CHRISTIAN ARTISTS

Contemporary Christian artists often find themselves isolated. Often their churches don't understand their art, and the art world doesn't understand their faith.

For more than a decade the Chrysalis Seed Trust has been trying to overcome this isolation. It has supported kiwi Christian artists and promoted their cause in the wider arts community.

The Trust provides resources, information, and inspiration for the contemporary arts community, especially artists who follow Christ. It helps organise exhibitions of their work, encourages networks and prayer groups, and has established an extensive art and faith library at its offices in the Christchurch Arts Centre.

Now Chrysalis Seed is shedding its skin and moving onto a different stage in its life.

For eight years, the Trust published the bi-monthly magazine CS Arts. The magazine carried essays, interviews with artists, and exhibition reviews. It had a circulation of 3200 and went out to artists, galleries and art schools nationwide.

The October 2008 edition of CS Arts was its last. In its place Chrysalis Seed Trust has developed a website (www.cs.org.nz) that organisers hope will generate a grassroots movement of Christian artists around New Zealand.

Chrysalis Seed Trust director Peter Crothall says, when it began, the Trust supported all contemporary artists including performance artists and writers. Now it concentrates its efforts on visual artists – painters, photographers, film makers, and installation artists.

"Much of the art that is called 'Christian' today tends to be poor

world. He cites the example of New Zealand's best known painter Colin McCahon. Colin's Christian faith is explicit in his art but it is ignored or reinterpreted by secular art theorists.

When discussing the Trust's new website Peter deploys a number of metaphors. A vision he had when he was contemplating the future of CS Arts was of a tree felled and new shoots arising from the stump that remained.

And to describe the website, he uses the image of an airport. Like an airport, it is an interactive hub where Christian artists and those interested in their work can connect up and get to where they want to be.

"An airport doesn't own the aircraft travelling in and out of its airspace. It is a means of transit from one place to another. Airports connect people, places, resources and information."

The www.cs.org.nz site carries news about exhibitions, information about competitions, residencies, and grants available to artists, and links to other art websites.

Through the website artists and others who wish to be more deeply involved can join csartspace.org.nz, an electronic social network site similar to Facebook or Bebo. At csartspace.org.nz artists can post their work, participate in online chats and forums, create interest groups, and find out about local and national events.

"We have moved our efforts into the website for several reasons," Peter says. "We could not sustain the magazine financially in the long term, and we believe this is what God wants us to do."

"The website will be much more effective in creating a grassroots movement of artists throughout Aotearoa. We expect it to be the first port of call for anyone who wants to know what Christian artists are doing in New Zealand. In January, two to five people were joining csartspace.org.nz everyday so it is taking on a life of its own."

Over the next several months Peter and Jessica Crothall are doing a networking tour around New Zealand. They will visit artists and galleries to promote the website. They can be contacted through www.cs.org.nz.

CS.org.nz
arts information and resources

FIND ARTISTS

ARTS ONLINE

csartspace.org.nz
connect with other artists

"Often churches are interested in what artists can do for them, whether it is to enhance their environment or promote their work and evangelism. The same is true for the commercial galleries."

Christian artists face more difficulties than others, Peter believes, because they are often marginalised and misunderstood by the secular art

KEEP HOPE ALIVE

Lent 6002

GIVE SOMETHING BACK THIS LENT

It's easier to give up something for Lent if you've got something to start with. Far too many people in the world are without life's basics.

- 923 million people wake up hungry
- 15 million people are homeless because of war or violence
- 40% of people don't have access to sanitation

Give something back this Lent.

- \$18 pays for a month's supply of rice
- \$128 pays for basic rations pack for emergency shelter
- \$257 pays for a toilet and sanitation

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CWS
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

Three of the artists who had work in Face to Face were Jessica Crothall (left), Joanna Osborne (middle), and Stefan Chambers (right). Peter Roberts (right) is pictured next to curator Janet Roberts (left).



ARTISTS EXPLORE GOD FACE TO FACE

WHAT WE SEE NOW IS LIKE A DIM IMAGE IN A MIRROR; THEN WE SHALL SEE FACE TO FACE. WHAT I KNOW NOW IS ONLY PARTIAL; THEN IT WILL BE COMPLETE – AS COMPLETE AS GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF ME (1 CORINTHIANS 13:12).

A personal encounter with God was the theme of an exhibition of contemporary Christian artists at the Centre of Contemporary Art (COCA) in Christchurch last month.

The exhibition carried the title 'Face to Face'. In various ways the artists' work attempted to express the experience of the sublime and the joy and lightness that come from knowing God.

The exhibition's curator Janet Chambers says the title refers to what can be revealed when we meet God face to face. "It begins with God's knowledge of us and our growing knowledge of God. From our relationship with God extend our face to face relationships with

other humans and our environment."

Biblical references to a 'face to face' encounter with the divine include Moses' long, almost personal relationship with God. When he returned to speak to the people after he had been in God's presence, he veiled his face because they could not bear to look at the brightness that remained on his face.

The artists who participated in the exhibition are members of a critique group brought together under the auspices of the Chrysalis Seed Trust. They meet monthly to comment on each other's work, often work in progress.

Janet says Face to Face was the group's second exhibition at COCA. The first was entitled 'Shrouded', and it explored the theme of how spiritual things are mysterious and the way God veils his face from us.

The prophet Isaiah used the metaphor of lifting a shroud to foretell Christ's coming.

The artists in Face to Face worked in several mediums. Two were photographers, two were painters, and one presented work in glass sculpture and mixed mediums.

Painter Jessica Crothall says she has experimented for years with colour, tone and texture. Her 'Symbolic Series' in the Face to Face exhibition used colour in a symbolic way.

Her work was in three parts. The first is black and chaotic representing spiritual pollution and separation from God. The second gold panel carries a stylised cross representing the bridge Jesus created to connect people with God. And the third, white image conveys a reconnection with God.

While Joanna Osborne is a photographer, her photographs were the last part of a creative process in which she constructed artificial imaginative

stroke across the sky and is a symbol for the spirit of God. Visual references in the work are drawn from the descriptions of Moses after meeting with God on Mount Sinai.

Janet says while some of the works in Face to Face deal with serious questions, play is the watchword of contemporary art. In this exhibition artists also play, in God's sight.

The title of photographer Stefan Roberts' contribution to Face to Face was 'Looking beyond the shadowlands'. Shadowlands is a phrase CS Lewis used to describe this world as a mere shadow of the reality that is to come.

Stefan used long exposures of himself taken at night to create his images. In his photos the moon creates a bold white different lighting to evoke different states and

landscapes, and then photographed them in various perspectives.

Joanna's contribution to this exhibition was called 'The Hermeneutics of being known'. For it she constructed an island. The water imagery related to Christ and the mountain that emerges out of himself taken at night to create his images.

In his photos the moon creates a bold white different lighting to evoke different states and

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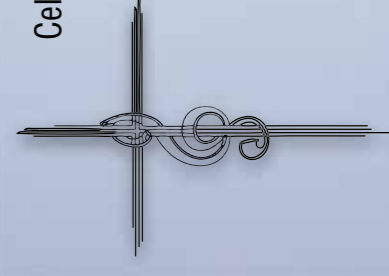
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Beyond rationality



Noah's Ark. By Ann Gray

The ending to one of the greatest stories ever told – Noah's Ark – comes up in this month's lectionary readings. God says the rainbow will be the sign of the Covenant "between me and earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant."

This is a remarkable claim. But you expect that with Genesis because there is a remarkable power in this book of the Bible. It speaks to the human condition. We see God or Yahweh portrayed with every human emotion: sometimes loving, sometimes angry, sometimes swift to act, sometimes slow and sometimes forgetful.

Despite this very human picture, there is never the slightest doubt that God is also perceived as different, beyond human comprehension yet touching it at the deepest level of awareness.

Some people are turned off by this approach – they have very refined and superior notions about the nature of God. Thus, they read about Noah, and the other Genesis stories, with increasing unease and finally erupt into moral indignation. If God is

like this, they say, we want nothing to do with it. It is primitive, superstitious and horrible. It is not rational. Noah's Ark is a story far removed from a God who loves consistently.

What can we say to such accusations? They are indeed true in certain ways. Yet at more significant levels they are ignorant. Genesis is not a book of science, which is in itself is nothing more than a paper-thin veneer of 'facts as they are today'. No, Genesis is not like that at all.

Here is a book which reveals God's relationship with the being who is human, the living soul which is the image of God. And how is this living being addressed? Through dreams, visions, signs, feelings and strangely revealing conversations within the psyche.

The shutter of the modern rational mind senses that which once was alive to this kind of God, and being defensive all too easily closes off the more powerful lens of deep intuition.

So, in the contemporary world it seems that the story of Noah's Ark functions like a black hole in distant space. You come close to it and its field of gravity sorts out who you.

Some of us are suddenly sucked in, unable to escape its inexorable crush, and are compressed into its pinhole centre – just like the camel going through the eye of the needle, only infinitely more so. And then out, out into a universe of faith and knowing and believing. But only after having the life in us compressed to a shocking weight, crushed into incomprehension, dead with no light in us able to escape. Out into the bow. The bow in the sky is the sign of imaginative insight, a release from literalism into Yahweh's story.

But for those left on the other side, who feared to wander near the vortex, all of that is invisible, a mere fiction. You have disappeared from their rationality. They think your sanity has gone. They warn others to stay away from the black hole of Noah's Ark and Genesis. They fear the truth of this story not because it is untrue because it is too overwhelmingly true, too close to the truth for comfort.

Noah, God's chosen representative of human perfection, lands his ark and the world is saved. Then, to his shame, he gets drunk, his son sees him naked and a terrible curse is uttered. Perfection is something, it seems, that God can never get right in the human soul.

That is the real reason that, like all good and true stories, Noah's Ark continues to get told, and probably will do so until the end of time itself, when all will fall into its abyss.

Secrets hidden in plain sight

Recently I was churches in New Zealand today. We seem to have lost our way and, I suspect, may be suffering from a kind of ecclesiastical depression. Faced with declining congregations and the rise of a profoundly secular society many Christians find it easier to succumb to silence than to undertake the risks of change.

Using Palmer's analogy, however, a depression can teach us how to walk on solid ground. Perhaps the crisis is inviting us to develop an understanding of Jesus and God that can become the foundation of a faith community for a new age.

Someone once said, 'there are secrets hidden in plain sight' but to be able to see them we have to change our way of seeing things. The history of Methodist origins seems to confirm this. Wesley had to step outside the traditional theology, polity and practice of the Church of England and engage in what he initially called his 'horror at this strange way of preaching in the fields'

in Northland (CTN) has an even wider ecumenical mix. In Northland there is no room for anything but working together, mahi taahi. Of our 19 parishes with Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Christian Church and some with Anglican involvement, 16 are Uniting parishes of various mixes. The two Presbyterian churches and one Methodist church in the region are all very involved in CTN as are the Anglicans because CTN is also Northland Joint Regional Committee. We chose 'Churches Together in Northland' as our title to include other denominations, so that we could enjoy a sharing of resources and be accepting of other denominational mixes that are happening in some of our parishes.

I am an ecumenist, formerly an



leading us into a worldwide depression.

He made an interesting observation about depression. Drawing on psychotherapy he likened depression to 'a friend who brings you down to the earth and teaches you how to walk on solid ground.' The analogy, I thought, was insightful. Many of us have been living way beyond our means captive to the illusion of endless growth. Sooner or later things were going to unravel. But then, Parker added, every crisis in life has embedded within it new opportunities. I thought the same could be said about the crisis which faces

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart

Wesley's eyes to secrets hidden in plain sight. The proclamation of the Gospel doesn't belong to the Church, it belongs to the whole world.

This truth in plain sight changed Wesley's life and as a consequence transformed the religious landscape of England. If the Church would not go to the poor, Wesley and his band of preachers would. Even if the bishops declared it irregular and closed the doors of their parishes to the Methodist preachers.

As I see it, a clear choice stands before the Church: hold on to what has been or step out of that security and trust the call of God. It's that simple and yet so threatening. But as the Canadian singer and songwriter Leonard Cohen reminds us in his song 'Anthem', "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

Let's let the light in!

Northland churches living example of unity

Based on Jim Strathdee's hymn, 'I am the light of the world', we now find ourselves in that space where the song of the angels is stilled, the star has gone from atop our Christmas trees, and the kings and shepherds have found their way home. We have all returned to our places of work and responsibility again, and the work of Christmas has begun.

As we follow the image of the star – as we follow Jesus – we realise that we cannot do it alone. We need each other. I count it a privilege to be part of the Standing Committee of Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa NZ, a privilege to be working together with such fine people from across the five denominations of UCANZ. Being part of Churches Together

not without some difficulties and disagreements to be worked and being brought but that's part of the family.

During his visit to Northland last year UCANZ executive officer Rev Peter MacKenzie moved around our parishes, from the urban parishes of Whangarei to the remote rural parishes of North and South Hokianga. He wanted time to explore the diversity. He inspired and challenged us to build on what we are doing.

We have given up on our elderly parents marrying. We are mature adults now and 'uniting' is what is happening at the grass roots. It is a work in progress. May Uniting Congregations of NZ go from strength to strength following the way of Jesus.

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NEW ZEALAND
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DELIVERING HOPE
IN A FRESH WAY



Gandhi & Jesus: The Saving Power of Nonviolence



This book is a treasure, combining in depth scholarship with a compelling message of hope for a world beset with violence and war. Since no review can really do it justice perhaps I should just say "buy it!"

I have already found myself quoting from it in several sermons and many discussions.

As the title suggests, Rynne explores how Gandhi was influenced by the life and teachings of Jesus and how subsequent theologians have built on their shared dedication to a way of non violence.

The first chapter tells of Gandhi "a Hindu and more" - the development of his faith and philosophy strongly influenced by the sermon on the mount.

A second chapter introduces us to the Hindu concepts Gandhi held dear: Satyagraha or "firmly holding to the truth". This concept that goes beyond simple passive resistance and ahimsa, or nonviolence.

Gandhi, says Rynne, pinpointed violence as the chief malady of our time, insisting that violence breeds increasing levels of violence from which there is no other outcome but after war. Gandhi's mantra was "ahimsa paramo dharma", the prime duty is nonviolence. The most striking aspect of Gandhian nonviolence is that it involves deep trust in the goodness of the opponent. It is this trust, which breaks the cycle of violence.

Rynne then introduces four Christian theologians, each influenced by Gandhi, each embracing Jesus' teachings of

making "not violent sacrifice, but non violent power, the root metaphor".

Yes, this is great theology, but more than that it is a call for change and a call to action: Having established that Jesus is non violent to the core, Rynne asks the million dollar question: Why do we still hang back from following the way of the non violent Jesus?

His answer is sobering - "we are enmeshed in a culture that believes in the myth of redemptive violence (when push comes to shove most people believe the only logical thing is to push back). We are deeply imbued with a spirit of retributive justice and as a result find it hard to hear the Biblical message of restorative justice (and) our "systematic theology" accepts violence as a given for humans.

But there is hope. Perhaps the clearest voice of hope in the book is that of Walter Wink. "In the spiritual renaissance that I believe is coming to birth...the teachings of Jesus, the sayings on non-violence and love of enemies will hold a central place...The ultimate religious question today should no longer be the Reformation's question, How can I find a gracious God? But rather, How can we find God in our enemies? What guilt, was for Luther, the enemy has become for us: the god that can drive us to God."

Beg, borrow or buy this book and maybe together we can begin to live the answers.

From present day theologians we then go back in time to the gospel writers and early church theologians and the core chapter of the book. Rynne argues persuasively that the early church, following Jesus, was committed to a non-violent stand against the powers of that time - the Roman Empire. As the church became the establishment and the advent of medieval Anselmian soteriology, with its emphasis on an angry God needing to be appeased, this gospel-based mandate of nonviolence and love of enemies was lost.

He claims that we must consider the life of Christ, human responsibility for history, and a way to deal with both personal and social evil if we are to have a theology of salvation that makes sense for the 21st century. Rynne very persuasively reformulates what it means to be saved by moving it from the individual to the societal and by

is actually evidence for the belief in a revealing God. Further, given the evolution of human culture, we must consider a God who, as cultures have evolved, has been able to be revealed in ever more complex ways.

The historical reality of human evolution and the sheer diversity of religious faiths provide criteria by which Stark evaluates religious faiths as likely to be carriers of God's true revelation.

First, the presence of such diverse expressions of faith means we must face the fact that such diversity demands some faiths are in fact incompatible. Not all religious roads can lead to one overarching religion.

Second, the more complex a faith, the more logically likely it is to be a true revelation of God. This allows Stark



to dismiss a range of faiths, including Islam, due to its regressive tendencies, both morally and theologically. Instead, Stark concludes that it is both logical and rational to believe in the Christian God's unfolding revelation in human societies. "I find it far more rational to regard the universe itself as the ultimate revelation of God" (page 399).

The question Stark fails to address is that of the future of faith. If God has, in the past, shown a tendency to speak with increasing complexity, what will happen if human society continues to evolve? Is there a new (and presumably better) faith yet to come? This then raises a question regarding the notion of human progress. For many people today, the events of the 20th century, including two World Wars, are actually evidence of human society going backwards, not forwards.

Overall, Discovering God is both an informative and a stimulating read. Stark writes forthrightly, unafraid to state his conclusions with boldness. While at times I wanted more detail to back up his bold conclusions, at 484 pages it seemed a small quibble.

On a long journey you also need to pace yourself. You cannot go at things too hard for very long without breaking down. He applies this also to his ongoing life and faith back home. He realises that he is overly driven in his work and that this is not sustainable.

He reflects on the hospitality one encounters on the road, and the renewed experience of God's providence on a daily basis. The journey takes on profound significance for him and is personally transformational.

Arthur explores how to plan a Christian pilgrimage in the appendices, as well as possible destinations. After finishing this book I found myself pondering what might be a suitable place for pilgrimage in this land.

We usually make the mistake of thinking that all the good pilgrimage sites are on the other side of the world. I'm thinking that some time soon I'll walk to the cairn at Port Levy on Banks Peninsula. It is the site where the Gospel was first preached in Canterbury by the Maori lay Wesleyan evangelist, Taawao.

The Way is Made by Walking: A Pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago



form of prayer, and sacramental in its depth. My walking in preparation for Walk for the Planet began to take on a much more spiritual focus. I will be forever indebted to Arthur for the way he connects all the outward dimensions of walking to matters of the spirit.

example he writes an entire chapter titled 'Your Pack's too Big'. He shares how only taking what you need becomes critically important when you have to carry it all on your back for 30 days or 500 miles. He then explores how this experience as a pilgrim led to significant change in his lifestyle when he returned home. He realised that his consumerism was stifling his ability to be a true everyday pilgrim walking with Christ.

Arthur Paul Boers, 2007, 219 pages
Reviewed by Mark Gibson

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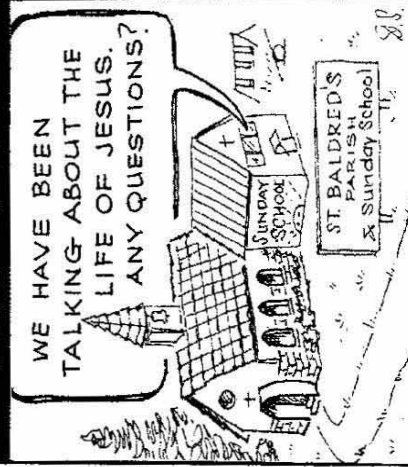
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ON SCREEN

A film review by Rev Dr Steve Taylor



are drawn between hope and fear, love and discipline. Into the fray steps the school's first ever black student, Donald Miller (Joseph Foster) and his teacher, Sister James (Amy Adams), still learning her trade.

Meryl Streep as Sister Aloysius Beauvier is superb. While her austerity repels, the audience remain intrigued by the moments of human empathy that leak from under her starched wimple.

The two central conflict scenes, despite being extended in length and placed back to back, are superb. The tension between Sister Aloysius and Donald Miller's mother (Viola Davis), followed by the contest between Father Brendan Flynn and Sister Aloysius Beauvier, crackle and pop open a absorbing range of issues. For religious communities, what is the greatest sin? Should it be racism, sexuality or child abuse? Is it Christian to protect those you serve today, at the expense of justice tomorrow?

For a movie about people of faith, God remains strangely absent. The opening was promising, the image of a toy dancer, spun by the invisible force of a magnetic

Doubt

storyline, engaging acting, and intellectual stimulation about a complex range of issues.

Father Brendan Flynn (Philip Seymour Hoffman) is a new priest leading change in the New York Parish of St. Nicholas in the Bronx. Powerful skills of oratory might inspire some but inevitably sour others. His charisma and innovative methods stumble against the ironclad convictions of Parish principal, Sister Aloysius Beauvier (Meryl Streep). The battle lines

mirror, offering a fleeting image of potentially divine interaction. After that, we are left exposed to the full emotional toll demanded by the complexity of doubt. One of the gifts of cinema lies in the ability of abstract images to convey mood and build story. If Doubt has a fault, it is the simplistic, almost linear use of such images. Open windows, blown light bulbs, branches broken by storm winds and dead mice lack sophistication and nuance.

Perhaps the move from play to film is at fault, amplified by the fact that John Patrick Shanley is not only director, but also writer of both play and movie script.

Despite this criticism, Doubt is a knockout. If you are looking for a movie to stimulate Lenten debate, seek Doubt. By the end, even this Baptist was converted.

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.emergentkivi.org.nz.

the boy shared his lunch of five loaves
Birds eaten in the wilderness
Passover bread was eaten with bitter
Jael welcomed the enemy with a drink of
Jesus turned water into
Jesus cooked a breakfast of
Joseph's brothers went to Egypt for
John the Baptist ate
Aaron's staff sprouted
Jacob sent pistachio to Joseph
Refresh me with
Samson made a riddle about
In the Passover meal, unleavened
A vegetable eaten by David's troops
Young David took his brothers ten
The Mount of
Jesus asked a woman for a drink of
Jesus talked about a
Ruth gleaned barley and
Esau swapped his birthright for
Abigail took 100 clusters of

In our Harvest Festival month it is interesting to consider the 'Harvest' celebrated by the Hebrews and the foods they ate.

BIBLE FOODS AND BEVERAGES

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PNG focus for World Day of Prayer

Papua New Guinea is the theme of this year's World Day of Prayer. World Day of Prayer (WDP) ecumenical services take place Friday March 6th.

Every year the WDP service is written in a different country. This year the service was composed by women from Papua New Guinea.

The logo for the 2009 WDP is the carry-all string bag bilum placed on the cross. It represents the nation of 800 languages being gathered together in a vibrant unity where love is genuine.

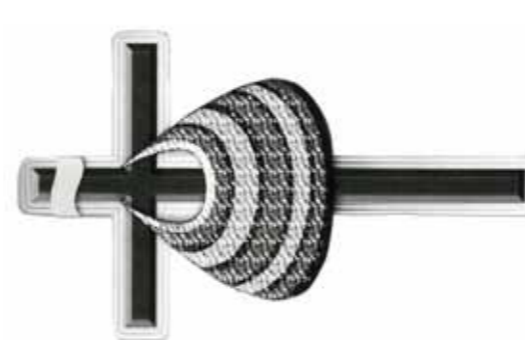
In NZ up to 15,000 participants attend more than 300 WDP services each year. Times and venues of services are available at local churches.

Through WDP people will be studying and praying for PNG in more than 180 countries.

NZ offerings on the day will be used in PNG by The Bible Society for translation, by Christian World Service for the BAERDA literacy programme in remote villages, and by Save the Children for Village Health Workers. In Ethiopia the Hamlin Fistula Hospital Trust will be assisted in carrying out life transforming surgery.

In this past year, due to the Charities Commission requirements, World Day of Prayer has formed an autonomous committee directly responsible to the International Committee of WDP. For the past twenty years WDP had been under the National Committee of Church Women.

For more information contact WDP national liaison officer Helen Buxton at 03 388 5456.



CWS AT PARACHUTE 2009

These questions were met with many a startled look as young Christian World Service volunteers



CWS volunteers challenged Parachute punters to think about world poverty.

approached people at Parachute 2009. The aim was to educate and engage young and old on issues of poverty, and the factors that link the lives of us all.

Taking their blood pressure was a pretext for reading some horrifying facts about world poverty. Dr Nick immediately diagnosed high blood pressure and prescribed a course of treatment that suggested they should join a movement to help others to have a better life.

The most telling statistic for the many young people who owned cell phones was from the Congo: "In the Congo thousands

are dying as a result of the mining of coltan. Coltan is used to make the cell phones that we use every day. The demand is so great that a lot of money can be made. Humans exploit and kill others to get coltan so you can have two mobile phones, a laptop and a desktop computer."

This really made the unsuspecting punters stop and think. The intention was not to make them feel guilty but rather to consider the way our lives are intertwined with the poorest people and whether or not they really needed two cell phones or might make a donation to local

groups working to end poverty in the Congo.

The young people displayed a strong sense of justice and a real need to do something to stop the actions that keep people poor. This was in spite of the heat and the great music that was being played.

Some 25,000 people gathered at Mystery Creek over the Auckland Anniversary weekend. Christian World Service can always be found there challenging young people to live more justly.

Young People

Doctor's orders: change the world

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John Drylie's 25 years of ministry

Sunday 1 February was a day of celebration for West Coasters who marked Rev John and Jan Drylie's 25 years of ministry to the parish of St Andrew's United Church of Hokitika-Ross-South Westland.



Jan and John Drylie

About 150 guests, members of the congregation, and former parishioners who now live in other parts of New Zealand took part in the celebration. The event began with a communion service followed by the cutting of a special cake, morning tea, and a lunch. Chris Auchinvole spoke on behalf of the wider church. Jan Davidson from Reefton spoke about John's work on the West Coast. Jan Harrison spoke on behalf of the St Andrew's, and Brenda Twidle from Haritari spoke about John and Jan's relationship with the South Westland part of St Andrew's United Parish.

In her talk Janice said over the years a number of other larger parishes sought John for their ministry but fortunately for the people of the West Coast, he and his family remained there. "John's knowledge of theology and his ability to deliver, unaided by notes, and without repetition, a thoughtful and provoking sermon, often with a fresh slant is something that we have taken for granted but would be the envy of many other parishes. People have stated that this is a very inclusive ministry where people are encouraged to participate at what ever level they feel comfortable with," Janice said. John committed himself to the 4th

Kids @viva!

Welcome to this months Kidz Korna

Rainbow Church

Young people at St John's Methodist Church in Hamilton East come from many different countries as well as New Zealand. One of them wants to share with you something about herself and her family.

Hello, my name is Doris Pita. I am seven years old and come from the Solomon Islands. I have friends in church from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malaysia, New Zealand and other places.

My family is in New Zealand because my dad is studying at Waikato University. I love coming to Sunday school because where I live in Honiara is a long way away from the church. Sunday School starts at 8:00 in the morning and it is too early for me to get there. I just go to church later with my family. In the photo you can see my brothers, Stephen and Peter and my mum and dad. I will let Stephen tell you all about our church.

Hi, I'm Stephen. Our church is a lot bigger than St John's with heaps more people coming to church each week. It was built by our local people in Honiara when the church built by the missionaries became too small. We have up to three hundred people there. We sing the same hymns because we are Methodists. At school we speak English but at home we speak pidgin as well. Pidgin is another form of English. We like living in New Zealand even though it was really cold last winter.

It would be really good to hear about your church and Sunday School. Write to Doreen and tell her about yourselves. She would also like a photo.



Stephen, Doris, and Peter Pita with their parents.

The Zoo

"The Zoo", is an original Christmas play by Derek Kingsbury and it was performed by the Sunday School at Chartwell Church, Hamilton last December. The animals of the zoo want to know why the zoo will be closed on Christmas Day so they go to the wisest animal they know, the tuatara, to find out.

As she tells them about the nativity story they decide that it would be fun to act it out. In their own way the animals learn about what happened and put their own spin on it.



The cast of The Zoo. Author Derek Kingsbury is at the back in a black shirt.

Book Review Friends of God: My First Bible Activity Book

By Leena Lane and Roma Bishop
 Word Among Us Press, 32 pages
 Reviewer: Patrick (10 years)

This is a book full of stories and activities. I especially liked the story of Joshua and how the walls of Jericho came tumbling down and the story of Elijah with the word puzzle. There are dot to dot pictures to join up and colour and matching and counting activities.

The book is full of fun things for young children. I'm ten years old and enjoyed it. Mums and dads could read the stories to younger children and then they could do the activities. A book for wet days or lying in the sun!



THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION

This month we have something different:

- Get out your colouring pencils, felts, paints
- Do you have a favourite Bible story?
- Draw a picture about it. Use A4 size paper.
- There are two age groups, 8 years and under and 9-14 years.
- Give your picture a title, write your name and age on the back and send it to: Doreen Lennox, 4/22 Wellington Street, Hamilton 3216.
- There is a prize for each age group.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

I had to change my e-mail address and so the time for sending in the answer to last month's competition has been extended. You can still enter and send the answer to me at the above address or e-mail me, dlennox@xtra.co.nz. Winners of both competitions will be announced in April.

Coasters celebrate their servants

Two pivotal figures in the live of the Church on the South Island West Coast - Elva Reynolds and Rev John Drylie - marked major anniversaries early this year. It was a chance to acknowledge their lives of service.

Elva Reynolds - deacon extraordinary

By Ken Russell

When Elva Reynolds of Hokitika offered herself as a candidate for ordination as a deacon about 25 years ago, it continued a lifetime of service. Indeed, when Elva began her diaconate ministry in 1986, she was already past the commonly accepted retirement age.



Elva Reynolds

This irony was remarked upon in January when Elva celebrated her 90th birthday with family and friends. Yet despite reaching a milestone that most of us might think was a signal to slow down, Elva is far from retired. She is zesty and alert, and has no plans to quit the ministry of service that has blessed the Westland community. In describing her call to ordination, Elva drew on the image of Sarah who dared to laugh at the apparent impediment of her age to bear a child.

While Hokitika is Elva's focus, her efforts extend throughout the West Coast, from Westport to Haast.

My own involvement with Elva began in 1957 as a newly married and very green probationer appointed to the Hokitika Circuit. Elva was a member of the Churches of Christ in those days, but already ecumenically committed, and leader of one of the largest Life Boy teams in the country. She sized us up immediately, and before one could utter a prayer of protest she had us both in uniform - me as chaplain and Judy as a junior leader. Elva and her husband late Winston offered and an open home to two nervous new-arrivals.

She came to the diaconate after Winston died in office as mayor. A very active mayoress, she was already busy politically, and served as trustee of the Westland Savings Bank and

he and Elva created a very strong team of presbyteral and diaconal ministry.

Yet it was a mistake to identify Elva solely with a ceaseless round of community appointments. She reads the bible every day with growing discernment. Her bible sits alongside a library that features the work of Borg, Armstrong, Geering, Spong, Brueggemann, Harper and others. And she likes a good murder mystery too!

Appropriately, Elva has been recognized for her community service. In 1976 she was named West Coast Woman of the year. She was awarded the Queens Service Medal in 1993, and in 1999 she received the Tower Senior Achievers Award.

Those of us fortunate enough to join Elva for her big event were amazed to find her sparkling and lively as ever. During our visit to Hokitika, we dropped into a fast food place on Revell St for one of their special pies. When we got to the pie shop, we were in town for a 90th birthday, the guy behind the counter asked us with typical Coast-bonhomie, whose birthday? When I named Elva his face lit up. "Mrs Reynolds! I'll send her a card. She's one special lady!" Amen to that.

Collection details Dutch immigrant experience

By Yvonne Wilkie



The New Settlers Committee collection details the experience of post-WWII immigrants to NZ. Most were Dutch but this photo shows White Russian refugees beside an OAC-Viscount plane, possibly at Invercargill Airport, 1966.

Between 1945 and 1968 about 24,000 Dutch residents settled in New Zealand. Approximately 25 percent of them belonged to the Reformed Church. Unlike in Australia, the agreement between the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and the NZ Presbyterian Church was to encourage the new settlers to assimilate into New Zealand congregations rather than have Dutch congregations develop independently.

Not all Dutch settlers felt comfortable with New Zealand Presbyterianism however. They believed it fell short of traditional reformed doctrines and practices. The Church in the Netherlands was more formal, sermons in New Zealand did not have the 'depth' they were used to and the religious festivals such as Christmas appeared too 'social'. A number of new settlers also found a lack of pastoral care disturbing.

In 1953 a group finally withdrew from the NZPC and formed the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. The papers relating to the withdrawal highlight the misunderstandings from both sides. New Zealand Presbyterians had difficulty grasping that assimilation and integration implies 'giving and receiving'. The papers also reveal how theological interpretation so often cannot be reconciled.

Miss Kos Goldschmidt was employed as a social worker in the mid-1960s and undertook much of the support work previously carried out by the chaplains. Her outstanding work over 20 years was recognised in 1984 when the Queen of the Netherlands created her a Knight of the Order of Nassau.

The Committee's work gradually expanded into refugee work supporting Eastern European and Asian settlement in New Zealand.

NB: The correspondence files are restricted from general use because of the personal nature of the material. If any bona fide family members wish to access material please contact the archivist, Yvonne Wilkie.

The New Settlers Committee collection covers the years 1952 to 1983 and mainly deals with Dutch immigration. It consists of lists of Dutch immigrants, correspondence between Dutch chaplains and government officials in New Zealand and the Netherlands, and personal correspondence between the new settlers and their families in the Netherlands. It also has a complete run - 1954 to 1981 - of the newsletter 'Protestant Contact', and cine films of camps and fairs. Up to 80 percent of the papers are written in Dutch.

The 1949 visit of the World Council of Churches' director of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid Rev Dr Hutchison Cockburn brought the urgency of the situation of 'displaced' persons to the New Zealand churches attention. The National Council of Churches which represented the main stream protestant denominations encouraged churches to offer practical support. It appears to be the arrival of 932 European immigrants in 1949 that reinforced a sense of responsibility from the Presbyterian General Assembly to support the 'new settlers'.

In 1950, the New Zealand and Netherlands governments signed an immigration agreement. Each year, New Zealand was to take 2000 single migrants aged between 18 and 35. With the arrival of 1000 Dutch immigrants under this agreement in June 1950 the Reformed Church of the Netherlands requested that they send a minister to assist their members resettle.

Rev Wilheim van Wijmegen was received as a minister in full standing at the 1951 General Assembly. He worked from the Wangarua Presbytery and assisted Dutch settlers come to terms with a new country whose mores and faith differed from their own.

Eventually the General Assembly agreed that a committee be formed to support parishes with the oversight