

# TOUCHSTONE

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



State integrated Christian schools promote critical thinking as well as Christian principles.

## Christian education thriving in Godzone

By Paul Titus

*The demand for primary and secondary education with a Christian character is on the upswing in New Zealand, and Christian schools are expanding and forming networks to meet that demand.*

The NZ education system has a unique provision for 'state integrated schools' that has created a space for Christian schools. Most state integrated schools are former private schools that are now integrated into the state system.

While the buildings and property of state integrated schools remain privately owned, the government funds their operating costs and teachers' salaries. The schools must maintain standards set by the Ministry of Education and deliver the state curriculum but they retain a degree of independence and can teach the curriculum from their own perspective.

About 10 percent of Kiwi students attend state integrated schools. Some 75 to 80 percent of these schools are Catholic. The others include a variety of Christian schools as well as alternative education providers such as Montessori and Rudolph

Steiner. Wesley College is a state integrated school.

Until recently, Mark Larson was principal of Middleton Grange Christian School in Christchurch. He now holds leadership rolls in two Christian school trusts and the Christian Schools Network.

Middleton Grange was established in the 1960s by a non-denominational group of evangelical Protestants. In the 1990s it struggled financially and it became an integrated school in 1996.

Mark explains that by becoming integrated, Middleton Grange and other Christian schools can provide an education that is in reach of families who could not send their children to a private school.

"One tenet of our founders was that attending Middleton Grange should be affordable. The fees are \$1100, which is about 10 percent of those at a private school," he says.

"When I became principal in 1999 we had long waiting lists. We were turning away 100 families a year so we decided to grow the school rolls. In 1999 our roll was 1000. It is now 1300, and we have applied for it to go

higher."

The Ministry of Education caps the number of students an integrated school can have so the school must apply to have its numbers increased.

Vaughan Darby is the executive director of the NZ Christian Proprietors Trust (NZCPT). This trust is the proprietor of three integrated schools in the greater Auckland area: KingsWay School at Silverdale, Jireh Christian School at Waitakere, and KingsGate Primary School at Pukekohe. NZCPT schools too are based on an evangelical Protestant ethos.

Vaughan says the integrated school system saves the Crown substantial money because it avoids the capital cost of owning land and buildings. Therefore the Ministry of Education is willing to integrate schools and allow rolls to grow in regions where there is high population growth.

Both Vaughan and Mark emphasise that Christian schools provide high quality education with a lot of input from parents.

"We believe parents are responsible for their children's religious education and our role is to reinforce that worldview," Vaughan says.



Mark Larson

"There is growing recognition even in the state sector, of the importance of teaching values. We promote Christian values and we involve parents. When parents are involved students do better.

"NCEA results show that students from integrated schools perform disproportionately well. Some of our students enter theological schools such as Laidlaw College but most go on to the major universities – Auckland, Massey and Canterbury."

Mark says the Christian element in the programme does not overwhelm the curriculum.

"Our approach to evolution and creation, for example, we work hard to teach the science but we also expose the students to the idea of creation. We point out evolution is a theory but we do not push the religious views down their throats. We believe they have the dignity and the right to decide the issues for themselves."

For more on Christian education see Page 8.

## CVs hot potato as partners explore new ways to cooperate

By Paul Titus

*In an open letter, former president of the Methodist Church of NZ Rev Brian Turner has fired off a broadside, warning that some leaders of the partner churches are planning to dismantle or restrict Cooperative Ventures (CVs).*

Church leaders respond that their support for CVs has not diminished but in changing circumstances they must seek new, more flexible ways to engage with one another.

Brian cites a number of moves he believes show that the Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican Churches are distancing themselves from their ecumenical commitment to CVs and Uniting Congregations.

These include the Presbyterian Church's efforts to create super presbyteries that, he says, ignore ecumenical groupings; discussions between Anglican and Presbyterian leaders in South Canterbury to review and perhaps split up cooperating parishes; and Methodist synod executives' statements that they would not support the creation of more CVs.

Brian writes that some denominational leaders say church growth is one reason they want to re-examine CVs.

"They claim that CV's do not grow as well as straight denominational parishes. If that is true, it's probably because denominations do not invest as many resources in CVs as in straight denominational parishes.

"Another major driver is that CVs tie up denominational property and finance. Under the old model of CVs, yes, but newer models such as the Waimakariri Shared Ministry in North Canterbury and Crossways Community Church in Christchurch, are freer from such requirements.

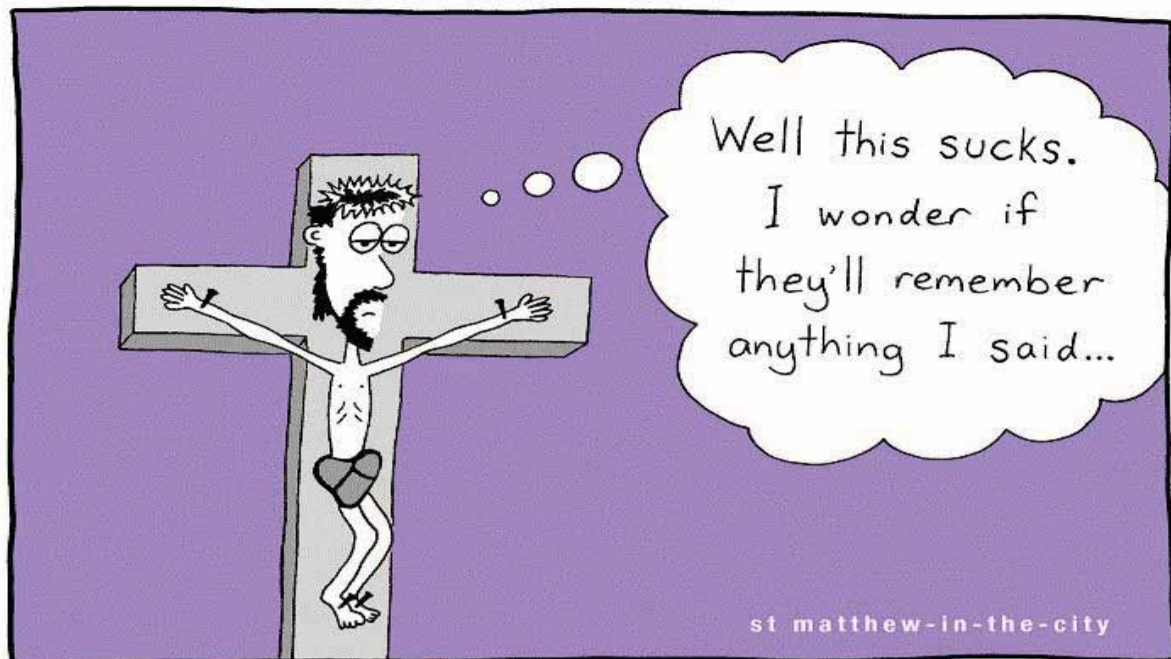
Brian argues that the bottom line for the churches should not be self-preservation but the call of Jesus that His disciples be one, so that the world might believe. (For the full text of Brian's letter, see page 7.)

The Presbyterian Church's executive secretary Rev Martin Baker says he is mindful that many small congregations, including CVs, face difficult issues but he does not share Brian's concerns or anguish.

"About one third of Presbyterian congregations in NZ are involved in some form of cooperative ministry and we are very keen to support them. We are not blocking new CVs. For example, a new Presbyterian-Methodist CV was formed in Levin last year," Martin says.

"However, we do not see structural integration as the simple answer to church growth. We need to support growth and mission, and to do this will require a diversity of solutions based on local contexts.

See Page 7



## Cartoon hits nerve as well as funny bone

Touchstone cartoonist Brendan Boughen, aka 'Jim', found himself at the centre of controversy over Easter when a billboard cartoon he prepared for Auckland's St Mathew in the City Anglican Church was first seized upon by the media and then defaced by a disgruntled Christian.

Last Christmas St Mathew in the City briefly became a worldwide media sensation when it put up a billboard that depicted Joseph and Mary in bed with the caption: 'Poor Joseph. God was a hard act to follow'.

Priest in charge at St Mathew, Rev Clay Nelson says some billboards are also a hard act to follow but Brendan's cartoon did an excellent job of posing fresh questions about Jesus in a humorous way.

"We are trying to use our billboard to make religion relevant. For too long the Church has answered questions no one is asking. We want to address the real issues people face and share with the community some new ways to understand Christianity," Clay says.

He says while the media eagerly anticipated the new billboard and put it in the spotlight, they did not

appreciate the theology behind it. Not so the person who vandalised it.

"Our billboard shows Jesus before Easter. Some Christians believe Jesus knew what was going to happen to him in advance but we disagree with that. We see his crucifixion as an act of courage and a result of his fight against the religious and political injustices of his day."

The person who defaced the billboard clearly objected to this theology, Clay says, because they wrote John 3:16 on it. This refers to the passage: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

"The theology behind this is that Jesus fully knew what he was doing, and that he participating in a sacrificial act by God to redeem humanity. We would consider this an act of divine child abuse," Clay says.

"Rather, we believe we need a more progressive understanding of what Jesus was all about and we need to make the changes he sought so the world can be a more loving and peaceful place."

## School of theology to examine stirrers and shakers

*Mary's Magnificat is the inspiration for this year's school of theology organised by the Lower North Island Combined Synod.*

The title of the school is 'Magnifying Grace', and it reflects the words "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour".

The school runs from midday Thursday July 8th to midday Saturday July 10th. It is open to all churches and individuals who seek to understand their faith better, and want inspiration and ideas to take and share in their home church community.

Keynote presenters will be Rev Jim Stuart, well-known for his regular Touchstone column, church historian Peter Matheson, and Gillian and John Thornley from the NZ Hymnbook Trust.

Jim and Peter reflect on the lives of past Christian stirrers and shakers. Jim speaks on John Wesley and Peter on Argula von Grumbach. The former is well-known, and Jim Stuart's recent book *The John Wesley Code*, is a wonderful resource for church people seeking Wesley's relevance to the

ecumenical church today.

Argula is not so well known. She lived at the time of the Reformation, and made a courageous stand for Lutheran teachings. One German theological professor, upset by her words and actions in the public arena, likened her to a 'shameless whore' and 'female desperado'. The relevance of both figures for how 21st century Christians share and live their faith will be explored.

With now over 450 songs published by the NZ Hymnbook Trust, Gillian and John have riches in music and theology to share. Folk will be given opportunity to enjoy some well known items and learn more new hymns to take home.

As in recent years, the School takes place at the Wanganui Girls College, with live-in accommodation provided, and the excellent food prepared by the college hostel staff.

For further information contact Jenny Olsson, Secretary to the Synod, via email: [olsson.noel.jenny@clear.net.nz](mailto:olsson.noel.jenny@clear.net.nz)

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## How united are the churches in Aotearoa New Zealand?

By Rodney Macann, National Leader, New Zealand Baptists

*I read with some surprise the World Council of Churches report on Kiwi ecumenism in the April Touchstone.*

Firstly the report states that Douglas Chial and Tara Tautari met with representatives of the Baptists among other churches. Because of the relatively short notice of the visit and the timing of their visit clashing with our annual Baptist Assembly in Rangiora, we did not meet with them.

Second they make some very strong statements about the supposed divisions between churches in New Zealand. For example, your article states: "there is a sense of sharp division between 'ecumenical' and 'evangelical' churches". And "Douglas and Tara observe that divisions between 'ecumenicals' and 'evangelicals' in NZ seem severe. Primarily a conservative/liberal division, the division is exacerbated by unhelpful stereo-types. There seems to be not one ecumenical platform that offers real opportunities for more than superficial and strained relations between the two camps."

As leader of one of the largest predominantly conservative churches in New Zealand who did not have the opportunity to meet with them I would love to know what shaped their observations.

On the same page of Touchstone, John Roberts comments on the "ecumenical winter" that we have apparently been living through and talks about the new initiative that he and Brian Turner have championed as helping us to enter an ecumenical spring. My experience is very different.

I remember the 'bad old days' when the divisions between the churches were very real. I also have vivid memories of the thaw in relationships that took place through the 1970s with charismatic renewal impacting most of the mainline churches and people discovering they had a new unity in the spirit.

It has continued and the experience of many would be that at a local level there are many joint initiatives with churches working very harmoniously on specific projects. Also at a national and leadership level the situation is very healthy.

There are excellent forums where the heads of churches meet to share with each other. My perspective is that these meetings are characterized by a warmth, acceptance and appreciation of each other and what is taking place in our respective churches. But it goes beyond that as in conjunction with the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services we have regular meetings with Government and at strategic times issue joint media statements.

It is true that there may be some tension between liberals and conservatives but I suspect that is more confined to what is happening within existing denominations. It would also be true that with the demise of the liberal wings of the church in New Zealand there has been a natural realignment of churches that would occupy historically orthodox theological positions and this would now be where the real strength of the church is.

I am not aware of enmity towards the liberals from the conservative/orthodox church, more a sadness that large parts of the church lost their way so badly with the result that they are small aging communities with few 'spiritual children'.

My experience, on assuming the leadership of the New Zealand Baptist churches three years ago, with regard to the other New Zealand churches and their leaders has been wholly positive. The new initiative that John Roberts writes of and is a part of is an addition to the good things that are already happening and may have a useful contribution to make, particularly in the important area of exploring theological frameworks for unity.

In the meantime I look forward to continuing and productive relationships with the churches of Aotearoa New Zealand.

# Solomon Islands tour shines despite cyclone

*Methodist Church of NZ (MCNZ) vice president Lana Lazarus says a Maori proverb sums up her recent visit to the Solomon Islands: He taonga rongonui te aroha ki te tangata – Goodwill towards others is a precious treasure.*

“The people we met were lovely, hospitable, and very appreciative of the support from our church. They asked us to take their greetings to New Zealand Methodists and to thank them for their help,” Lana says.

Lana accompanied Methodist Mission and Ecumenical secretary Rev John Roberts to the Solomon Islands March 13th to 21st.

MCNZ supports a number of development projects through its partner churches in Papua Guinea and the Solomon Islands, and every year John visits one of these countries to follow up on them. This year Lana joined him because she is both vice president and a member of the board that oversees Mission and Ecumenical.

Their visit was timed to coincide with the opening of the Uniting Church of the Solomon Islands’ (UCSI) new national children and youth centre at Kokeqolo, near Munda on the island of New Georgia.

During their stay John and Lana also visited other projects MCNZ sponsors on New Georgia, Banga and Choiseul Islands. This included the youth training centre at Tabaka that a group of Kiwi church people led by Rev Trevor Bennett helped build in 1991-1992.

Lana and John’s first assignment was to attend the day-long opening of the UCSI’s new children and youth centre. The centre incorporates part of the old Jubilee church built in 1952. The centre has an office, kitchen, ablution facilities, and guest accommodation.

Lana says very high percentage of UCSI members are children and young people, and this was very much in evidence at the opening of the centre.

The crowd was led to the new building by a procession of Sunday school and Girls’ Brigade members and other young people. Lana and John then cut the ribbon and led everyone into the building.

John handed over the keys, and UCSI moderator Rev David Havea dedicated the

building and declared it officially open. Feasting and singing then went on well into the evening.

During the service the next morning, John acknowledged the contribution the late Gladys Larkin made to the centre. A former nursing sister and tutor at Helena Goldie Hospital, Gladys left half her estate to the work of Mission and Ecumenical in the Solomon Islands’ Roviana district. A substantial part of her bequest went into the construction of the children and youth centre.

Two days after the opening, Lana and John visited the Tabaka Rural Youth Training Centre on Banga Island. Both were impressed with the range of activities students are engaged in under the leadership of principal Rev Wilson Agiri. These include carpentry, agriculture, mechanics, and life skills.

Cyclone Ului brushed by the Solomon Islands on March 15th. While it left the nation largely unscathed, it did make for some fairly wild canoe rides as John and Lana travelled to some of the stops on their tour, including Sasamunga Hospital on remote Choiseul Island. The rough seas did prevent them from making the trip to Vella Lavella Island to visit a UCSI copra project.

Lana says she quickly learned to be flexible in the Solomon Islands.

“Things didn’t always happen when and how they were scheduled. Our travel plans were disrupted or delayed because the airline suddenly cancelled flights and we were supposed to stay in the guest rooms at the children and youth centre but the plumbing wasn’t quite finished.

It was also necessary to be flexible and open because the theology of the UCSI is quite traditional and patriarchal. All but one of the Assembly staff are men.

John was very good in including me. He made it clear that in the MCNZ, we work in partnership between men and women, young and old, and lay and ordained.”

Lana says John is highly respected in the Solomon Islands. She thinks this is because he is honest and tells people when he doesn’t believe the MCNZ can help them. She and John are grateful for the generous hospitality they received during their visit.



UCSI moderator Rev David Havea accepts the keys to the Church's new national children and youth centre.



Lana Lazarus with UCSI Assembly staff. From left: moderator David Barakana Havea, George Alu, Eddie Pratt, John Sisiolo, Caleb Saiqoro, Lana, Eddie Kotomae, John Eto, Amon Bobal, general secretary Isaac Dakei, and Frank Barikana.

## MCNZ projects in the Solomon Islands

Other Uniting Church of Solomon Islands initiatives that the Methodist Church of NZ supports include:

### Timber dressing plant, Kokeqolo.

UCSI owns a facility where local builders would pay to have timber dressed. New machinery has been purchased, and the project now generates 20% of the UCSI assembly office budget.

### Helena Goldie Hospital, Kokeqolo.

This is a 78 bed hospital with four doctors and a dentist. MCNZ provides the salary for director of nursing Chris Leve, contributes to the cost of relieving

nurses, and has funded building projects at the hospital.

### Sasamunga Hospital, Choiseul Island.

MCNZ has helped buy a boat and outboard motor so staff can visit outlying health clinics. MCNZ has also provided building materials, refrigerators and a computer and future assistance will underwrite construction of staff houses and upgrades to the hospital’s birthing room and laboratory.

**Vella Lavella Centennial Agency’s copra project.** MCNZ aid has helped purchase a storage shed and a boat as well as provide capital for the project.



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## Spong's views supported

To the editor,

I was sorry to read such adverse criticism of John Spong's latest book, *Eternal Life* (April Touchstone).

Having several scientists in the family who cannot accept traditional teaching, I welcome a liberal 21st century approach as it is inclusive of a different, more acceptable, point of view.

Personally, as a member of Dignity NZ, I found his final chapter on the right to choose

to die a very clear exposition of the situation in today's world, where we are saved from early death by modern medical treatments, only to linger on in an increasingly worthless way.

Having watched my husband slowly waste away, blind, deaf, and suffering from Alzheimer's, I can see no virtue in only breathing, eating and sleeping.

*Hilda Bak, New Plymouth*

## Next steps for Methodist-Anglican Covenant

To the editor,

I have waited in vain for signs of human out-working of the sacred Anglican-Methodist Covenant entered into last year. So far the indications are that it has been lost in 'ecumenical space'.

I dare to prayerfully propose the following for action:

1) That the Methodist Church of NZ should now be known as 'the Methodist Church in connexion with the Anglican Church of NZ'.

2) That the Methodist Church of NZ should adopt episcopacy and a long-term president should be consecrated bishop by the Anglican bishops.

3) That the vice president be a senior layman who should be chancellor of Conference and its chair.

4) That all candidates for ordination as

presbyter be ordained jointly by the president and the Anglican bishops.

5) That all admitted as probationers should be ordained deacon in a similar manner.

6) That the conjunction of regional Anglican and Methodist synods should be a priority.

7) That the system of local ordained 'sacramentalists' (after the Anglican pattern) should be introduced to aid parishes without a presbyter or likely to be without.

8) That zoning or juncture of support services be undertaken.

9) That Methodists revisit John Wesley's vision of a spearhead society within the Anglican Church to revise our mission.

10) That we heed the declared will of the Risen Christ to make real our covenant unity.

*Laurie Barber, Invercargill*

## William Neil books sought

To the editor,

I seek two books written by UK author William Neil for an article on his life and writings to be published in a future issue of the magazine *Music in the Air*: They are:

'Apostle Extraordinary: The Life and Letters

of St Paul', 1966; and 'The Christian Faith in Art' (with Eric Newton), 1966.

I am happy to pay the standard price for second-hand items. Please contact me at email: johngill@inspire.net.nz or phone 06 356 9681.

*John Thornley, Palmerston North*

## Refresh the message

To the editor,

Andre le Roux is to be congratulated on his efforts to revive the church's life and witness. Good luck to him and those who take up his cause.

However, his efforts miss an important question that is rarely if ever considered. Over the years, churches generally have concentrated on the presentation of what is considered to be 'the message'. The problem is that despite the heartfelt desire to believe the message is unchanging – such is not the case.

The message is based largely on a completely outdated understanding of the universe and how it works. The classical Biblical view of a three-tier universe may have sufficed 1,000 years ago but it is no longer valid. The argument of 'creationism versus evolution' is

probably the sharpest current example.

It is small wonder then, that many people are leaving the Churches because they can no longer reconcile such Middle Ages thinking with our current understanding of the world around us. The situation is not helped either by the insistence of the more conservative (even fundamentalist) church members that the faith must adhere to unsupportable and obscure doctrines and ideologies.

What is needed is not a new way of promoting an old message, but a new and fresh message which truly meets the needs and understandings of modern human beings. The sad thing is that those who try to promote such views are all too often reviled and dismissed in favour of old and comfortable thinking.

*Graham Weir, Lower Hutt*

## Rap against poverty rapped

To the editor,

Regarding your piece 'Childcare centre raps against poverty' in the April edition of Touchstone: I am alarmed at two of the suggestions that Rise Against Poverty (RAP) has made.

1) That mums should be encouraged to use reusable cloth napkins. As a retired Plunket nurse, I doubt the wisdom of this. Cloth nappies require more resources in terms of water use, washing powder, bleaches, plastic waterproof pants and bedding, and possibly clothes driers.

I believe this has been researched and found wanting compared to disposable napkins. I noticed over the years that babies had less nappy rash from disposable napkins and had drier and warmer beds.

2) That RAP would entertain the growing of vegetables especially those that are eaten uncooked, on verges anywhere near the discharges of the toxins from the fuel of passing traffic. Food should be grown at a reasonable distance from roadsides.

*Shirley Grafton, Westport.*



## FROM THE BACKYARD

### Water, water everywhere?

*Gillian Watkin*

Water is life, the most precious of all the earth's resources. It is no wonder it is the primary symbol of entry to the faith community at baptism.

There is so much to say and to learn about water. I was reminded of this recently when we were faced with an abundance of water. The sprinkler had been accidentally left on for at least six hours.

The citrus trees didn't mind, and we said a little prayer of thanks that we were not living in an area where water is metered. By morning the water had been absorbed into the ground.

There is something mystical about a place when the water is absorbed in this way. Our home in the Hawkes Bay is on a flood plain. When we arrived a friendly neighbour greeted us, and when he heard of our plans to garden told us we had come to the right place. 'Three foot down and there is old river bed,' they said. Hence the good drainage. The river changed course many, many years ago.

Water is a hot topic with droughts in the north, pollution of rivers in the east, hydro dams being built in the west, irrigation and allocation matters under political scrutiny in the south.

I heard a Federated Farmers representative on the radio say that drought is more difficult than flood to cope with. With floods farmers watch the waters recede and have hope of a cleanup but with a drought there is no way of knowing how long it will continue and how long it will

take the land to recover.

The ancient story of creation reminds us in that in the beginning the wind from God swept over the face of the waters (Gen1:2). The story of the people of God starts and ends with water in abundance. It is the continued promise of God.

How sad it is that it is not the reality. The water of the Heretaunga Plains where we live comes from an aquifer, an underground water supply, fed by the Ngaruroro River. We could draw water from a bore in our yard.

It is capped, and Council advise us that resource consent is not required to get it back in action. We choose not to do this thinking it is better to be party to a monitored communal supply. If you are on town supply water do you know the source of your water? Do you know the names of the rivers and dams the water is drawn from?

The people of Israel and all desert people knew the importance of water sources. The danger for us is that water has become just another commodity.

Water is life, clean water is health. How can we share our abundance? If we have food we can give it away easily to food banks and to friends. We can ship material goods to places of need.

We are urged to save water but if we do what happens? The effects seem so disconnected to daily life. Water is a question, a challenge. We may need to revisit our old ways of justice making, of sharing our wealth. How we do this is the question.

# The lesson of our mothers

By Lana Lazarus



*E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga rau rangatira ma. Tena koutou katoa. Tena hoki koutou me o tatou tini mate e*

*hingahinga mai nei runga i o tatou marae maha o te motu. Waiho ratou kia tiraha mai ki roto i te rangimarie, waiho matou ki konei takatuu ai ki nga mahi.*

*Na reira, ko ratou ki a ratou, ko tatou te hunga ora ki a tatou, tena tatou katoa.*

Recently, someone asked me if I could remember what I did 10 years ago as the person was having difficulty recalling what they had done the week before. Much to their surprise I answered, "Yes!" They continued asking, "How come?" My response, "It was ten years ago when Te Taha Maori lost two significant women about a couple of weeks apart, namely Aunty Joy Rakena and Te Ruakawhena

Winiata."

Alongside retired presbyters, Rua Rakena and Barbara Miller-Taylor, these two women had a great impact on my spiritual growth, within the Haahi, from an early age. They both had teaching backgrounds and later on became part time educators/facilitators for what was then Maori Division. They also became influential lay leaders within the life of Te Taha Maori and the Church.

Together they nurtured me through the rangatahi and hui waahine (youth and women) groups. They gave every encouragement to study the stories of the bible and to discover one's own God understandings. I was also given the opportunity to represent Te Taha Maori on key boards and committees of the church, to analyse situations carefully, to speak out if necessary and to stand strong. Furthermore, there was opportunity to attend international church gatherings to allow me to broaden my perspectives.

Beside their influence, there was also my mother and grandmother. As I grew

up, they shared stories of my heritage and taught me to always remember that God is at the centre of my being. These stories helped me to relate being a young Maori woman. They also encouraged being open to different theological positions, spiritual awareness, and looking at the world from a holistic point of view. Caring, helping, concern for people and creation, and being honest, welcoming and compassionate, were some of the important Christian principles ingrained in me.

The role of women in the context of Aotearoa has changed since the time of my grandmother. The contribution of women in the Church especially, continues to be significant. There are many tasks and responsibilities that they carry out. There are far more prospects available and a lot more women are in leadership positions. For instance, within Te Taha Maori, the current tumuaki and rohe liaison positions belong to women.

Nowadays in the community, my family and I are involved with Maori netball in the North Harbour region. The

aim of Maori netball is to encourage Maori whanau wellbeing using netball as the vehicle. Its kaupapa (theme) is to convey the wellbeing of whanau through holistic health.

It also provides positive opportunity for young Maori girls and women to participate in a sport they enjoy. It assists them identify where they come from and provides role models being whanau by bringing together young and old alike as well as discern the meaning of being in relationship with God. What they learn is part of the teachings that I had.

Personally, those who have inspired my life are "like the light for the whole world. Making their light shine, so that others will see the good that is done and will praise God in heaven." (Matthew 5:14, 5:16). They have cared for me spiritually, supported me in my endeavours, listened to my stories and offered their wisdom.

Mothers' Day is coming up. My hope is that God's light will continue to shine brightly on all mothers and mother figures – not only on their special day but always.

## The peasants are revolting! Will you join the revolution?

Geraldine Coats, St Lukes Union Parish, Masterton

*In response to Brian Turner's letter 'CVs Be Warned' I would like to suggest that the time is now right for Uniting Congregations to become more pro-active about their future.*

Having spent a great deal of my church life in CVs, and the past 14 years serving as a minister in them, I'm feeling more than a little tired and worn. This weariness however comes not from serving the congregations but from the extra energy required to serve the demands of sometimes two or three "parent" churches, as well. How am I expected to serve God with all my heart soul, mind and strength and all these church denominations without dying from exhaustion?

At a Methodist Church synod executive meeting last year we were discussing church property, and the complaint went up that when CVs want to sell church property or change it in some way, they often failed to give proper notice to all 'Parent Bodies' involved. This lack of information from the CVs caused a lot of hard work and frustration for the Synod property committee.

When I suggested a way to solve this problem would be for the parent bodies to gift all the property tied up in CVs to UCANZ, I was laughed at. This is not a reflection on the workings of the Methodist Synod. I'm sure the response would have been the same from the other churches' courts. Be that as it may, I wasn't joking.

A major issue in all union negotiations is property. No one wants to give up what they believe is rightfully theirs. However, the big moral question is who truly owns the buildings where local congregations worship, and from whence they carry out their mission?

I am well aware that legally these buildings are the property of the Parent Bodies, Is this just and fair for CVs? All the CVs I've been associated with came together in union in good faith 40 or so years ago. Their marriages were encouraged and celebrated by their parents. They have survived and developed by taking the best of what they brought with them.

The suggestion that we can all happily divorce and go and live with our parents once again seems ludicrous. The problem for CVs is that we are still tied to our parents through the non-ownership our buildings. It is time to claim our due in order to survive.

Wouldn't it be fair and right then if the parent churches were gracious enough to sign over what is rightfully ours, instead of holding on to it as part of their assets? If they did this we could all work alongside each other as equals and not as some being dependent on others.

I suggest:

1. The Anglican, Christian Churches of NZ, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches sign over all church property which is vested in CVs and Union Parishes in New Zealand to UCANZ.

2. A Covenant of Cooperation be signed between UCANZ and these churches to continue to share resources in ministry and training.

3. UCANZ be given the authority to become the church of oversight for all ministers working in CVs.

4. The various congregations of UCANZ continue to pay a levy towards the costs of ministry training, etc. to those who provide it.

5. The primary responsibility for ministers and congregations in Union Parishes is to UCANZ. It will pass on to them any relevant information and provide representation at the various Church conferences and courts.

I am well aware that UCANZ did not want to become another denomination but if it doesn't take on the mantle of one, then all will be lost for the union movement in New Zealand.

If any of the negotiating Churches want to pick up their stumps and go home, now is the time to do it instead of slowly strangling us to death. However, I believe that if they do so without leaving their property interests in the hands of the CVs, then they would be committing a great injustice.

Are you ready to come out and fight for your rights? (non-violently of course!).

SPY BASE TRIAL

## With joy filled hearts

By Jim Consedine

*It was a moment to savour. Two hours after retiring, the jury in the trial of the three Ploughshares activists – Peter Murnane, Adrian Leason, and Sam Land – who deflated a dome at the US military spy base at Waihopai near Blenheim in April 2008, returned to a packed courtroom. It took less than a minute to read their verdicts. Not guilty on all counts.*

The applause was spontaneous, immediate and prolonged. It was renewed as the jurors were dismissed and left the courtroom. They had played a critical part in this historic decision to acquit. In the history of New Zealand law, there has never been a decision made that in certain circumstances a higher moral law existed and should prevail over the prescribed legislation of a nation.

The jury accepted that these circumstances prevailed when the three peacemakers damaged the equipment and temporarily put the antennae out of action. The three follow a long tradition of Christian pacifism dating back to the earliest days of the Church.

The jury had heard eight days of testimony and legal argument. They reached their conclusion by accepting the defence claim that the action was taken to prevent further suffering from wars involving the US.

The defence wanted to argue that the damage done to property was small compared to 'the greater good' achieved by their action which could save lives. This 'necessity defence' was ruled out by the judge.

What was allowed was a defence from the Crimes Act of 'claim of right' because the trio believed sincerely they had the right to act as they did. The judge held they did not have that right but agreed that there was evidence that they believed they did. Hence the moral argument that followed and the need to show the state of mind of each defendant at the time of the action.

Peter Murnane told the court in his testimony that the trio felt strongly the spy bases enable activities that create unspeakable evil. These include torture, the overthrow of legitimate governments, war, the extraordinary renditioning of prisoners secretly from one country to another in order to torture them, and the widespread use of depleted uranium which has a destructive lifespan of millions of years.

"In going into Waihopai, we wanted to challenge these warfaring behaviours. We went there to prevent further mass murder. It was

both necessary and our right to do so," he said.

The acquittal is a significant victory for peacemakers and the power of non-violent direct action. This action is usually taken only when all other avenues have failed. Such action is based on a love of neighbour, in this case a neighbour unknown but devastated by war.

More than 100 peacemakers, most actively Christian, gathered for two weeks to witness the trial. It amounted to a confrontation between the non-violent power of Christ and the violent power of a government lock-stepping in tune to the war plans of the US military and its allies.

The corporate media reacted with surprise. Had they been present for the duration of the trial (only on-line Scoop and two documentary makers covered the trial fully) they would have experienced little surprise. The evidence was compelling. The Waihopai base is an integral part of the US war machine and responsible for the death of innocent civilians in foreign wars.

The presence of the Holy Spirit was palpable. This court verdict was backed by prayer from religious communities, parishes and individuals across the country. Early morning and evening communal prayers and nightly Taize vigils were held outside the US Embassy and at a shrine to peacemaking saints like Oscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Phillip Berrigan and Franz Jagerstatter. In court, kuia Aunty Raina Paniora faithfully prayed her rosary. A spirit of community, peaceful co-operation, sharing, song, humour, prayer and family, was built around the trial.

Everyone noticed it, and many remarked upon it. It was reflected in the help the local Marist priests gave in providing marae-style accommodation to about 40 travellers at Emmaus House near the Embassy. The wonderful Urban Vision young people of Wellington were everywhere, supporting the trial and proving help to the community of the willing.

Catholic Workers and their friends and families came to support three of their number on trial. Some people came for an hour and stayed for a week. Collectively they formed a community of the willing, peacemaking People of God, witnessing in the central city, a stone's throw from parliament, the centre of state power.

The jury had to be affected. Their verdict reflected that fact.

*Jim Consedine is a Christchurch priest and former prison chaplain. He writes on social justice issues.*

# Genesis and Science



Joan Miles: Adam and Eve

There is a growing interest in Trinity College courses, says the Principal, Rev Dr David Bell. More people are becoming aware of the range and depth of papers offered. David will lead a tutors' team in November to teach one of the great theological subjects, Genesis and Science.

From the course notes David writes, "We are all time travellers. More than that, we are exquisite, living time machines, each of us. In our bodies and in our minds, we carry an extraordinary history. From the moment of conception until the moment of death, our human development unfolds as a pattern of evolution. Miracle upon miracle happens.

"Part of our genetic code has time travelled billions of years since primitive life first appeared on earth. The 70 or 80 years of the individual human lifespan is miniscule by comparison. Yet human history can change through one unique life well-lived; even one unique moment can prove decisive, the single moment of action or insight. It is as if all life itself has concentrated upon this moment. Everything leads to the 'now' of decision, what de Chardin described as the Omega Point. It is not blind chance that guides life to it.

"Scientifically speaking, however, it is hard to study and understand this psychological moment. A universal 'now' is elusive to catch. It may not exist at all. Albert Einstein called time itself a persistent and stubborn illusion. Why is that so? Whatever happened to 'now'?

"When we look up at the sky, the light from the sun is about 8 minutes old, light from the next closest star 4.3 years old, and the light from the closest galaxy to our Milky Way is already 2 million years old. What we experience as 'now' is mostly very old information. The night sky presents us with a breathtaking panorama of time. We can and do strangely experience in an instant the presence of time past.

"Time is inextricably bound up with human perception. Genesis has much to say about this and so we begin the course there. Joan Miles, in 'Adam and Eve', well suggests that we are creatures of both light and dust. But the story doesn't end with Biblical insights. There is much more to consider. Through God's long processes of evolution, star dust and light beams have forged in us a capacity to reflect on the universe. And when that moral self-awareness clashes with the authorities of state, religion, and science, all hell breaks loose."

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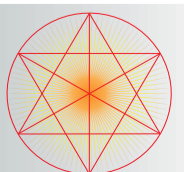
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## Partners' new arrangements pose questions to CVs

*From Page 1*

"Concern arises when congregations decline and believe the only solution is to join with another denomination. We don't believe that is the solution. We believe we need to find more creative ways to move forward."

Martin disagrees with Brian that CVs are under resourced. There is no policy to treat CVs differently, he says. In fact, they can draw on the resources of the different partner churches.

"Many CVs are small, and small congregations face critical issues in all denominations. One solution is more regional support networks that can help them find ways forward. Larger presbyteries are one way that more resources can be made available to smaller congregations," Martin says.

Methodist general secretary Rev David Bush too disagrees that the partner churches are blocking new ecumenical endeavours or withdrawing support from existing ones.

He cites the Waimakariri and Crossways congregations as examples of the new types of CVs that are emerging.

"People are looking for ways to work with other churches that are more flexible. It is a sign of the times. The ecumenical vision of the 1970s is not the current vision that is driving them."

A concern David has is the role played by Joint Regional Committees (JRCs), the regional ecumenical bodies that support CVs and serve as forums for the partner churches. He says the performance of JRCs is uneven across the country. In some regions they do not exist at all, in others they meddle in the affairs of the partner churches.

"At times the JRCs are at odds with where the partners are at and can become the tail that wags the dog. The JRCs say they would like to see the partners take a greater interest in the CVs but the JRC

themselves can act as a screen between the partners and the CVs," David says.

"The partners do care about what happens in CVs, and we need to find ways to help the partners engage with their CVs. One proposal that has been floated is that Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa NZ (UCANZ) should play the key linking role between the partners rather than the JRCs.

"This would mean the primary function of a CV's church of oversight would be to keep the partners informed," David says.

UCANZ executive officer Rev Peter MacKenzie echoes the sentiment that greater flexibility is required as the partner churches and CVs move into the future.

"In local communities there are a host of new cooperative initiatives that are not based on traditional models. Some are within denominations and some are between denominations," Peter says.

"CVs are diversifying and working with churches outside the traditional partnerships. The partner churches have to be flexible enough to endorse these relationships.

"At the same time, the partners are moving away from the 'one parish/one minister' model. This places new challenges on CVs and it is in their interest that the partners explore new ways to cooperate."

Peter says UCANZ must also become more flexible if it is to effectively support and encourage the partners to deal with CVs. He says UCANZ must continue to ask the right questions and act as a facilitator to help the partners find solutions.

To this end UCANZ is reviewing its guide to procedures. Peter says UCANZ has given him a mandate to facilitate discussion at all levels – within UCANZ, JRCs, and parishes – on these issues.

He understands Brian's concerns but sees the partner churches finding new ways of cooperating rather than withdrawing from cooperation.

## CVs Be Warned!

By Brian Turner, Waimakariri Shared Ministry

*Cooperative Ventures be warned; some denominational leaders are planning your demise. Moves are afoot in some Churches to dismantle, restrict and prevent the cooperative ventures movement from further developing.*

Whilst nationally, Church leaders and their reps are seriously negotiating a national Churches Commission for Christian Unity, some regional Church leaders, in cahoots with national nods, are working against CVs.

For example:

1. The Anglican Diocese of Christchurch has established a commission to review the model of cooperating parishes. On 31 March the commission met with national and regional Presbyterian Church leaders to review the cooperating parishes of South Canterbury. One of the options proposed was to share buildings but split into separate denominational parishes.

2. Already, the partnership between Methodists and Presbyterians in Geraldine has been dissolved, and elsewhere in the country Anglicans have withdrawn from some cooperating ventures and taken over others.

3. The executive of the Methodist Central South Island Synod has gone on record as not supporting the development of any more cooperative ventures, despite this policy never being debated or decided by the Synod as a whole, and contravening the present position of the New Zealand Methodist Church.

4. The restructuring task group of the New Zealand Methodist Church is paying little or no attention to the fact that approximately half of NZ Methodists are in cooperative ventures.

5. The Presbyterian Church's blueprint for new super presbyteries, could ride rough-shod over Union District Councils (UDC's) and their equivalents in Northland, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa and the West Coast. Presbyterian parishes in these areas are now required to give their primary loyalty to presbytery rather than their ecumenical grouping.

All this is hypocrisy at the highest level of Church governance when

• Representatives of the same Churches threatening CVs are negotiating a national Churches Commission for

Christian Unity.

• In 2009 the NZ Anglican and Methodist Churches signed a national covenant to work more closely together.

• The official position of the New Zealand Methodist Church is "To be Methodist is to be Ecumenical".

Rumours of moves against CVs surfaced in 2007-08. They included suggestions that Presbyterian and Methodist Church leaders were planning to divvy up CVs between them!

UCANZ convened a meeting with Presbyterian and Methodist Church leaders. As the then President of the NZ Methodist Church, I strongly reaffirmed the pro-union and pro-cooperation position of the Methodist Church and publicised this reaffirmation throughout the Church. This remains the national position of the Methodist Church. The Executive Secretary of the Presbyterian Church said that Presbyterian Church growth was their priority.

Church growth is one of the reasons that some denominational leaders give for wanting a re-examination of CVs. They claim that CVs do not grow as well as straight denominational parishes. If that is true, it's probably because denominations do not invest as many resources in CVs as in straight denominational parishes.

Another major driver is that CVs tie up denominational property and finance. Under the old model of CVs yes, but newer models such as the "Waimakariri Shared Ministry" of North Canterbury and "Crossways" in Christchurch, are freer from such requirements.

The bottom line is surely not self-preservation, but the call of Jesus that His disciples be one, so that the world might believe (John 17:20-23).

It's not for our survival or self-satisfaction that we are called to one-ness but that the world might believe. The disunity of the Church is a disgrace and a blot upon the Gospel of love and unity we purport to proclaim.

So then, is cooperation and unity or competitive denominationalism to rule the day? We can't have both, for as one wise-head has put it: "to not cooperate is in fact to compete".

The blatant hypocrisy of Churches in purporting to be concerned about unity nationally but acting against unity and cooperation locally, needs to be challenged.



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# Unity strengthens Christian schools

*NZ Christian schools have formed clusters and networks in order to share knowledge, boost one another's capacity, and make more credible cases for government funding.*

Many of the Christian schools in Christchurch coordinate their efforts, for example, and the Christian Schools Network (CSN) links them with other Christian schools in the South Island.

CSN chief executive Mark Larson says Middleton Grange School stands at the centre of a cluster of schools in Christchurch. Middleton Grange is the only one of them that offers classes from years 1 to 13. Its secondary school has more than 600 students.

Several Christian Year 1-10 schools in the city – Aidanfield in Halswell, Hillview in Woolston, and Emmanuel in Papanui – feed students to the Middleton Grange secondary school.

These schools have ties with Christian schools in Rangiora and Asburton, and through the CSN they have affiliation with schools in Timaru, Dunedin, Nelson, and Blenheim.

While some of these schools are small with 30 to 40 students, others have up to 200, and they are all growing.

The story in Auckland is similar with the two primary schools in the NZ Christian Proprietors Trust feeding students into the secondary school at KingsWay.

“We are looking at opportunities for new schools

in Christchurch and this fits well with the policy of the National government, which is pro-parental choice.

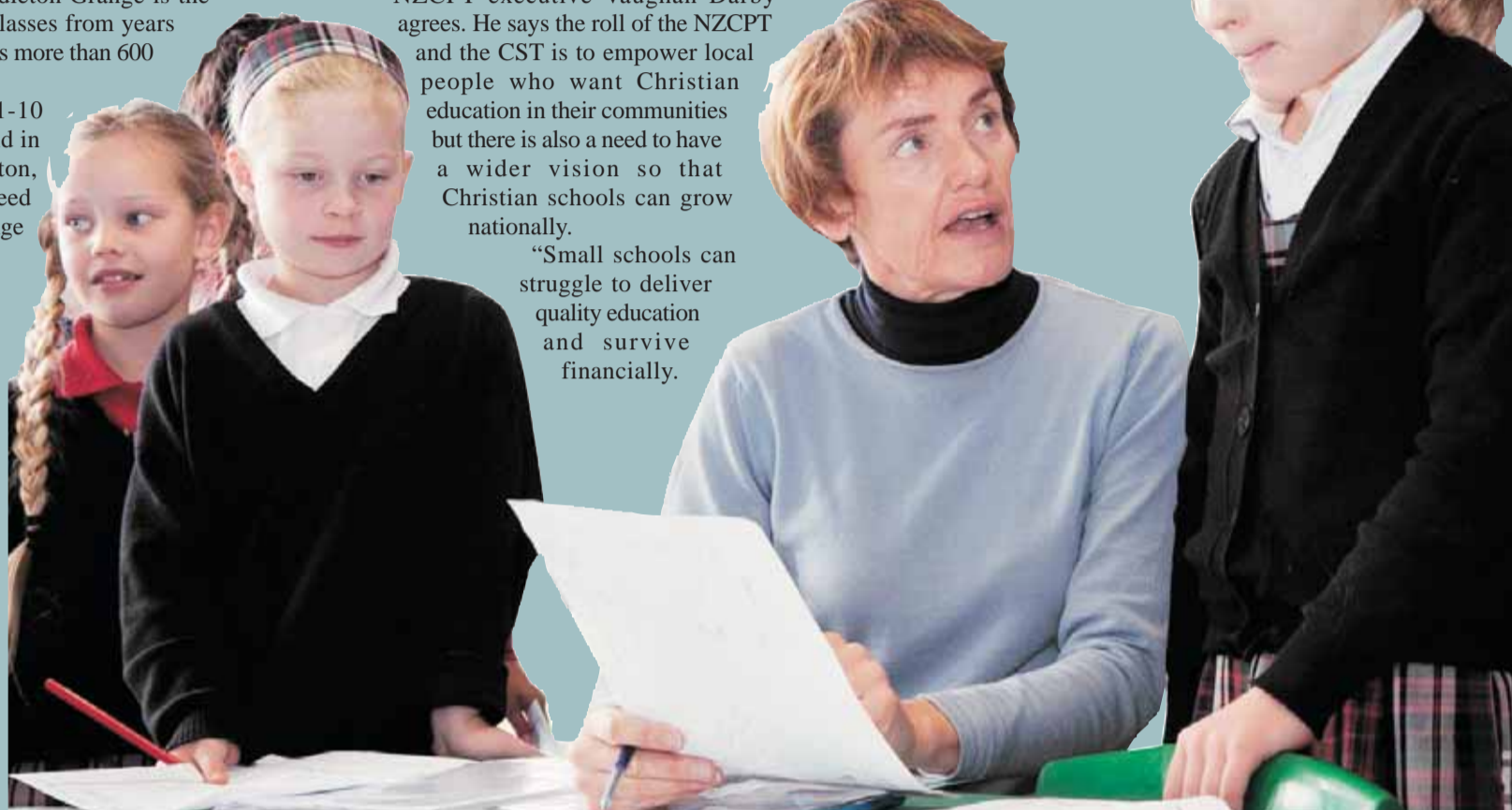
“We believe there is a place for the proprietors of Christian schools around the country to affiliate. Although they have different histories, their visions are similar.

“By affiliating they can better develop curricula based on their special character and gain traction with the government. The government doesn't want to see the proliferation of little schools,” Mark says.

NZCPT executive Vaughan Darby agrees. He says the roll of the NZCPT and the CST is to empower local people who want Christian education in their communities but there is also a need to have a wider vision so that Christian schools can grow nationally.

“Small schools can struggle to deliver quality education and survive financially.

Through greater cooperation Christian schools can grow their capacity and become more professional not only in delivering education but also in dealing with the Ministry. The Minister of Education is aware of this and is supportive of our efforts.”



## Biblical principles Aidanfield School's foundation



*Work underway on the buildings at Aidanfield Christian School in Halswell tells a vivid story.*

On one side of the campus a wing of the 1930s brick St John of God orphanage that once housed the school has recently been demolished. On another part of the campus, the foundation is being laid for a new library and science block.

This development is something of a turnaround for the school, and it illustrates how linking up with other schools can boost a smaller school's capability.

Formally called the Canterbury Christian College, Aidanfield School integrated into the state sector in 1999. At that time it offered classes from years 1 to 13. In 2006 the school was in trouble. It had some negative reports from the Education Review Office, and its finances were not healthy.

At that point the trust that owns Middleton Grange School invested in the school, and Mark Richardson, who was in senior leadership at Middleton Grange, became its principal.

“We changed the name to Aidanfield to better reflect the school's location in Christchurch,” Mark says. “We also cut out the senior years 11 to 13. We modified some other minor points and improved financial management.

“Now we have a number of new classrooms and our rolls are

growing by 25 to 30 students a year.”

Aidanfield has nearly 200 students on its roll this year. It runs six combined classes (e.g. years one and two, two and three etc.) and intends to expand to the point where it will be able to have a class at each year level.

Mark says the school's Christian worldview is expressed in both the way it teaches the NZ curriculum and the pastoral way it deals with its students.

“Some of our students have faced bullying at other schools, and their parents are very happy with the caring approach we take. We are a real United Nations. Along with Pakeha and Maori, our students come from Africa, Asia, Australia, the UK, the US, and the Pacific Islands.

“Our aim is not to indoctrinate our students but to teach them to be discerning thinkers. We start with our Biblical principles and link these to the principles of the NZ curriculum.”

Foundation principles include: 1) that there is a personal creator God; 2) that He reveals himself to mankind through creation, His Son, His Word, and through history; and 3) He continues to work in



Mark Richardson

individuals through His Holy Spirit.

The school links these principles to the curriculum by reflecting New Zealand's cultural diversity, history, and traditions, and by creating a curriculum that is not sexist, racist or discriminatory.

“In teaching math, for example, our teaching rests on

the Biblical principles of God's truth and order. Math doesn't work unless there is a sense of pattern and rhythm, and we believe this comes from God, the creator of order,” Mark says.

Similar approaches are applied to science, which is the effort to explore and understand God's creation, and social science, where students are encouraged to develop a sense of social responsibility as being part of God's creation.

Aidanfield School students are encouraged to explore their gifts, strengths, and talents and consider how they can apply them.

Senior students take part in community service. This has included painting graffiti off fences, cleaning up Halswell quarry, packing at food banks, and doing jobs around the school.

For more information see [www.aidanfield.school.nz](http://www.aidanfield.school.nz).



Aidanfield School students are encouraged to explore their gifts, strengths, and talents.





Jennifer Plane Te Paa

## Influential educator critical, constructive

By Cory Miller

*Dr Jennifer Plane Te Paa has been recognized as the 20th most influential Anglican on the planet, and she has now received a distinguished alumni award from the University of Auckland.*

The London Daily Telegraph has identified Jennifer as an influential voice in Anglican liberal circles for her outspokenness in condemning homophobia and for her active role in social justice.

Early in March, Jennifer was one of six high-achieving graduates who were recognised for contributions to their chosen field, their community, and the nation.

Alumni orator Brian Boyd says she is one of those extraordinary New Zealanders who few other New Zealanders know about. "She has had so many firsts that when the pope dies I expect her to be the first woman pope," he says.

She is the first lay, indigenous and single woman ever appointed as the head of an Anglican theological college.

Jennifer has worked as the ahorangi (principal) of Te Rau Kahikatea at the College of St John the Evangelist in Auckland for the past 15 years.

"In the beginning I found myself unexpectedly anointed to step out on a pioneering professional pathway fraught with risk and with profound uncertainty," she says.

Jennifer remains one of a handful of women who hold leadership positions within the Anglican Church.

"There is still a dearth of women, lay or ordained, holding key leadership roles across the Church," she says. "For now I am one of those oddities, richly blessed by the deposit of faith first received and then bestowed by my greatest of Maori grandparents here in Aotearoa.

"It is not just a job but a blessing," she says. "It has also been challenging, overwhelming and at times uncertain.

"In spite of my struggles I have learnt to love St John's and yearn for its future progression as teacher, mentor and leader."

Jennifer says becoming the principal of an Anglican theological college was never in her wildest dreams.

"Why would it be when there was no inspirational role model for me to aspire to?" she asks.

"Why would any Maori woman do so, when there is the double and at times triple whammy of racist, sexist and clerically structured oppression to overcome?"

Even now she often has the repeating mantra "Why me" playing in her head.

"It was Archbishop Desmond Tutu who reminded me why, with his divine sense of humour," she says.

"You do believe in a God who sides with the least of us? Then why not choose you, the complete antithesis of Anglican theological leadership," said Tutu.

"In these increasingly strange ecclesial times it is harder to stay single minded about theological education," says Jennifer.

She observes that the global Anglican Church is at risk of being old-fashioned if it forgets to be human.

"I recall the awesome memory making it momentous to be alive at the turn of the century, when more than 200 leaders emptied their purses to help alleviate human suffering," she says.

All manner of minority interests were being thought of in the spirit of justice, in a caring open-minded, openhearted concern for the minority other, she says.

But since 2001 and the growing unrest in the Middle East we are now far from this time of hope, she believes.

Conservatives in the church have become increasingly aggressive and aim to undermine the 'ungodly' liberalism of the mainstream churches.

"These are the ones who have led to indiscriminate inhuman behaviour and who refuse to dialogue. They want to influence the public so that only certain genders, ethnicities and sexualities are in control of the church."

The situation is not hopeless says Jenny, but it is serious.

She says the Anglican Church is ailing moderately. It is not incurable, it just needs a course of anti-venom, and then a gentle reorientation back toward its prior call to love justice, show mercy, and walk ever more humbly with God.

## Gardening yields new outlook on life

*One of the first things Russell did when he got his current state house was to mow over the garden and turn it into a lawn, yet he now finds himself enjoying regular visits to Wesleyhaven Village where he tends his own patch of vegetables and finds solace.*

"It's so cool there. It's a place to sit, a place where I can take time out, listen to the tui and woodpigeons. I've even got to know some of the residents there.

From the mowing over a flower garden, to now planting a garden and growing vegetables, there seems to have been quite a change in Russell's approach to life.

Russell readily admits that ongoing battles with ACC over a 2008 leg injury had left him frustrated, and when ACC told him that they had suspended all his claims, this news combined with losing his home help entitlement left him at a very low ebb.

Fortunately for Russell these same changes of circumstance led him to be reassessed by the Nurse Maude organisation, who in turn recommended regular visits from Wesley Community Action's community worker, Anne Ross. It was from those humble beginnings that there have been some recent positive changes in Russell's life.

At the stage when Anne entered his life, Russell by his own admission was prone to, "mope around a bit. The whole ACC thing mucked me around big time."

Since then Russell says the assistance provided

by Anne and Wesley, has been "brilliant, really supportive. It's not so much the advice that she gives but that she gives me other ways of looking at things. It's really turned me around."

Russell jokingly relates that when Anne first introduced to him the idea of gardening his approach was more like one of the Tui beer advertisements,

"Yeah Right", he thought, and promptly put the idea, on the back burner. However a persistent Anne arranged for a trip to the local plant shop, seedlings were purchased and things literally grew from there, to the point where he proudly relates, "I've even given some of the lettuce I've grown to my cousins.... 'I say hey bro, I grew this!'"

As Russell's vegetable supply improved so too has his outlook on life. There are still battles for him to face, however now he seems better equipped to face them. He recently received a call from his local MP Trevor Mallard to attend a meeting to discuss his ACC claims and a long stalled hearing regarding re-instatement is nearing culmination.

When Wesley Community Action recently

put the call out for the donation of a 'freezer' for the Wesley Community Foodbank at Porirua, it was Russell who responded and donated his largely unused freezer.

Russell's lounge proudly displays his National Certificate in Mental Health Support, and it is his hope that he can re-enter the workforce as a mentor to those worse off than himself.



'Hey bro, I grew this!'

## Leave a Lasting Legacy

*"The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it."*

William James

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Email: bilverst@xtra.co.nz



## What is the Spirit saying to the Church?

*This year the lectionary is leading us through the gospel of Luke but in May each of our Sunday readings is from John's gospel.*

This month we move towards a celebration of the day of Pentecost, on May 23rd. This is a day when the Church internationally celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit, the 'birthday' of the Christian Church.

Often, on this same Sunday, Methodist Churches will also celebrate Aldersgate Day (May 24th), the day when John Wesley's heart was 'strangely warmed'. Without this personal experience of God, Wesley would not have been so powerfully motivated to share his faith so persistently and effectively for the rest of his long and full life.

On Pentecost Sunday this year we will once again hear the well known

reading from Acts 2. We will be reminded that the disciples were all together in one place when a sound "like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house. All of the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

The book of Acts was written by the author of Luke's gospel, but John's gospel was written many years later. The early Church had 60 or so years to reflect on the activity of the Holy Spirit of God in their midst before the more overtly theological gospel of John emerged.

The author of John's gospel knew the impact of the Holy Spirit in the life of his community, and so can we! The Holy Spirit sent by Jesus was experienced, and continues to be

experienced as the one who reminds us of everything that Jesus taught (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit sent by Jesus was and is experienced as the Spirit of Truth which guided the early Church, and guides us into all truth (John 16:13).

Each year at Conference the Methodist Church of NZ, in all its diversity, is challenged to respond seriously to the question 'What is the Spirit saying to the Church?' This question is always asked in the context of a world and Church full of suffering.

One thing I believe the Spirit is continuing to say to us all is that we can rejoice in our sufferings, whatever they are. Those open to being influenced by the Holy Spirit have a different perspective on suffering. Why?

Because suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character and character produces hope.

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us (Romans 5:3-4).

The Holy Spirit bestows upon us the capacity to endure suffering as well as the desire and the power, where possible, to overcome it. As Pentecost approaches this year, may we as individuals and as a Church, be open to the loving and sustaining influence and guidance of te wairua tapu, the Holy Spirit. May our hearts also be 'strangely warmed' so that we can both endure and help heal the sufferings all around us.

Kia tau ki a tatou katoa, te atawhai o te tatou Ariki o Ihu Karaiti, me te aroha o te Atua, me te whiwhingatahitanga ki te Wairua Tapu, ake, ake, ake. Amine.

## What keeps us alive?

## LIBRARY OF FAITH

By Jim Stuart



*Last month we celebrated Anzac Day. For reasons I'll never understand, war continues to plague humankind revealing a dark side of existence*

*that raises the deeper question of whether there is an ultimate purpose in life at all.*

Human beings do things in war that they would never do in ordinary life. In spite of the ugliness of war, some people engage in the most extraordinary acts of courage and compassion.

A book that I treasure and that addresses the deep contradictions at the heart of humanity is the extraordinary record of one man's struggle to survive the brutality of the Holocaust. The book, Man's Search for Meaning, chronicles the experience of Austrian psychiatrist Viktor

Frankl in the Nazi concentration camps, first Theresienstadt, then Auschwitz and finally Turkheim, near Dachau.

Over a period lasting from September 1942 until April 1945 when the concentration camps were finally liberated, Frankl's wife was murdered at Bergen-Belsen, and his parents and brother were murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz. His only consolation was that his sister escaped the horrors of the Holocaust by emigrating to Australia.

The central theme in this moving record of human suffering is the question of how Frankl could find a life worth living, having lost every possession, witnessing every value and moral principle destroyed, enduring the pains of hunger, the bitterness of cold winters and daily threats of extermination.

Frankl raises the eternal question of what a human being can do when he realised that, "he had nothing to lose except

his so ridiculously naked life". He observed that the words of the German philosopher Nietzsche came to mind, "He who has a why to live can bear almost any how."

The book describes how the concentration camp was organised to deprive a human being of the means of life. What remained, Frankl writes, was "the last of human freedoms – the ability to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances".

He discovered, to his surprise, that amidst the hunger, humiliation, fear and anger at the injustice of it all, life was still rendered liveable by deeply held visions of beloved persons, the essential truths of a deep faith, an abiding sense of humour and the daily healing beauties of nature. He survived, he says, by finding meaning in the suffering.

Reflecting back on his personal experience of the Holocaust, Frankl

concluded that the greatest threat to our humanity is what he calls "the existential vacuum... a widespread modern phenomenon". In other words, a loss of the feeling that life is meaningful.

He calls this our Sunday neurosis, "the depression which afflicts people who become aware of the lack of content in their lives when the rush of the busy week is over".

In our age of endless consumption, constant activity, and a vague discontent, the words of Frankl written during the darkest moment of his life are worth writing on our hearts, "For the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets... the truth – that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which one can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: the salvation of man is through love and in love."

## ADJUSTMENT AND UNITY

By Lyndsay Jacobs

*Recently I was pruning tress and bushes, part of the seasonal clean up. It was a misty morning and I wrapped myself up to cope with the biting cold.*

I had been working for about an hour when the mist cleared and the sun came out. Off went the jersey and I went inside to get a hat. I had desperately needed that jersey but then I was desperate to tear it off. Conditions had changed and I needed to change to carry on with my task. Same task, different me.

And yes, I certainly needed the hat once the sun was out. I had a melanoma removed from my face a couple of years ago. I wouldn't be gardening – nor doing anything else – if I hadn't dealt with that. Surgery was life saving.

You can probably see where I am going with this. The church has a job to do. But it often needs to change to do its job. Same task,

different church. Sometimes even surgery is vital.

Over the last 50 years the church in New Zealand has been called to make huge adjustments. In a radically different world, the place of the church has changed dramatically as well. Confident, influential churches that were steaming towards unity were confounded as more and more people chose to ignore them.

How well are we adjusting? Despite the best efforts of many, we need to admit, not very well.

- The New Zealand community knows less and less about church. We are challenged to start at a new place in a new way. Our community needs the gospel more than ever but what is the gospel for 21st century Kiwis and how do we share it?

- Most congregations ('denominational' or 'uniting') are a shadow of their previous life, and

many have gone. 'Numbers' are down. We struggle to find the strategy to provide a sense of local, regional and national church.

- Ministry and leadership, which was formerly largely maintenance, must now be pioneering. Where once we maintained or replicated congregations, we must now renew or create centres of Christian community.

- Cooperative Ventures (union and cooperating parishes, shared ministries, shared buildings, and other ecumenical projects) were seen by many as early, visible signs of a welcome ecumenical tsunami. The urgent and passionate prayer of Christ, on the evening before his crucifixion, that his disciples would be one, that the world might believe, looked like taking a giant step towards fulfilment. Now Cooperative Ventures are something of a challenge (even a problem) for

our denominational families, created in another time and another world, as we seek to redefine ourselves.

We are all New Zealanders and we are all church. If we were serious about adjustment we'd start with our togetherness. Christ prayed earnestly for that – so his message would be clearly understood and accepted. Talking about loving one God and one 'neighbour'hood, and practising many Gods and division, is hypocrisy.

Our togetherness is at the heart of our message and it is also at the centre of our current reality. We are in the same boat; always have been. We owe it to ourselves and our community to find simple, 21st century ways of being church together in New Zealand.

When you wrap up to go out in the cold, it is almost impossible to believe that an hour later you will be stripping off. Do you think, maybe, the sun is coming out?



## Healing through play & song

Fun and games can help heal trauma and in Haiti demand for both fun and healing is high.

Christian World Service's "cousin" via the ACT Alliance, the Church of Sweden is specialising in providing what are technically called psychosocial support sessions for Haitian children.

Church of Sweden worker Mikael Wiking explained that what looks like child's play can in fact be a profoundly therapeutic experience for children in trauma after catastrophes like the January 12 earthquake.

The psychosocial work in Haiti is highly varied in the numbers of children dealt with. In one setting nearly 2000 children benefit during weekdays from play sessions, toys and daily art opportunities.

In March helping them get back to some sort of schooling was also a priority.

ACT Alliance staff were working on setting up 19 emergency schooling sites with uniforms and school supplies for 10,600 students in the Leogane commune area.

## Can Fiji's future leaders build peace?

*Fiji's young people have a unique perspective on their country's ethnic and racial tensions and a very positive role in making change, says a report from CWS partner, Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECEA).*

CWS's Trish Murray has just returned from Fiji with a copy of the ECEA report *Culture, Conflict: Implications for young people in Fiji*. ECEA's youth peace programme was in part prompted by concerns about the effects of Fiji's coup history. Nearly half the population have no memory of pre-coup Fiji and ECEA staff were worried about what message armed takeovers of democratic governments was sending young people about ways to resolve conflict.

Coups result from political and ethnic tensions and they have themselves triggered further tensions and conflicts. These include desecration of places of worship, non-renewal of land leases and an increase in violent and property crimes. ECEA's research questions the role of young people in these conflict processes and their potential as peace-builders now, not

just in the future.

The research brought Fijian and Indo-Fijian young people together in workshops and focus groups looking at perceptions and experiences of conflict and their suggestions for peace building. While initially participants thought both ethnic groups in Fiji live peacefully together, once separated into ethnic groups the areas of tensions came out.

Discrimination at school and in the workplace, unacknowledged racism and temple desecrations were the major issues. One Indo-Fijian noted "we constantly hear that this is not your country, which makes me feel as if I am a refugee. Why are we still regarded as refugees at the mercy of the Fijians when we have lived here for generations?"

A Fijian boy had his eyes opened to the hurt. "In school many times when arguing with Indian classmates, we shout at them to 'go back to India'; but I never thought it was racism. But now I realise it's wrong to say that."

Indo Fijians noted the tendency to blame Fijians for racism, when they were just as much to blame for using stereotypes, like Fijians

are always broke. "Most Indians I know won't loan money or rent property to Fijians but will do to Indians. They judge individual Fijians based on stereotypes. Both Fijians and Indians need to relook at themselves and what they teach their kids, to move away from this thinking."

Religion is an area where young people want to focus more on their similarities. "It has been interesting to learn today that Christians, Hindus and Muslims all have similar beliefs on forgiveness, mercy and resolving conflict. These are things we should be taught more so we can respect other religions too."

The young people see a future when they can fuse their cultures without losing their own unique traditions. They call for more education in schools on each other's religions, criminalisation of racial slurs, formation of inter-ethnic youth groups and opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges to deepen understanding.

CWS has been funding peace camps and other aspects of the ECEA programme so young people can begin their work to build peace between all Fijians.

## Foreign Affairs set to change overseas development funding

By Pauline McKay, national director  
Christian World Service

*In an April 19th letter the Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully writes that the government has decided NZ Overseas Development Agency (NZODA) funds should be focused on economic development in the Pacific region and that current partnerships with NGOs are out of step with these priorities.*

To meet these priorities the Minister asks officials to redesign arrangements for funding NZ development NGOs. He envisages a fund, administered by officials, that prioritises support for the Pacific and South East Asia with the ability to support some projects else in the developing world.

He says he has asked officials to look at arrangements for funding responses to humanitarian emergencies. He wants funds to be more readily available for NGOs to meet priority needs quickly and efficiently. He believes tender processes have wasted time and set back relief efforts.

Finally he says he looks forward to sharing the new framework and plan to transition from the old system with the NGO sector.

His letter raises more questions than provides answers. Some of you may have heard me (and others) on Radio NZ's Morning Report last month voicing this opinion and lamenting the fact that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) staff no longer attend the traditional MFAT/NGO meetings.

At these meetings we could have put questions to the officials regarding these new arrangements. We only heard that MFAT staff would not be attending the meeting shortly before it took place and

that the Minister was going to send a letter later.

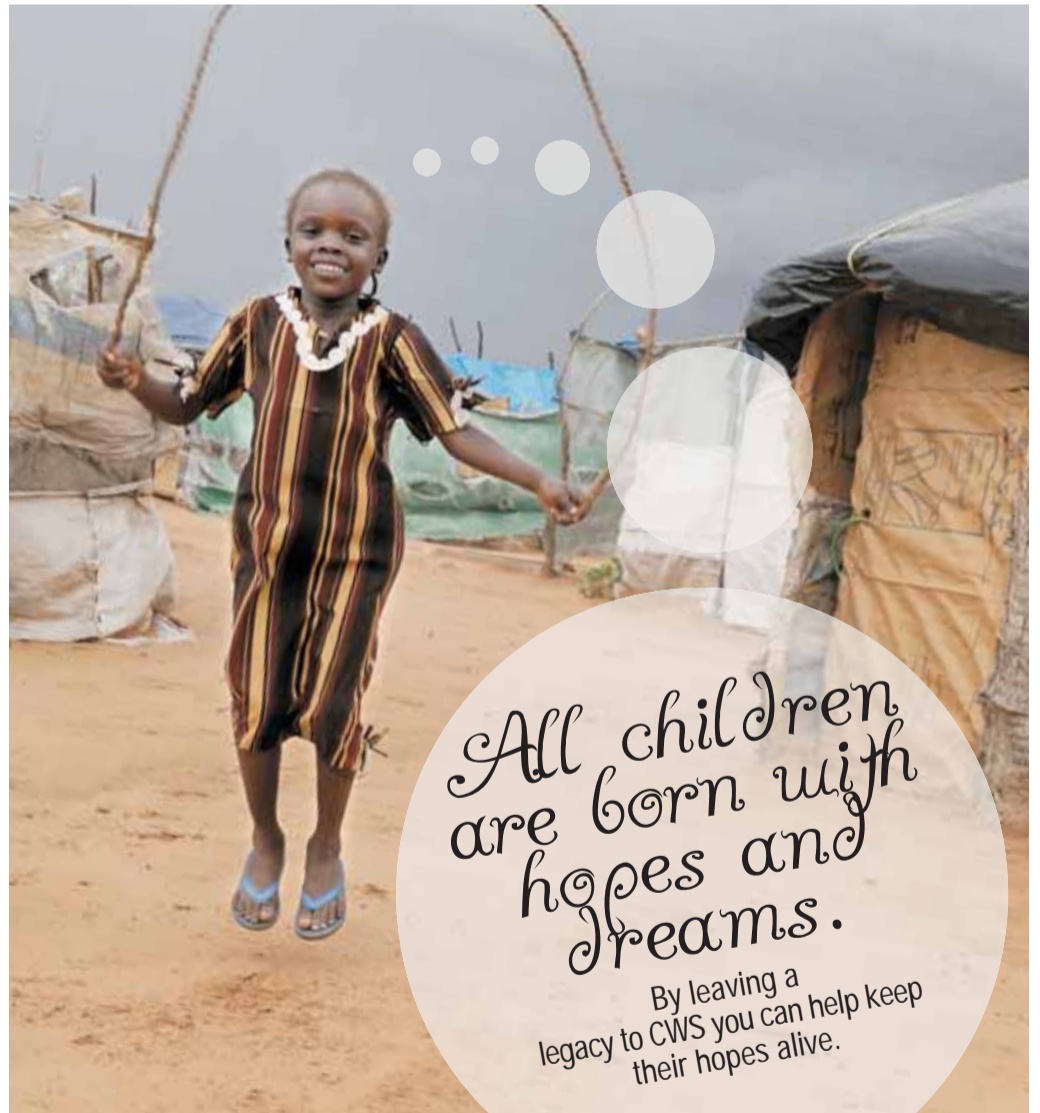
On Morning Report the Minister made comments about the way NZ International Aid and Development Agency's funding schemes are administered. The Minister said they are administered by a committee of NGOs and there was a perception that those not on the committee miss out on funding and there are some alleged issues of fairness.

The funds are administered by a committee made up of elected representatives from NGOs on a rotational basis and staff from NZAID. It is a peer review process and projects are judged on whether they fit the KOHA criteria and meet NZ Overseas Development Agency guidelines. A recent review by an independent consultant found that this process was robust and fair, as have previous reviews.

CWS has always found the process to be engaging and sometimes challenging but the scheme has provided the NGO sector with cohesion, strong skills through training programmes, and ensured high standards of programme delivery.

CWS is monitoring the situation carefully. We are very concerned at the fact that there is very little time until the end of the financial year on 30 June for us to learn fully about the transition plans as mentioned in the letter.

This situation and its associated uncertainties have major ramifications for CWS and its programme partners. We will keep you posted on all developments and particularly when we learn precisely what will replace the funding schemes.



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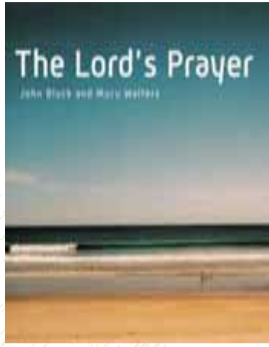
Christian World Service is the development, justice & aid programme of New Zealand Churches.

# The Lord's Prayer

*This is a small volume but one that speaks volumes. It presents an opportunity to review, rethink and reconsider just what the most well-known of all Christian prayers might mean to us today.*

The Lord's Prayer was the only prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, an indication perhaps of its worth. This volume is offered not only as a refresher, but also as a study resource and provides interesting questions for group discussions and analysis.

The authors invite the readers, and especially people who are not very religious, to engage in



an exploration of this prayer. The book begins with the acknowledgement of the Lord's Prayer origins in Palestine and then seeks to contextualise in an Aotearoa, and 21st century context.

The language and intent of the prayer is addressed through a line by line analysis revisiting the meaning of each expression from the "old English" into today's context. New and different ideas about the meanings implied and intended are aired. There is a section dedicated to the Maori text of the Lord's Prayer and translations are offered that provide further perspectives for consideration.

*By John Bluck and Muru Walters  
Anglican Taonga, 2010, 40 pages  
Reviewer: Bella Ngaha*

This book is a refreshing review of the prayer we take so much for granted. It allows those well-versed with it to revisit and reconsider how to understand and use it, privately, quietly, as well as in concert.

For those not so familiar with this prayer, it offers insights into understanding God, our universe and our place in this world. It challenges the reader to celebrate God and we are encouraged to use the prayer in different ways; to say it alone quietly, to speak it aloud alone or with others, to sing it, to chant it, to dance it even or to say it in Maori.

No matter how it is done we are encouraged to just DO IT and to rejoice in how it makes us feel! This valuable resource will make you want to celebrate the Lord's Prayer.

Review copy supplied by Epworth Books.

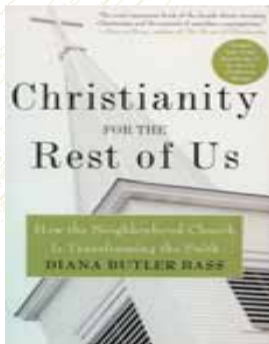
# Christianity for the Rest of Us – How the Neighbourhood Church is Transforming the Faith

*Diana Butler Bass is an American writer who has undertaken extensive study on the life and health of mainstream American Protestantism. This book is a result of her study.*

She begins by noting that mainstream Protestantism is meant to be dying, that congregations and denominations which look upon themselves as progressive or liberal are perceived to be withering on the vine. Sometimes we even internalise this belief and are trapped in the inevitability of decline. Growth is for conservative evangelical churches that offer the appeal of certainty and often package their message in a very savvy way.

Butler Bass challenges this and offers us cogent proof that there is nothing inevitable about decline.

She begins by noting the profound changes in society that have been a challenge to mainstream churches. To make this point she takes us back to her childhood in suburban Baltimore, which she calls "an urban village of



the 1960s". This community was apparently unchanging and the churches – including the Methodist parish she grew up in – were at the centre of community life. Now rapid urban change has made the neighbourhood almost unrecognisable. While her old church is still hanging in there it is but a shadow of its former self. I suspect many of us would have a sense of wistful recognition reading this story.

She acknowledges that society is in flux, what we call 'post modernity' makes clear allegiance difficult, and that this is a crisis for

the mainstream churches. However, the examples she offers of growing churches show it is possible to offer a meaningful experience of community and that this leads to growth.

The churches she studies include Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Disciples of Christ. In age at least one is very old, while another – a Spanish language Episcopal parish – is very recent.

She identifies 10 characteristics that are hallmarks of successful mainline churches. They are hospitality,

discernment, healing, contemplation, testimony, diversity, justice, worship, reflection and beauty. These churches are quite different from one another but all are nurtured by these qualities.

I particularly liked her analysis that the way to growth is through attentiveness to practices and attitudes at the heart of Christianity.

Think of hospitality, which is so strong a feature in our church life. This is deeply rooted in the Christian tradition. Perhaps discernment (intentional listening to the prompting of the Spirit) and testimony (telling your story and accounting for your hope) might be disconcerting for some of us in the mainstream but she gives cogent accounts of their power.

I happily recommend this book to you. I have two small 'buts' though. Firstly the book comes out of an American context which is more churchd certainly than Pakeha culture is. Also this is neither a magic bullet, nor a cure for our decline. Rather it is a cogent argument that there is hope if we put our attentiveness and care into being church.

*By Diana Butler Bass  
2006, HarperOne, 336 pages  
Reviewer: David Poultney*

# Eco-Faith - Creating and Sustaining Green Congregations

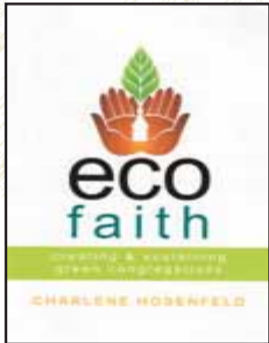
*One of the most pressing areas for Christian mission today is the care of creation.*

As a church it is one of our core principles. But to what extent has it become an incarnational reality for congregations? Do we honour the earth community to which we belong as we 'do' church? Do we preach good news to all of creation? Do we walk the eco-talk?

In the US and the UK many local faith communities have begun to wrestle with these questions as they rise to the mission challenge of the degradation of God's creation. In a pastoral letter to their church in November 2009, the United Methodist bishops in the US began with the arresting statement: "God's creation is in crisis". They urged their church to practice environmental holiness. They say that "we cannot help the world until we change our way of being in it".

This book has emerged from this context. It is a convincing call for transformed local churches, and a source of inspiring stories of congregations from around the US who are changing their way of being in the world.

It is a unique coming together of ecological science, theology and research-based psychology. Yet it is a very user-friendly and a practical guide for the academic and



non-academic, clergy and lay people.

One new theological insight I gained was in reference to the mandate God gives humanity in Genesis to have 'dominion' over the earth. This has often been interpreted as free license to dominate. But apparently the Hebrew word means "higher on the root of a plant", and so most likely implies human dependency on everything that is under us. Without a healthy planet we face oblivion.

One frustration I found as a reader was the strong American focus of the book. Many of the practical suggestions are irrelevant to our context. Yet despite this there is enough of value to justify picking it up.

For example, the chapter on worship is very useful. It includes all sorts of material on how we can green rites of passage ceremonies such as baptisms, weddings and funerals.

As a leader of children's ministry in my own parish there is an inspirational chapter on children's activities with some very exciting ideas about how to foster understanding and care of the Earth with the youngest members of the congregation.

The same could be said for the section on 'special projects'. Has your congregation ever thought of holding a meat-free event? Hosenfeld, suggests that one of the most

'inconvenient truths' for many of us is that meat eating is a major contributor to environmental problems.

Many Methodists do not realise that John Wesley was a vegetarian. Is this something for us to wrestle with as we seek to live more lightly on the earth? Hosenfeld also outlines what a local foods event might look like. Such an event would surely have all kinds of mission potential.

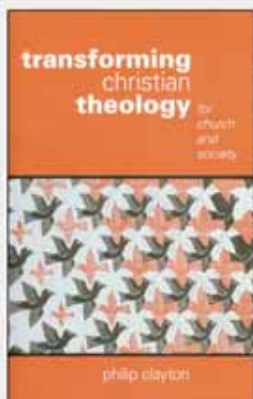
Christmas has become the high-season of consumerism in Western societies such as ours, largely shadowing the celebration of the birth of Christ. "I'm dreaming of a green Christmas" is a thought-provoking section also.

A chapter that details six green initiatives taken by local churches is inspirational. Each story posed the question 'If they can do it, why can't we?' I particularly enjoyed the story of how the Society of Friends Centre in Philadelphia was transformed from an old, ecologically wasteful building into a state of the art eco-temple. The decision to preserve the old buildings instead of constructing new was an important first step.

If you want to sharpen and deepen the ecological mission of your local church, this book is a good resource. Indeed, its overriding impact on me was to strengthen my determination to assist with the greening of congregations in Aotearoa.

Review copy supplied by Epworth Books.

*By Charlene Hosenfeld  
2009, Pilgrim Press, 195 pages  
Reviewer: Mark Gibson*

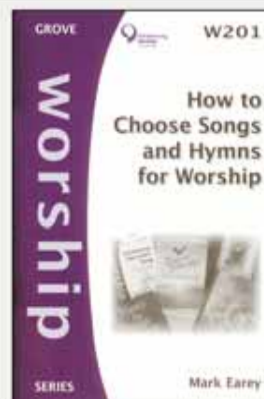


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## ON SCREEN

A film review by Janet Chambers



Eleven year old 'Boy' (James Rolleston) and his younger brother Rocky (Te Aho Eketone-Whitu) live in an 'interesting world' of imagination and hanging around the village store. When Grandma's peach-coloured old car patters off to a funeral, Dad (Taika Waititi) blasts onto the scene in his V-8, with a couple of sidekicks, fresh out of jail and looking for buried treasure.

Taika Waititi has created a Dickensian assemblage of memorable characters. Dad's real name is Alamein, but he prefers to be addressed as Shogun. There are a great many interesting names in the Waihou Bay community on the East Cape – the sisters Dynasty, Dallas and – naturally – Falcon Crest, the much-admired Chardonnay and the benign Weirido on the beach. Also playing a key role is a magnificent goat.

Waititi is writer, director and lead actor. However, this is no self-indulgent, slow compilation of a director's favourite sequences. The film rocks along at a fair old pace, resisting the temptations of a background of iconic New Zealand

scenery. Set in the early 1980s, the cinematography is exemplary and the locations are spot on. The music is so much part of the movie that I didn't notice until the credits how many songs had been used. The casting is brilliant, particularly the two boys.

In this coming of age movie Boy is forced to consider the meaning of words like 'potential' and 'retrograde'. Rocky lives with guilt at his mother's death in childbirth. The ending is abrupt, but makes sense, as the three boy-men meet at the graveside.

Like many directors' early features, this movie started life as a short film. 'Two Cars, One Night' (2003) was nominated for an Oscar in the shorts category. The initial title for the full-length film was 'Choice' – as in the kids' comment of appreciation. The script was developed by Waititi at a Sundance writers' workshop in 2005. During shooting the working title was Volcano. The vitality and exuberance of performance is summed up by the not to be missed post credits cast haka. Waititi has worked with Jemaine

Clement and Bret McKenzie in live comedy and as writer/director on episodes of Flight of the Concorde. Clement was one of the leads in Waititi's Eagle vs Shark (2007). In Eagle Waititi was learning his trade as a director, while waiting for a part for himself that was more than the walk on comic relief. As it turned out he had to create his own character. Boy takes a successful step for New Zealand filmmaking.

Don't watch this film if you are offended by bad language, patchy childrearing or the depiction of marijuana use. I did wonder about the wisdom of the two mothers plus babies and a posse of small boys in the row in front of me. But I have no doubt that those boys would have understood the essence of the plot and characters. Do see Boy if you are prepared to be caught up in laughter and lament together.

Janet Chambers lives in Christchurch with her husband Stephen and two sons.

Her most recent qualification was an Honours degree in Art Theory from the University of Canterbury.

## MOTHERS IN THE BIBLE

With Mother's Day upon us it is timely to think about mothers in the Bible. There are not as many named as you may expect, particularly in the New Testament, where most named women have stories that do not revolve around giving birth to someone important. Except for the narrative tales of Genesis only a handful of named Hebrew women are mothers, apart that is, from the Queen Mothers. It was more important to know who the King's mother was than to know the names of his wives. Most Queen Mothers are not given stories, so their names are not familiar to us. The most common female name in the OT is Maacah, used more than the popular NT name Mary. There are at-least seven females named Maacah and only one has a story.

## Name the Mother of:

Jacob	___ B ___	Gen 27:6
Gad	___ I ___	Gen 30:10-11
Dan	___ B ___	Gen 30:5-6
Dinah	___ L ___	Gen 30:20-21
'all living'	___ E ___	Gen 3:20
Perez & Zerah	___ M ___	Gen 38:24-30
Gershom (Moses' son)	___ O ___	Ex 2:21-22
Ephraim	___ T ___	Gen 41:50-52
Joseph	___ H ___	Gen 35:24
Miriam	___ E ___	Num 26:59
Ishmael	___ R ___	Gen 16:15
Isaac	___ S ___	Gen 21:2-3
Absalom	___ A ___	2Sam 3:3
Samuel	___ N ___	1Sam 1: 20
Josiah	___ D ___	2Kg 22:1
Timothy	___ C ___	2Tim 1:5
Boaz	___ H ___	Mtt 1:5
Eunice	___ I ___	2Tim 1:5
Athaliah	___ L ___	1Kg 16:30 +2Kg 8:16
'Salome' (dancing daughter)	___ D ___	Mk 6:22
John Mark	___ R ___	Acts 12:12
John the Baptist	___ E ___	Lk 1:57-63
Mother-in-law of Ruth	___ N ___	Rth 1:22

Answers: Rebekah, Zilpah, Bilhah, Leah, Eve; Tamar, Zipporah, Asenath, Rachel, Jochebed, Hagar, Sarah; Maacah, Hannah, Jeddah; Eunice; Rahab, Lois, Jezebel; Herodias, Mary, Elizabeth, Naomi

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## Bible Challenge

## Worship as public art

A gathering intended to shift our understanding of church worship from primarily a static event led from the front, to an art form that is interactive and participatory will be held over Queen's Birthday weekend (June 4-7) in Christchurch.

The aim of the Just Worship is to enhance the types of worship people already practice.

It will introduce participants to ways of creating sacred spaces outside of church buildings and encourage people to engage with God and the issues facing our world.

Presenters will show participants what they have been doing with worship inside church buildings and in public spaces.

These include Cheryl Lawrie, who works with the Uniting Church in Australia to connect spirituality with local culture and context, particularly with the unchurched. Cheryl curates ritual experiences and public installations that engage with everyday themes of life: bewilderment, fear, hope, and fragility.

Her specialties are creating sacred spaces in basement carparks and prisons. She regularly writes on spirituality for the Melbourne Age, and blogs at [www.holdthisspace.org.au](http://www.holdthisspace.org.au).

Presenter Marcus Curnow hangs out with the Melbourne ministry for the marginalised people Urban Seed. He also coordinates a network of communities committed to worship that sustains mission.

Dave White lives in Hamilton. His best work is inspired by the taniwhas of the Waikato River – slippery, magical, and mysterious. He installs large-scale, Easter Stations of the Cross in the Hamilton Gardens.

Christchurch's Peter and Joyce Majendie are well-known for their large-scale public sacred spaces and worship events at Christmas and Easter. Their Peace Labyrinth takes over Latimer Square for five days at Christmas.

Just Worship will be coordinated by Rev Mark Pierson, who works for World Vision.

The focus of Just Worship will be worship based on art installations. The venue is Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, in downtown Christchurch.

Registration fee includes programme and meals but not accommodation.

For more information email [justworship@worldvision.org.nz](mailto:justworship@worldvision.org.nz) or visit [www.worldvision.org.nz/churchevents](http://www.worldvision.org.nz/churchevents).

## The REV...

by Dale Sweeney



# Papatoetoe church walks the talk for Oxfam

*You could say Wesley Methodist Church Papatoetoe puts their money where their feet are when it comes to supporting Oxfam International.*

Four teams of four people from Wesley Papatoetoe each raised thousands of dollars for the charity's efforts to find solutions to poverty and injustice by taking part in the Oxfam Trailwalker challenge. To meet the challenge teams must walk 100km in 36 hours or less.

Wesley parish steward Peter Lemanu says the four teams represented a real cross section of the congregation. One team was made up of women, one was men, one was youth, and one was mixed couples.

The teams created their own names. The women's team called themselves 'Footprints'. The men called themselves 'WFC', which stand for Walkers for Christ. The youth were called 'Wesley Healing Love'. And the mixed team was 'Don't Weight Up'.

"We are a real United Nations at Wesley and you could see that in the teams," Peter says. "The women's team had a Maori, a Samoan, an Indian, and a South



The Footprints team (in green tee shirts) crosses the finish line of the Oxfam Trailwalker challenge.

African. The youth team was two Samoans and two Tongans, and the men's team was a South African, a Zimbabwean and an American. The mixed couples were all Pakeha.

"Everyone was taken right out of their comfort zones. They have been training non-stop since November. All of the teams made

the distance in less than 30 hours. It was a massive achievement."

The 100km course is in the vicinity of Taupo. Teams have support crews that make sure they have the food and water they require. Peter says all Wesley teams stayed at a local marae near Taupo, which made the event very enjoyable.

The teams took pledges and held sausage sizzles and culture nights to raise money for Oxfam. The Oxfam Trailwalker website says Trailwalker 2010 has raised \$730,000.

Peter says former Wesley Papatoetoe minister Rev Andre Le Roux got the congregation involved in Oxfam Trailwalker

four years ago. Andre is now undergoing treatment for cancer and he was very much in the thoughts of the Wesley Trailwalker teams.

The young people chose the name of their team 'Healing Love' as a tribute to Andre. They say Healing Love expresses their affection for him as a friend and leader and their hope for his recovery. It also reflects his legacy in getting the church involved with the Oxfam trail walk.

One sad note was that the leader of the women's team Dawn Hughes had to miss the walk. Dawn lost her brother and father, and had to travel to South Africa for their funerals.

Team members were Footprints: Dawn Hughes, Lisa Gunanayagam, Lynette Lemanu, and Elaine Collins. WFC: Simon Williams, Dale Walterhouse, Gonald Present and Abednico Malandu. Healing Love: Julianne Lauhinga, Fano Asiata, Michael Walter Lemanu, and BeauAnne Bates. Don't Weight Up: Dawn Trenberth, Richard Trenberth, Simon Kay and Janina Kay.

**What are the kids up to at your church? Take some photos, write a story and send them to Doreen Lennox lennox@xtra.co.nz**

# Kidz Korna!

Welcome to the May Kidz Korna

## WHAT'S COOKING?



Anesu, Gary and Richard making biscuits.



The finished product!

The children at St John's heard that the ladies in the Women's Fellowship were raising money for a special project. We learned that the money they were raising was to help young people in Nicaragua and New Zealand.

Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in the world and many children do not get enough to eat and many do not finish primary school.

The churches in Nicaragua have started a programme to educate people so they can grow better crops, start small businesses, and build a better future.

This means that the children will have healthier food and the families can earn more money so the children can stay at

school, learn more and get jobs when they leave school.

How could we help?

The ladies were fundraising on Sunday mornings by having special morning teas and people in the congregation were asked to donate a gold coin. This was going to be for six weeks.

The kids decided to help by doing some baking. We've just done this for the first Sunday. It was fun. Some of the boys made chocolate chippie biscuits and the girls and very small boys made pikelets. After morning tea there was not a single biscuit or pikelet left.

Next Sunday we're going to help serve morning tea.

### WORD SEARCH

In the word search there are the names of 15 children and young people in the bible. When you have found them the remaining letters will tell you something that Jesus said.

- Abe • brothers • Cain
- children • daughter
- David • Esau • Goliath
- Jacob • Jonathan
- Joseph • Josiah
- Miriam • Samuel
- Timothy

J	O	S	E	P	H	L	H	E	T
B	O	C	A	J	E	S	A	U	T
R	H	N	E	R	D	L	I	H	C
O	E	C	A	H	I	E	S	T	T
T	C	L	D	T	R	U	O	A	I
H	E	A	N	D	H	M	J	I	M
E	C	M	I	R	A	M	L	O	
R	O	V	M	N	E	S	N	O	T
S	A	B	E	L	T	O	M	G	H
D	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	E	Y

### EASTER QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
2. The angel said, "Don't be afraid."
3. They ran to the disciples.
4. Jesus told his followers to go to Galilee.

### BOOK REVIEW

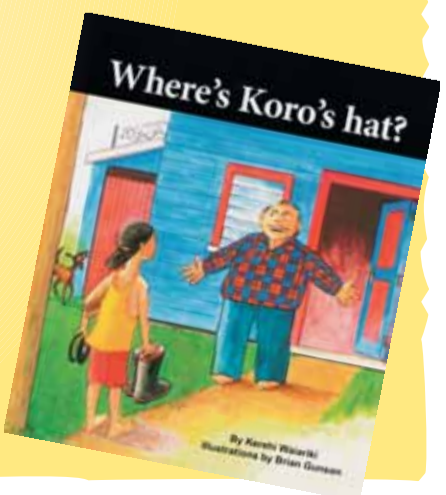
Title: Where's Koro's Hat?  
 Author: Kerehi Waiariki  
 Illustrator: Brian Gunson  
 Publisher: Huia Publishers

This is one in a series of books for very young children. Koro wants to go fishing but cannot find his hat.

All young children know that you must wear a hat if you're going out in the sun and Koro asks his family if they know where his hat is.

Koro has his bait for fishing, his fishing line, kete, gumboots and knife but no hat - until his grandson comes to the rescue.

A good book to share aloud with small children.



## Long life in ministry leaves a sweet taste



Trevor and Gloria Shepherd.

*During his long career in ministry Rev Trevor Shepherd advised parishioners to mark anniversaries because he believes it is important for us to celebrate.*

It was appropriate then, that last month St John's Methodist Church in Hamilton East whipped up a cake to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Trevor's own entrance into full-time service for the church.

Among the many accomplishments and highlights of his career was a decade spent in the Solomon Islands, two visits to the Holy Land, and an audience with Pope Paul VI.

One April 6th, 1940 Trevor left the family farm at Port Albert, on the Kaipara Harbour to become a home missionary at Hikurangi. The Hikurangi circuit had a central church and five country churches, and this meant doing three services on a Sunday plus Bible school...all on a stipend of £140 per year.

"After three years at Hikurangi I went to Trinity College," Trevor says. "They were war years, and I was out of college as much as in. The students were called into service at churches around Auckland, and I was at Morrinsville, Ngaruawahia, and Te Awamutu. During vacation from college, I served at Helensville, Te Puke, and Ohura."

After he was ordained in 1946, Trevor's first appointment was at

Taihape. It didn't last long, however, because the following year he was accepted to serve as a missionary in the Solomon Islands. He was married by that time, and he and his wife Gloria spent the next decade in the mission field.

"There were a lot of remains of the war around the Solomon Islands at that time. I had the dubious privilege of escorting the last Japanese prisoner of war from Guadalcanal out of the Solomon Islands."

"We served at Teop for five years and then at Vella Lavella for five years. I was stationed as a minister but the work included teaching, providing medical aid, building, and helping the pastor teachers."

When the Shepherds returned to New Zealand in 1957, they had appointments at Oxford, Christchurch, Hamilton East, and Opotiki.

His career included stints as a tour guide.

"In 1970 I led a tour group to Oberammergau and another in 1980. The tour went around the world and our stops included the Holy Land, Rome, and New York.

"Visiting the Holy Land was very special. It is one thing to read about Galilee, Jerusalem and Jericho but actually seeing them brought their significance home.

"Some years before the 1970 trip I had met the Catholic Church's ecumenical cardinal in Hamilton. He told me that if I ever came to Rome to contact him. I did, and he arranged a meeting with the Pope. It was in St Peter's Cathedral which was chocker with people. We were one of only two Protestant groups there but the Pope came and met with us."

Another highlight of the trip was visiting a Negro Methodist Church in Harlem, New York.

Trevor retired in 1981. Although he and Gloria retired to Tauranga, they moved to Tamahere Rest Home near Hamilton two years ago. Each week they either attend services at the rest home or at St Johns in Hamilton East.



Kava featured in the ceremony that marked the turnover of St John's Bryndwr to the Fijian Methodist Moraia congregation.

## Much loved church Fijian Methodists' new home

*In a ceremony rich with tradition and symbolism, Christchurch's Fijian Methodist Congregation entered its new home, the former St John's Methodist Church in Bryndwr.*

The departing congregation at St John's handed over their church on April 1st, Maundy Thursday. At the beginning of the ceremony the Fijian congregation's presbyter Rev Peni Tikoinaka used a walking stick to knock on the door of the church three times and the Fijian congregation was then welcomed in by the St John's congregation.

Peni called out: "Open to us the gates of righteousness, that we may enter through them and give thanks to God".

The St John's congregation was waiting in the foyer and replied: "Enter God's gates with thanksgiving, and enter his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name, come into his presence with singing."

Because it was Easter week, children led the Fijian congregation into the church carrying fern fronds, symbolising the palms of Palm Sunday.

After the church service a Fijian style ceremony and feast took place in the church hall. Peni and other leaders of the congregation presented a whale tooth (tabua) and kava to a delegation of Methodist leaders.

The leaders were general secretary Rev David Bush, district superintendent Rev Bruce Anderson, Hornby Riccarton parish superintendent Rev Jill van de Geer, and Christchurch North superintendent Rev Saikolone Taufa.

Peni explains that to present a tabua is to

demonstrate the highest form of respect in Fijian society. "Tabua are always presented to very special guests. Kava too is very important. It represents the hope relations between the people who drink kava together will never get dry and the spirit of the kava will be with them."

After the presentations the guests and hosts joined in a Fijian meal and enjoyed entertainment presented by the young people of the Fijian congregation.

Peni says he was delighted that the members of the out-going St John's congregation stayed and participated in the evening's events.

The new name Peni has given his congregation is the Moraia Fijian Church. Moraia (or Moriah) is the name of the mountain where Abraham was prepared to sacrifice Isaac. Last year the young people of the Fijian congregation presented a moving drama about that event, and Peni says he chose the name to reflect their commitment and enthusiasm.

Formally the Fijian congregation worshipped at the Clarence Street Methodist Church in the Hornby-Riccarton Parish. They outgrew that building though they will remain affiliated with the Hornby-Riccarton Parish in their new home. The members of the former St John's congregation now worship at the Papanui Methodist Church.

Peni wishes to extend his deep appreciation to Te Haahi Weteriana and to the St John's congregation. He realises it is not easy to leave behind a place of worship that has been their home for many years.

## Setting the record straight on Raithby Cemetery

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Jo Smith

*On a sunny afternoon in March, the Christchurch Methodist Archives volunteers are visiting the small Raithby Methodist Cemetery at North Loburn in North Canterbury. The simple wooden Raithby Church is long gone, shifted to the Journey's End campsite in the 1970s.*

Driving slowly along the gravel road, we spot a faded sign on a gate fronting a brown grassy paddock. It reads 'Raithby Methodist Cemetery 1866'. There are a few big trees in the paddock, and the odd headstone pushing through the long grass.

In the more recent history of the Raithby Cemetery, it was sold to a private company who wanted to have eco burials there. However New Zealand legislation does not permit private cemeteries, and according to the Waimakariri District Council website the land the cemetery is on now belongs to the government.

Some of the headstones are damaged but they are all readable, which is necessary for the purpose of our visit. The original ink and watercolour plot plan for Raithby Cemetery is held in the Methodist Archives as part of the Parish Archives Collection, with the names of the plot purchasers



Archives volunteers check out the headstones at Raithby Methodist Cemetery, North Loburn.

written on it. This plan is the only contemporary surviving record relating to burials in this cemetery. We want to see how the plan matches up to the headstones.

Furthermore, a list made in the 1980s of those buried there, records the earliest burial as taking place in 1875. Other information gives the date as 1873. Could we solve this date discrepancy?

Our Archives group spreads out and examines the cemetery carefully. We compare the position of the graves against the plot plan and struggle to read the lettering on some of the more worn headstones.

When we find the headstone for Barker, tucked away in a far corner, we can see how the date difference has happened. The

engraved date on the stone could be read as a '5', but is actually a '3'. One mystery solved and confirming that the earliest known burial as recorded on the headstones is 1873.

Other burials could have taken place but because the burial register for this cemetery has not survived, the only record of who was buried there is the information written on the headstones. We know from the plot plan that 17 plots were sold but only 11 headstones exist today. Cemetery regulations stated that to erect a headstone or memorial, a plot needed to be purchased. So it is possible there are unmarked burials within the cemetery in the other sold plots.

The plot plan records the names of those who purchased grave sites. These include some of the early Canterbury emigrants who were involved with Raithby Church and who had settled nearby. This country church was the result of the enthusiasm of a small group of local settlers: the Patrick, Free, Hodgson, Philpott and Howard families.



Ko e Faifekau Kepu Moa mo hona hoa Maa'imoa 'oku na tu'ulutui lolotonga 'a e lotu Fakataapui 'e he Faifekau Sea Vahefonua, Faifekau Setaita K Veikune mo Faifekau Jill van de Geer



Ko e hoa 'o e Faifekau, Maa'imoa Moa, lolotonga 'ene lau 'a e Kosipeli 'o e Malangaa. 'Oku haa mei mui 'a e kau Faifekau Mark Gibson, 'Aho, Saikolone Taufua mo Kepu Moa.



Ko e Setuata Lahi Faitangane Tu'ipulotu mo e To'utupu Peulisi Kosipeli 'i hono foaki 'a e ngaahi me'angaue faka-Faifekau ki he Faifekau Kepu Moa lolotonga 'a e ouoau malanga Fakataapui.

## Hiki Faifekau Kepu Moa ki Kosipeli

*Ko e me'a fakafiefia foki 'a e lava lelei hono fakataapui 'o Faifekau Kepu Moa ki he 'ene potungaue fo'ou ko e Faifekau Pule 'i he Siasi Kosipeli 'i Christchurch 'i he 'aho Sapate 21 Ma'asi 2010.*

Ko e Malangaa na'e fakahoko ia 'e he Palesitini Malolo, Faifekau Toketa Jill van de Geer, pea ne toe tokoni foki ki he Faifekau Sea 'o e Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa, Faifekau Setaita Kinahoi Veikune, ki he fahoko 'o e ouau Fakataapui. Na'e lava atu ki he ngaahi ouau 'a e Palesitini Malolo Faifekau Norman West mo hono hoa Glenda, Sue Spindler, ko e Kaunga Sea Sinoti Motu Saute Lotoloto ka ko e Tokoni Palesitini Fili ki he ta'u 2010/2011, Faifekau Mark Gibson ko e Faifekau Pule Peulisi Christchurch Saute, Faifekau 'Aho, ko e Faifekau Pule 'o e Siasi 'o Tonga, Faifekau Saikolone Taufua, Faifekau Inoke Siulangapo mo hono hoa Tafa, pea mo e kau 'a'ahi mei he ngaahi siasi kehekehe 'i Nu'u Sila ni. Na'e lava mai foki mo e Kau Hiva 'a e to'utupu 'a e Kau Fisi mei he Siasi Hala Durham 'o nau fahoko 'a e hiva Fakavaha 'a Lesoni mo nau toe hiva foki lolotonga 'a e 'ilo talitali.

Ko kau Faifekau Fehikitaki 'e toko 4 'oku nau ma'u potungaue 'i he Vahefonua Tonga 'a ia ko Faifekau Setaita Kinahoi Veikune, Faifekau Vaikoloa Kilikiti, Faifekau Kilifi Heimuli pea mo Faifekau Kepu Moa. Pea ko e hiki eni 'a Kepu Moa ki he Peulisi Kosipeli Tonga mei he Peulisi

Tonga Gisborne hili ia 'ene Faifekau Pule ai 'i he ta'u 'e 4. Ko ia na'e muimui folau atu 'a e Setuata Lahi, Matangi Fonua, Tokoni Setuata, Pauli Ma'afu pea mo e ni'ihiki kehe mei Gisborne kenau kau hono momoi 'a e Faifekau Kepu Moa ki he Peulisi Kosipeli. Na'e pehee 'e Pauli Ma'afu, "na'e faingata'a 'enau maavae mo 'enau Faifekau mo Maa'imoa pea na'e fai 'enau katoanga fakamavae tu'o tolu. Kaneongo ia ko e me'a fakafiefia mo fakamaafana mo'oni 'enau mamata ki he tali fiefia 'e he Faifekau 'a e ui 'a e 'Eiki mo e Siasi, neongo 'ene hoko 'i he taimi kehe mei he taimi Fehikitaki maheni 'a e Konifelenisi". Na'e toe tala foki 'e Jill van de Geer ko e taimi na'e fai ai 'a e fetu'utaki fakavavevave po'uli kia Kepu fekau'aki mo e fehikitaki ki Christchurch na'e 'ikai ke 'i Gisborne 'a Maa'imoa ia ka na'e tali lelei pe 'e Kepu ia 'a e ui kuo fai ange ki ai. Ko e taimi koe na'e toki tala ai kia Maa'imoa na'e pehee 'e Maa'imoa ia tene muimui fiefia pe ki he ui 'a e 'Eiki hi he Faifekau.

Hili 'a e malangaa mo e ngaahi popoaki talamonuu, na'e fai 'a e talitali ki he holo 'o e Siasi pea fakahoko ai 'a e ngaahi lea fakamaafana mo malie. Fakamalo atu ki he Setuata Kosipeli, Faitangane Tu'ipulotu mo e Kainga Lotu. Tau Fakafeta'ia ai pe 'a e Huafa 'o Sisu Kalaisi pea hangee ko e toe fakalotolahi mai 'e he Faifekau Setaita K Veikune – "Taalunga mo 'Ene Kelesi" 'oku tau 'i he tu'unga 'oku tau 'i ai ni".

## FAKALOTOFALÉ'IA

*Ko e Kaveinga 'o e mahina - "Ko e Fetauhi 'aki Fakakovanite mo Sisu"*

'Alaa si'oku kaunga ngaue 'i he 'Eiki, 'oku tau fakafeta'i ki hotau 'Otua he'ene foaki mai 'a e kaveinga fisifisimu'a ko eni, ke tohoaki 'aki 'etau manatu he mahina ko eni ki hotau vaha'angatae ketau fai "Ko e Fetauhi 'aki Fakakovanite mo hotau 'Eiki ko Sisu Kalaisi".

Ko ia ai 'oku mahu'inga 'aupito foki ketau fakamahu'inga'i mo ngaue'i fakafamili mo fakasiasi hotau ngafa mo hotau ui ke fai he mahina fo'ou ko eni; 'a e pau ketau toe fakafeta'ou 'a 'etau Kovinanite Fetauhi'aki mo Sisu. 'Oku tatau pe foki 'a e lea Kovinanite mo e lea

Fuakava pe Aleapau. Pea ko e laumalie totonu leva 'o e Kovinanite ko ia ko e Fetauhi'aki – pea 'oua na'a maumau'i. Pea ka maumau'i leva 'e ha taha 'a e Kovinanite mo e Fuakava mo e Aleapau kuo fai, pea 'oku ta'e'aonga leva 'a e Kovinanite na'e fakahoko.

'Oku fakamanatu mai 'e he Palofita ko Selemaia 31:33 'a e Kovinanite 'a Sihova mo 'Isileli, 'a ee na'a nau hanga ('e 'Isileli) 'o maumau'i. Ka ko Sihova eni tene toe fai mo 'Isileli ha Kovinanite Fo'ou: "Teu 'ai ki loto 'eku lao, 'io, teu tongi ia ki honau loto, pea teu nofo ko honau 'Otua, pea tenau nofo ko hoku kakai". 'Oku tau ongo'i halaia kotoa pe 'i he 'etau fa'a maumau'i 'a 'etau Kovinanite pea mo e 'Otua.

Ka e fakafeta'i kuo toe 'omi 'a hotau Kaveinga he mahina ko eni ke toe fai ai ha huke mo toe hunuaki 'a 'etau ngaahi mo'ui fakalaumalie. Pea 'oku matu'aki mahu'inga 'aupito ketau Fetauhi'aki Fakakovanite 'a kitautolu mo Sisu. Hange ko ia 'oku talanoa ki ai 'i he Sione 13: ne fai 'e Sisu ha Kovinanite faka'osi mo 'ene kau ako 'o makatu'unga 'i hono sino mo hono ta'ata'a. Pea 'oku kei ma'oni'oni mo haohaoa 'a e Aleapau mo e Fuakava ko ia ne fai 'e Sisu ma'a tautoluu. Ko ia ko e faingamalie eni he mahia ni ma'a tautolu - ketau toe fakafeta'ou 'a 'etau Fetauhi'aki Fakakovanite mo Sisu. 'Ofa atu mo e Lotu ma'u pe.

Faifekau Mosese Manukia.



*Ko e Fefine Akonaki mei Niua, 'Eua nofo 'i New Lynn ko 'Uheina Piutau, ko hono ta'u 104 eni. Na'aku 'a'ahi kiai he ta'u fo'ou 2010. 'Oku ne kei lava pe lau e lotu 'a 'Eiki he'ema lotu. Ko 'ene Folofola manako e Saame 23:1-6. He'ikai fai ha ofo ai he ko Sisu pe hotau Tauhi Mo'onia. Himi Manako 567, 'Io ka fotu mai 'a Sisu ko ia pe masani, pea to'oa ai hotau loto". Mo e 518. "Io*

*'oku tau fie mo'ui he maama kaha'u, tau tali 'Ene fakaafe he 'oku Ne kumi kitaua 'oku hee". Talamonu atu ki he 'etau ngaue. Faka'apa'apa atu Faifekau Kepu Moa.*

*Rev Kepu Moa visited Mrs 'Uheina Piutau of the New Lynn Tongan Congregation. 'Uheina is originally from Niua, Eua and is 104 years of age. Her favourite Bible passage is Psalm 23.*