

TOUCHSTONE

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



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

By Joanna Ibell

There is no such thing as a typical day for a chaplain says coordinating chaplain at Hawke's Bay District Health Board Rev Barbara Walker.

"Every day is different, and you don't know what is going to happen when the phone rings," she says.

Barbara may bless a baby, sit with someone dying, bless a room, or talk with people in the chapel. Chaplains visit the emergency department, intensive care and palliative care patients, general wards and anyone else – staff, patients and families – who requests pastoral and spiritual support.

Barbara and her team of three other chaplains and 11 chaplaincy assistants are at Hawke's Bay Hospital in Hastings.

She says some hospitals have their chapel tucked away somewhere, whereas the Hastings hospital's chapel is in a prominent position by the main entrance. The prominence of the chapel reflects the prominence of the chaplains' role in the hospital.

So why do hospitals need chaplains? A common theme for the work of chaplains is

relationships. Hospital chaplains promote connections between people and within a person.

"We're part of the holistic healing of people" says Barbara. "Lots of studies around the world show that people who have a holistic approach to their life that includes a spiritual component, however you define that, do better in hospital. We are part of that multi-disciplinary team providing holistic care."

"When you come into hospital, whoever you were on the outside, you get between the sheets and lose control and power."

"You lie there, sometimes for hours and hours, and questions come up."

"Maybe you've had a bad diagnosis. Maybe you had some Sunday school when you were eight, but had been too busy and now you're wondering 'Who am I? Where am I going? What is life all about?'"

"So I have lots of conversations about what's important with people who have just been told they have six months to live. That's why hospital chaplains are there."

Ann Gray and Gloria Morgan are clinical nurse specialists for

the hospital palliative care team. They work closely with the chaplains, and Ann says chaplaincy is a vital service in palliative care.

"We look at holistic nursing – patients' physical, emotional, social, spiritual and cultural needs. Patients on the palliative journey are facing their own mortality, and the realm of spirituality is huge. It has a religious side if they're religious; otherwise it's about who they are as people."

Barbara says it is a privilege when a family calls and asks if a chaplain can be there when a family member is dying.

"We walk into this sacred moment. They accept you as part of that family and you're able to just be there. Over a period of time you build up a relationship with that family and patient. It's so special."

Gloria emphasises how impressed she is with the way Barbara copes with complicated family situations. "We've had complex, deep meetings with families of different cultures as they go through what it means to have a loved one dying."

Gloria also values the

Hospital chaplains provide support to patients, families and staff in hospitals throughout NZ. September 19 - 26 is NZ Hospital Chaplaincy Week. For more see Page 8.

chaplains' acknowledgement of hospital staff, who have died.

She gives the example of Beryl Neilsen who died aged 102. Beryl was badly injured in the collapsing nurses' home in the Napier earthquake of 1931. Pulled out of the rubble, she went away to heal and came back and served as a charge nurse until she retired.

"The hospital chapel is also a memorial chapel where we can acknowledge health professionals. It helps us to remember that we're part of it too."

Both Ann and Gloria value having rooms blessed after a death. It is an important ritual,

even for non-religious staff and families.

Ann: "Rituals are important as they acknowledge the life that has now gone. We're in a busy hospital culture with an emphasis on acute treatment and care, and getting patients well quickly."

"When someone dies it would be so easy to bundle them up and put the next person in that bed but you have to acknowledge who's been there and the significance of that life."

"We touch on so little of their life but it's a life and is to be treasured. I get a great peace out of it."

Barbara normally blesses rooms on her own but sometimes staff or family join in. "I think for them it's part of closure," she says.

Recently, 25 family members were at a blessing. "They wanted the room blessed and an opportunity to thank God for the life of that person. I prayed for the family as they mourned their loss, and I always pray for the staff, who cared for that person. And I bless the room so the next person has a sense of peace."

See Page 8

End to poverty requires moral courage, new policies

By John Roberts,
Methodist Mission and
Ecumenical

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will soon be in the news again. The United Nations general secretary Ban Ki-moon has called a high level meeting of world leaders for September 20th-22nd to advance the achievement of the MDGs.

All UN member states, including New Zealand, signed up to the MDGs in 2000. Ban Ki-moon wants greater commitment and delivery of funds from developed countries to meet the goals by the target date of 2015.

The World Council of Churches (WCC), a global network of churches, has issued a statement ahead of the UN September summit. It calls on the world leaders to see the eradication of poverty as a matter of political will and moral courage. The eradication of poverty should have greater priority than bailing out failing financial institutions and increasing expenditure on military infrastructure and hardware, says the WCC.

The United Nations Millennium Project says the cost of meeting the goals would be approximately half of one percent of the gross national product of the developed nations. They simply need to fulfil commitments they have already made, says the UN.

This includes serious efforts to achieve the target of 0.7% of gross national product as aid to developing countries. Fulfilling this commitment would provide more than sufficient resources to achieve the MDGs. On average wealthy nations currently spend an average of 0.25% of gross national product on development assistance.

The 0.7% target for development assistance was made some 39 years ago in a UN General Assembly resolution. It has been reaffirmed over the years. Five European countries already devote 0.7%

or more to development aid. All European Union countries have committed to timetables to reach 0.7% by 2015.

New Zealand is one of six Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development countries that have not set a timetable to meet the 0.7% target.

Furthermore, the government of NZ has now shifted its top priority for overseas aid from alleviating poverty to economic development. It seems to think that trade is the key to economic development, as evidenced in its promotion of PACER Plus – the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations.

While trade has its place, it is not a magic bullet for achieving development. The UN says the slogan ‘trade not aid’ is utterly misguided, particularly in the poorest countries.

The WCC says eradicating poverty is a moral and ethical imperative. The WCC contrasts the resources needed to achieve the MDGs with the trillions of dollars that were put together in a matter of months by governments in rich countries to rescue failing financial institutions, and global military spending.

“We need to re-examine and dismantle such a perverse system of priorities that places more importance on rescuing big banks and acquiring machines that kill people, than on emancipating people from starvation and homelessness,” the WCC says.

The WCC has called on governments and international institutions to work out economic policies that “move away from the current paradigm focused on unlimited growth and based on structural greed, towards models founded on pro-poor, redistributive growth.”

The WCC has set out a series of reforms it calls on governments and international institutions to commit to at the MDG summit next month. See www.oikoumene.org.



UNDP administrator Helen Clark says in the past decade the world has made some progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals but we still have much to do to reach them.

Some progress, much to achieve to reach development goals – Helen Clark

The world is making some progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals and must build upon its successes to achieve more.

This is the view of the head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and former NZ prime minister Helen Clark. Last month Helen addressed the status of the Millennium Development Goals when she gave the inaugural Christchurch Cathedral lecture.

Each year it invests US\$1 billion to reduce poverty and the UNDP uses the Millennium Development Goals as its benchmark for success.

Helen says despite serious environmental and economic catastrophes, there have been some promising developments in the first decade since the Goals were launched. Those successes suggest the way forward to achieve more by the target date of 2015.

The absolute number of people in extreme poverty (defined as a person living on US\$1.25 per day or less) has dropped and it is within reach to achieve the Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015. However this success is due in large part to dramatic economic growth in China.

“Primary school enrolment has also grown to about 89

percent and while this is not at the goal of 100 percent, it is promising. There are some positive developments throughout the world. Tanzania, for example, increased primary education by 90 percent between 1990 and 2006,” Helen says.

Malaria prevention is expanding and 1.6 billion people have gained access to safe drinking water since 1990.

Helen says after examining all the country reports on the first decade of the Millennium Development Goals the UNDP has distilled eight priority areas to achieve greater progress.

1) A key issue is that development must be led by each country. There is no one size fits all. Development cannot be imposed and must come from countries charting their own path to build capacity among their people.

2) Effective governance. Countries must develop the capacity to achieve their vision of development. This requires investing in rural infrastructure, agriculture, and micro-credit rather than depending on extractive industries such as mining which do not deliver tax revenue or skills to local people.

3) Invest in women and girls. When women are educated they have higher expectations for their children

and it has a multiplier effect through the whole economy.

4) Health and sanitation. Continue to target tuberculosis, HIV-Aids, and malaria.

5) Create better social security. People can claw their way up financially but without a safety net they will be pushed back down by global economic downturns.

6) Access to basic energy. Even power through a simple electric generator can transform the lives of village women if they no longer have to walk long distances to get water or spend hours grinding grain.

7) Help countries improve their ability to collect taxes.

8) Exhort developed countries to honour their commitment to pay 0.7 percent of the gross national products in aid to developing countries.

Helen says it is in developed countries’ interest to achieve the Millennium Development Goals for two key reasons. One is that as they become wealthier, the developing countries will be markets for goods produced in the developed countries. Another is that if poverty and injustice persist, problems will spread from the developing countries through illegal immigration and other means.

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The Millennium Development Goals

1. Halve extreme poverty and hunger
2. Universal primary education
3. Gender equality and empowerment of women
4. Reduce child mortality by 66%
5. Reduce maternal mortality by 75%
6. Reverse the spread of HIV & AIDS, malaria and other major diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Create a global partnership for development.

Public Questions Network up and running

By Hilaire Campbell

The Methodist Church is set to become more vocal about local, national and global issues.

With the appointment of coordinator/researcher Betsan Martin, The Public Questions Network (PQN) is gearing up to advocate and inform churches about social issues.

Based on feedback from the Connexion, PQN's coordinating committee has decided to initially focus on three issues: 1) welfare reform, 2) environmental responsibility, and 3) relations with developing countries through CWS and other aid groups.

These priorities were selected from a list that included income inequality, alcohol, youth, schools, poverty, housing and homelessness, Pacific trade agreements, climate change and disasters and environment.

PQN has been set up to replace the Churches Agency on Social Issues (CASI).

Interim PQN convener Rev Michael Dymond says PQN is in its infancy but



Betsan Martin

its aim is to open up concerns across the whole Connexion.

"As well as advocating for the Church, we will ask questions of the Church – why and how it is doing what it does. I believe the time is long overdue for us to go back to our social conscience and social action roots, as per John Wesley," Michael says.

Betsan says whereas CASI was a Wellington-based group chiefly concerned with high level policy, her role includes commentary on public policy and making submissions, and building a Methodist network to resource groups to be active locally.

"We are interested in social ecology and integrating social, spiritual, ecological and economic areas. The term 'oeconomia' – the derivation for ecumenism and economy – is a good reference for this.

"We are compiling a list of groups and people interested in local, national, and

global issues," Betsan says.

"It will be a high priority to feed information to the Network about things that are coming on to the radar – policy development on the Foreshore and Seabed, for instance. It is important to know that iwi custodial ownership would not prevent recreational access to beaches and would provide avenues for other development interests, subject to RMA-type regulation. There are groups trying to stop an agreement being made that recognizes iwi traditional ownership."

The intent is that PQN will work as a two-way flow of ideas and information. The researcher will resource local committees and they can make use of her wide ranging skills.

"It will be important for me to use my skills to access information quickly. I envisage sending discussion notes as well as general information initially by email through the Network. This might involve submissions, and what I call 'think and do' pieces," Betsan says.

"It's a combination of encouraging people to respond to questions that are local – Manukau liquor outlets is a burning one – as well as me being alert to social

justice issues being raised around the country. In the South Island, for example, there was a great response from the churches to Canterbury's water issues."

Betsan comes to PQN from the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) where she has been a researcher since 2007. She has strong interests in philosophy, ecology and social justice.

One of Betsan's roles with NZCCSS was leading Manaaki Hapori, the 'Enhancing Communities' programme. She visited many amazing community-facing parish initiatives. There is a strong Pasifika element in her work including working visits to Samoa and other Pacific countries.

Michael says Betsan's relationships with tangata whenua and M_ori communities, experience with Te Tiriti, and interests in te reo as well as her wide range of contacts put her in a valuable position to address concerns raised in parishes and rohe.

Betsan's email contact for Public Questions is betsan@publicquestions.org.nz and her phone is 04 473-2627.

Conversation at the heart of peace

By Kay Knowles

We see and hear a lot about violence in our news media. We are told of increasing violence in our families and communities. But violence can be present everyday, and expressed through emotion, by actions and in conversation.

As Christians, we are called to non-violent conversation. This was the message the world-wide Anglican Church's first woman archbishop brought to a gathering of New Zealand women.

Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori is the presiding bishop of the Episcopalian Church in America. Katharine visited Auckland and Christchurch at the end of June.

One of her speaking engagements, titled 'Conversation, violent or otherwise', was at the Canterbury Women's Club. In this address, she explained the importance of conversation and how the lack of conversation can lead to misunderstandings



Katharine Jefferts Schori

that can lead to violence.

Conversation, says Bishop Katharine, does not mean just to talk. It means talking about how we feel and think and listening to each other. Conversation means to turn about with, keep company with, or to live with.

A lack of conversation can mean we turn to violence.

We use violent language when we feel misunderstood. Our different points of view conflict because we have not sat down with each other in conversation. We allow violence to dominate. We do not respect each other nor acknowledging our need for conversation. We judge others when we feel that they have rejected what we want to say. We forget that it is not for us to judge, but God.

When people judge us, it makes us feel

threatened. We want to retaliate and put them down. We want to make them less than ourselves. We want to be powerful over them and reduce them. We could be driven to attack with violent conversation.

Bishop Katharine says that, "as Christians, we are called to non-violent conversation". Everyone is made in the image of God. No one should be denied conversation. Everyone deserves respect and dignity.

Jesus never turned people away who wanted conversation. Nicodemus, the Pharisee and ruler came to him by night because of fear of his colleagues. The conversation he had with Jesus was challenging. Nicodemus learnt new truths; that he must be born of the Spirit and he must be born again.

Jesus did not turn away a Syro-Phoenician woman from conversation because she was a Gentile. Her conversation with Jesus resulted in Jesus healing her daughter.

Bishop Katharine invited her audience to engage in intimate conversation with God

in the form of a meditation. She invited everyone to meditate for five minutes on the words, 'You are my beloved child and in you I am well pleased'.

Afterwards, she asked for peoples' responses to the meditation. One woman said that she felt profoundly touched emotionally by the words of the meditation. She felt a sharp contrast to the criticism which she was used to hearing as a child.

Another woman replied that she had felt she wanted to cry. Other people said that they had been moved to tears. Another woman said that she felt a strong desire to respond to God's love reaching out to her. She said that this was the sort of love in which she felt affirmed as being one of God's children.

Others shared aspects of their relationship with God as a result from the reflection.

The meeting concluded with everyone sharing in conversation around the supper table.



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Methodist sites neglected

To the editor,

I note in the last issue of Touchstone the article by Rev Donald Phillipps regarding the updating of the bronze plaque at the Mangungu Wesleyan Mission Station site. It is an important step to record correctly the history and the personal oversight of that Station.

However, for readers' information I attach a photo of the two grave stones and monument at the Te Kopua Wesleyan Mission Station in the Waikato, which I fear is more representative of Methodist historic sites than the New Zealand Historic Places Trust-controlled Mangungu site.

As is obvious from the picture there is a need for the Church to take some responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of these historic sites before they disappear for ever because no one or no organisation cares about their significance. There is a need to maintain these significant sites for future generations.

I intend visiting Wesleyan Mission sites in



Te Kopua Wesleyan Mission Station, Waikato

the Waikato area to ascertain their condition and whether maintenance is required.

Robin Astridge QSM, Te Awamutu

Trust the word revealed, not Spong

To the editor,

Having read letters to the editor critical of Alan Webster's review (April 2010), of 'Eternal Life' by John Spong, I wish to record my thanks to Alan for taking on this task and providing an excellent review.

Spong's views are far from the faith that I know, experience and treasure in this Methodist Church that grew from Wesley's faithfulness to the Gospel. I ask myself, why would anyone want to wreck that by incorporating Spong's beliefs?

Part of the answer may lie in people who are happy to read of Christ and His teaching without the background of his death, resurrection and ascension. One of the greatest preachers of the 20th century, G. Campbell Morgan, reminds us that:

"The teaching of Christ was not the final fact about Christ, and His Person is not the final fact about Christ. We find that fact in Jesus

crucified, risen, and ascended. We must approach Christ thus and we must cling to that Christ. That is the word of God in all its fullness".

It seems some are happy to keep God as 'the great mystery of our world and universe'. But in the New testament the word 'mystery' does not mean something we cannot understand. There a mystery is something that human intellect can comprehend when it is revealed.

"Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory," (1Timothy 3:16).

Let us be a church that trusts in the word revealed, made manifest and, being manifested, can be apprehended by those who seek.

Stewart Patrick, Gisborne

Beneficiary bashing not the answer

To the editor,

It is not to be wondered at that a party which conceives citizens as no more than consumers and taxpayers finds itself unable to maintain unity in a caucus of just five.

We need as a nation to recover a fuller vision of what it means to be able to contribute to a society, to seek to build equity in the world of work and in our families – and to recognise that, for many in our midst, contributions are not possible today because of the skewed economic rewards.

For decades now the top 10 percent have become better off - the next 10 percent have just held their own - and the great majority

have slipped behind on inflation-adjusted calculations. We need significant change but even after the major economic crisis, our present political leaders are trotting out the same limited mantras.

Let's look for fairness and inclusion. There's a place here for vigorous initiatives by our church. Let's ensure that our members and our nation recognise that if we want to improve New Zealand society and build community, ACT nostrums of beneficiary bashing and a harsher criminal code are starting in the wrong place.

Ken Rae, Porirua

Violence and television linked

Why has our murder rate grown from one a year to one a day over my long lifetime? The reason is simple actually.

During WWII the Americans discovered most of their young men would do military training but when it came to the battlefield, only 12-25 percent were willing to shoot to kill. They would shoot up in the air or not shoot at all.

The churches were the problem of course but they dare not attack directly. They came up

with a brilliant solution - violent videos and DVDs. They have weakened the churches.

The book 'The Plug in Drug', by Marie Winn presents a strong case especially against subliminal TV that can project an idea or image to the subconscious mind. Do something about that and our murder rate would evaporate like a drop of water on the fire, then our reformatting country the whole world could inspire.

John Miller, Christchurch



FROM THE BACKYARD

A story for spring

Gillian Watkin

Towards the end of the afternoon we were sitting down in the tranquil space between a day's work and the evening sort out. I am home now after a time in Auckland.

We were, in fact, discussing the subject of this column. September's theme is the story of restoration, from the bleakness of a wet and miserable winter to the joy and vibrancy of spring.

Spring comes first in small steps, a blossom tree here, a bulb poking out of the ground, a lamb appearing, foals and other baby animals appearing in the paddocks.

Here the Hastings Blossom Festival is not far away, that celebration of the Heretaunga Plains turned from the grey sweep of bare branched apple and peach trees into a sea of white and pink blossom. It is also, for many, the time when work begins again.

There was a loud thud on our back window. "A bird," we said together. We thought we had better see if the stunned one needed assistance.

Outside on the ground lay two blackbirds, the black male with the yellow beak and the bright yellow ring around his eye, and the brown female. They were grasping for air, and the male looked as if he had broken his neck and was dying. The female was looked stunned, we checked for other damage but there did not appear to be any.

Through the years we have had many birds hit windows and usually they have a rest and get up and fly away. So we carefully took these two

off the path and laid them by the hedge, planning to check up shortly.

As we went inside we heard a commotion and looked around to see what looked like every blackbird from our garden down beside the pair, poking and tweeting, with much wing flapping. Interestingly the males were with the male and the females with the female. In that time the female obviously gathered enough strength to move towards the male.

Then all the birds departed. We went to check, and both were dead, side by side. Blackbirds keep the same partner for life, and it must be rare for two to die together.

All evening until sunset we were conscious of the blackbirds' alarm calls echoing around the garden. We were quiet, recognising that we had seen something we had never seen before.

The next morning all was back to normal. The blackbirds were buried in the garden. 'In the midst of life there is death', words that are so commonly said they can become a throw away line that can deflect a depth of feeling. They are, of course, a statement of reality, lest we forget.

At the very epicentre of our faith is a death, a brutal political death. That death has been surrounded by the springtime joy of the resurrection story which has, in part, become an ever present reminder that each death is surrounded by the love of God. The most amazing of all stories is at times is the hardest of all to understand but sometimes just for a short time, one we know.



LET'S HONOUR FATHERS

Lana Lazarus

*I te timatanga ko te Atua;
A te mutunga ko te Atua ano.*

*He mihi atu ki a ratou kua wehe atu, moe mai koutou i roto i te aroha o te Atua.
Ka huri ki te hunga ora, tena ra tatou katoa.*

While travelling the South Island a short while ago, President Alan and I were discussing various things coming up and what we needed to do. During the conversation, we talked about 'Fathers of the Conference' noting that one had passed away earlier in the year, and the current one lost his wife recently.

Now you may be thinking, what an odd discussion to have. But our conversation then moved onto the first weekend of September being the usual time to celebrate both Fathers' Day and spring time here in Aotearoa.

There are many people who have a close bond with their fathers. My mother always speaks fondly of the wisdom,

insight and knowledge of hers. My stepfather is someone who features highly in the lives of my siblings and I. He is greatly respected and loves unconditionally. I have watched my brother try to be the best father he can be to his children, even moving away to a small township in the Manawatu where they grew up appreciating the rural lifestyle and never wanting for anything.

Within Te Taha Maori, there is much appreciation of the numerous gifts and vision of the 'fathers of the past'. People such as the late Revs Sam Toia, Moke Couch, Morehu (Buddy) Te Whare, the honorary home missionaries and minitai-a-iwi. All have made an impact and

contribution to the life of Te Taha Maori as we know it today.

For several of the rangatahi I grew up with, there is one 'father' who remains today and that is 'Uncle Rua Rakena'. He is known and lives by his famous President's words of 'don't tell me, show me!' His deep theological views, his knowledge of ecumenism, his considered responses, patience and understanding have shaped many of us. We can ask him about anything but we know the famous 'why' question usually appears in the conversation.

It seems to be quite apt that Father's Day occurs in the season of spring. In the words of Mother Teresa, "See how nature

– trees, flowers, and grass grow in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence...we need silence to be able to touch souls."

Most fathers touch souls like Jesus thanking God in Luke 10:22, 23b, "My father has given me everything. You are really blessed to see what you see!"

For some, their relationships with their father's have not always been easy. However, let's honour the many to whom it is due. May those who bring warmth, confidence, patience, peace, kindness and joy to their families be lovingly celebrated by their whanau and mokopuna on their day.

UCANZ should oversee CVs

To the editor

The May edition of Touchstone carried an opinion piece I wrote in response Brian Turner's open letter 'CV's Be Warned' headed 'The Peasants are Revolting! – Will you join the revolution?'

In that piece I suggested the time is now right for Uniting Congregations to become more proactive about their future, and I set out a five point plan to stimulate thinking about a way forward.

I have since been very encouraged by the positive support I've received. I was also pleased that Peter MacKenzie, from UCANZ, give me the time to talk to him about it, and I believe it was part of a discussion, along with Brian's paper, at the last UCANZ Standing Committee meeting in June.

I therefore read with regret and alarm the 'Guideline Paper on Parish Oversight' that is now being put to the partner churches for their affirmation. In the July edition of Touchstone Peter is quoted as saying "The document seeks to clarify the partnership that exists within Cooperative Ventures and requires the partner churches to be more active in the working out of the partnership." I believe it will do nothing more than further entrench the status quo.

As a minister working in a Union Parish, part of my concern

and one of the reasons I wrote my original letter, was the demands made on my time and energy by having to serve too many masters, and this document does nothing to relieve this.

My suggestion was, and still is, that the best way forward for us all would be for UCANZ to become the body of oversight for all CVs and Union Parishes.

This would not only cut out a lot of duplication but would also relieve the partner churches of a duty they have (in my experience and from my observation), neither relished nor performed very well, probably through a lack of available and willing people.

This morning we received an invitation, along with other CVs in the region, to a meeting to discuss the proposed guidelines on parish oversight, from the Johnsonville Uniting Church in Wellington. I would like to commend Johnsonville Uniting on their initiative.

I would also like to encourage all CVs to look at this paper and let UCANZ know whether it is truly going to help your congregation more easily serve God in your community, or just add yet another layer of bureaucracy to your lives.

*Geraldine Coats
St Lukes Union Parish,
Masterton*

Oversight changes won't promote ecumenism

To the editor,

I agree with the letter Geraldine Coats has circulated in which she says UCANZ should become the coordinating partner of oversight for CVs and where possible delegate that responsibility to regional JRCs.

Partner churches should then only exercise oversight of their appointees to CVs (e.g., ministers) to ensure they perform to the professional standards of the appointing church. All other oversight of CVs should be the prerogative of UCANZ/JRC.

To the claim that not all JRCs are able to provide oversight, I repeat my earlier assertion that CVs' first external responsibility should be to their JRC before providing

representation and finance to partner church courts.

If partner churches are serious about partnership, they will similarly seek to strengthen JRCs rather than weakening or avoiding them.

In some JRCs, some partner church reps give the impression that they are there more as protectors of partner church interests than as advocates of CVs and ecumenism per se.

As the UCANZ position paper proposes greater rather than lesser control of CVs by partner churches, I urge rejection of the paper in its present form by CVs, JRCs and partner church courts.

Brian Turner, Christchurch

A practical ecotheology for Canterbury

By Garth Cant, Rural Ministry Network
In 2010, we share our planet with seven billion people, many of whom are underfed and undernourished.

Rural Canterbury has three important resources:

- 1) Skills and technology (a more than finite resource, share it and it multiplies);
- 2) Sunshine (available day by day, year by year);
- 3) Water (constantly replenished, available month by month, year by year).

Canterbury has had a succession of bonanzas:

- Pastoral sheep farming in the 1850s and 1860s (low intensity use of natural resources, improved by stock water races);
- Bonanza wheat boom in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s (medium intensity, without fertiliser it depleted our soils, especially our light free draining soils);
- A real estate bonanza in the decades around 1900 (cutting up large estates into smaller, family farms), which went hand in hand with
- Mixed crop and livestock farming (more intensive and almost sustainable – needed constant inputs of natural or artificial fertilizers. The first came from islands like Nauru, the latter came from oil);

And now, in the 2000s and the 2010s, dairy-farming (a way to harness our water and sunshine, and replenish the poorest of our soils).

Coming up, perhaps in the 2020s and the 2030s the next bonanza will be intensive horticulture (water and sunlight, with or without fertilizer, applied to a diversity of plants).

The challenge to our dairy farmers now is to enjoy the sunlight, get the best use out of water (maximise productive use and minimise run-off to streams and ground water) and the maximum recycling of nutrients. Those long booms that suit some terrains do both – they get the water to the places where it is most effective and they recycle the cowshed nutrients back onto the pastures.

Dairy farms are like vehicles on the road. Some drivers are skilled, careful, and responsible, others are a hazard to themselves and a risk to other road users.

Dairy farming is practical ecotheology, the challenge is to use water, sunlight, pastures and dairy cows in the best possible way. For many of our farmers, in these two decades, it is the best contribution we can make in terms of work for our people (rural and urban), and food for the global economy.

That is the ecotheology. Now for two evangelical experiences: The first, an outing with the Ellesmere Historical Society. The second, a visit with Rev Heather Walker from the British Methodist Conference.

The Ellesmere Historical Society took a group of us to Rakaia Island. My two passengers were Bruce Ford and Natalie Osbourne. When

Bruce farmed the island there was one farm family and around 3,000 sheep. It provided a livelihood for the Ford family – just.

Now it is owned and farmed by the Turner brothers. When they were small their Dad had a 35 cow dairy farm at Sefton. They left home, worked on farms, and went sharemilking. They married and the four of them (two brothers and two wives) bought two small dairy farms, and built up their herd numbers. Rakaia Island came on the market, they sold their smaller farms, bought the island, and did a large carefully sequenced, dairy conversion.

Whereas the island had one sheep farm with one family, it now supports 5,500 dairy cows, spread across three herds, and looked after by 23 full time staff, including four managers. There is a community hall, and a school bus taking children to primary school and Ellesmere College.

As they showed us the island they shared their pride in farming, in production, in community, and in the ecology. There are areas of the island now separated off and designated as ecological reserves; the river banks are fenced off so that cows and spawning fish are kept apart. The natural scrubby, head-high vegetation has been left in place. They use small-scale, low level irrigation pivots that spray the water under the canopy.

They spoke with pride. On the way home, Neroli Osbourne, spoke with similar pride. She told us about her granddaughter, who has left school and is determined to be a veterinarian but without a student debt. She was working for a season on one of the dairy herds, accumulating funds to pay her university fees. I was converted.

Rev Heather Walker from the British Methodist Conference came to New Zealand on study leave. Ellesmere Parish hosted her for a day. In the morning we went to Harry Schat's farm at Te Pirita, between Dunsandel and the Rakaia gorge.

Te Pirita is on Lismore stony loam soils, high above Rakaia river level and 100 metres above the aquifer. What little soil fertility there was had been depleted when wheat crops were grown in the 1880s. One hundred years later it was a struggle to run sheep in good years and a disaster in dry years.

Harry Schat gained a water right and did a dairy conversion nine years before Heather's visit. Pumping water from aquifers 100 metres and 180 metres below the surface means that it was used with meticulous care.

The farm that had employed one person half-time, now employed four full-time and two more half time. This time the ecological miracle is in the soil. With water, and sunlight, and pastures, and dairy cows, the soil is being transformed. That thin, dry, Lismore stony loam is now growing a new, black, organic soil underneath the pasture.

My conversion was complete.

principled thinking—creative energy



Art: Melissa Martyn

Pou hihiri, pou ramarama
Tiaho i roto, marama i roto
Wananga i roto, Marama i roto
Tera te Po, tou pou ka eke
Te pou kei a koe na
Ke te pou o enei korero

Jim Irwin, from *Koru and Covenant*, marking Te Reo Maori

This Pou is to be like the rising of the sun.
The Pou that gleams in the darkness,
That shines within, illuminating all within;
That reveals the hidden matters,
Illuminating that which has not been seen;
That goes back to the beginning of time
The pou that brings to the surface
The pou that is within me
To guide and direct your thoughts
These I speak

From across the Principal's desk

In 2009 UNESCO produced a very significant and comprehensive report on emerging global trends in tertiary education.

In the executive summary it noted that there is "global interest in developing students who are skilled communicators, effective critical thinkers, dynamic problem solvers, and productive team members in diverse (increasingly international and intercultural) environments."

For at least the last two decades the Trinity College student cohort has been both decidedly multicultural and international in make-up.

From the start of 2010 we began to maximize the unique learning opportunities offered by the cohort itself. This has resulted in an important shift in teaching emphasis with new curriculum developments.

Trinity College exists for its participants and what they bring. In the last twelve month period, over 300 have joined in face-to-face and distance learning. They include ministry candidates, full and part-time private students, and lay participants doing short courses.

First and foremost in the mix is our bicultural commitment.

Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa enhances partnership gifts, opportunities and challenges through Tino Rangatiranga. This has been so from missionary times to the present, although it has not always been taken up as it ought.

Flowing from that comes a host of other rich learning and teaching opportunities. Participants use learnings to enrich congregational and connexional life. Laity report that they feel empowered to serve local mission and the wider community more effectively.

The UNESCO report also highlights the shift to using blended learning for many institutions. It's a highly significant measure of credibility in today's world. With the advent of fast internet, there are new opportunities for everyone. People who thought they wouldn't ever be able to attend a theological college can participate fully in courses never before thought possible, taught in ways that were once only the stuff of dreams. So, where to from here?

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'Oku malama ai 'a e laumalie!
'O lo'o mumu ai le agaga'!



Sing out: the strength of song

By Diana Roberts

Music has incredible power. It marches armies to war and leads protesters in their demonstrations. It hypes up sports games and TV programmes and spreads a money-spending mood through our supermarkets and stores.

It is an essential part of most Christian worship, and has shaped the Methodist tradition. Singing together is a powerful force for uniting people, and on Sunday 1 August 2010, more than 70 people from Methodist and Cooperating parishes in the Auckland and Manukau districts and beyond, joined in a Hymns, Songs, Music workshop prepared by Rev Norman Brookes.

The presentations reflected the different styles of music enjoyed across the region, and Norman encouraged congregations to be adventurous and include songs from outside their usual range to create 'blended worship'.

Christine Peak from Takapuna guided us through new introits from the NZ hymn collections, Alleluia Aotearoa and Faith Forever Singing. She encouraged us to try different versions of the Lord's Prayer, new responses, amens and blessings.

Poulima Salima, leader of the Mt Albert 'Musos 'n' Faith', launched us into the passionate discipline of Pacific hymn singing. He stressed the significance of hymns in the life of Samoa and Samoans, and his

music group expressed this in the singing of the national hymn, 'Nu tofia e le Atua Samoa', 'Samoa is founded on God.' The hymns of the missionaries are central, but Poulima has written new music for them, adding cultural choreography and traditional musical instruments.

Hymn, song or chorus? For Karene Biggs of the Lynfield Community Church the distinction doesn't matter in contemporary worship. She introduced us to songs from NZ Parachute and offered suggestions for accompanying and introducing new songs to worshippers.

The deep love for the songs of faith was strongly expressed by Michael Lemanu from Papatoetoe. Michael believes that "music and young faith go together" and he shared several of his own worship songs, moving us with their intensity of feeling. He reminded us that working together in faith music teaches young people that faith takes time and patience.

The old and the new come together in With Heart and Voice, a collection of the hymns of Norman Brookes and Jan Chamberlin, with new words for older tunes. This linking of past and present brings new insights into our faith story. All workshop members experienced widening horizons and deepening understandings. Best of all, singing together gave us a real sense of belonging together. We want to do it again!

Better health care for prisoners

To the editor,

The recent report from the National Health Committee notes that imprisonment can contribute to poor health for prisoners and has negative impacts on families and children.

They recommend the transfer of responsibility for prisoner primary health from the Department of Corrections to the

health sector, as has already occurred in several Australian states.

In 1989 The Prison Review (Roper Report) recommended 'the integration of prison health services within the wider health care system' (page 112 of the Report).

How long must we wait?

John Whitty, Wellington

Theology should delve into science and religion

To the editor,

I think a page in each issue of Touchstone should be devoted to the subject of science and religion. The two are in harmony, rather than at odds, as perceived by many today.

I am reflecting on the statements of one of New Zealand's leading scientists, Dr Jeff Tallon (April Touchstone). Jeff believes that science and religion are in harmony, and I agree with him.

I am sure there are other Christian scientists who would be prepared to contribute to such a discussion.

My reflection is partly due to the decreasing number of Europeans attending mainstream churches. I have asked several

young people if they are interested in religion, and in particular 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'. I have received the answer that science is slowly revealing the truth about everything much clearer than any church.

So here is a challenge. We need to clarify that religion and science are in harmony, and that science cannot help us with certain fundamental truths (such as the wisdom of treating others as you would like to be treated) but the Bible can.

We need new theology that includes scientific awareness and this could come from further discussion.

Graham Grove, Wellington

Christian journey takes minister to transgender community

By Cory Miller

Born male, Christina Loughton, is a former Presbyterian parish minister who now provides ministry to the transgender community.

Christina is the coordinator of the Christchurch branch of the not-for-profit charity Agender. She has been living as a transgender female for more than a decade.

Transgender people are individuals whose present gender identity (or self-identification as male or female) does not match the gender they were assigned at birth.

Agender was borne out of support groups that began to emerge during the latter years of the 20th century. It has coordinators throughout New Zealand who provide support for the transgender community.

Transgender people have become more visible in recent years as society has become more open and accepting. "They have felt able to claim their space in the community," Christina says.

Agender works to promote the emotional and social well-being of the transgender community. It tries to provide transgender people and their family and friends a place of their own in a safe and secure environment.

Christina says people are welcome to drop in at the Agender office from off the street. "It's a rare week to have nobody," says Christina. "In any given week four or five people come through I have not met before."

Through its work, Agender also seeks to eliminate the social stigma that is attached to the transgender community.

By educating the general public about transgender

issues they hope to create a more accepting world.

Christina says she felt drawn to work at Agender, as she is able to share with others her experience and help them as they explore their own issues of gender.

"I believe that through sharing our abilities we enable others to find life and to share life," she says.

Prior to Christina's work at Agender she enjoyed three parish ministries. Her transgender side was unknown to the members of her parishes as it was not yet a part of her daily living.

"Some of the richest years of my life were within parish ministry, as a servant of the servants of God," she says. "It is a privilege to be a minister of the church."

Christina says that she has had a long journey with the Christian faith.

"I have had spells of journeying some distance from the faith but I have always been drawn back to it. Christianity is where I have found the essential richness of life.

"It is faith that gives purpose and meaning to my life," she says. "It is the ground of my being, where my feet are in life."

Through her work at Agender Christina feels able to share the life that has been given her. She

is able to interact with other transgender people and to support and encourage them in their own journey of growth.

"What I am seeking is to be an open friendly set of ears and to share my awareness with the community," she says.

Christina says the outside community on the whole has been very accepting. "We still come against the odd prejudice but who doesn't?" she says.



Christina Loughton

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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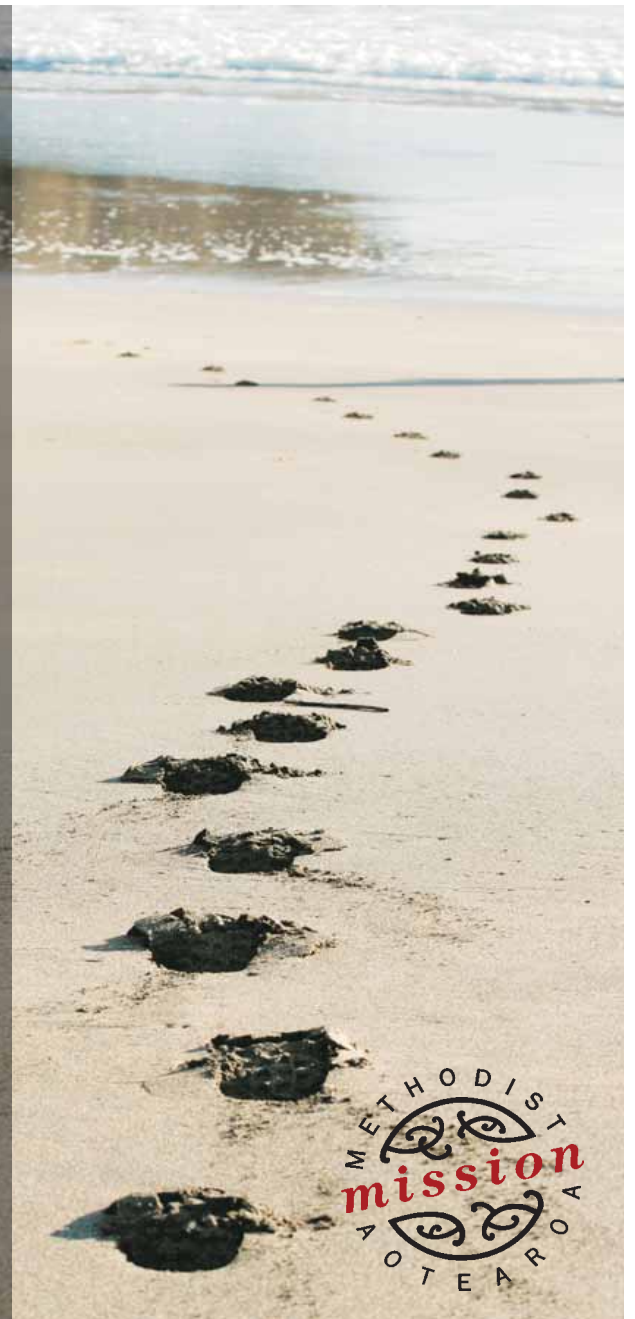
Ruth Silverstone

Convenor, Methodist Mission Aotearoa

23 Tarbottons Road, ASHBURTON, 7700.

Phone: 03 307 1116

Email: bilverst@xtra.co.nz



Chaplains journey with patients, families, staff

From Page 1

Barbara or one of her chaplain colleagues is called to all rooms where someone has died, in the wards, maternity, ambulances and operating theatres.

In rooms where the patient's name is written on a board above the bed, after the blessing, Barbara wipes the name off. "For me that's also closure. That person has gone and we're ready for a new person."

Sometimes there are profound moments when someone who has gone away from the church is reconciled.

Gloria: "I have seen amazing things, where someone knows they're going to die and reconnect with their faith, or their faith is strengthened to face what lies ahead."

Harder to cope with are the people with a restlessness or

spiritual anguish that hasn't been addressed.

Sometimes the chaplains can help the patient. They are able to talk with them and the patient relaxes and gently passes away. Sometimes the person can't find that peace.

Chaplains are not in the business of conversion, however.

"Sometimes patients say to me they're not religious, and I say 'neither am I'. People think 'chaplain' means 'conversion'; but we're not here to convert people. We're here to journey with them," says Barbara.

"For some people, I hold their hand as they're dying. For some I read a poem, or read a prayer, or just listen as they pour out their hearts and souls."

Barbara has no problem praying with a person of a different



Gloria Morgan, Rev Barbara Walker and Ann Gray with two of the quilts at palliative care.

faith or no faith if they request her to pray. She believes every person's relationship with God is between them and God; she just has to be what God has asked her to be, whatever that might involve.

"I believe it is our love and compassion that reaches across the boundaries of race, creed and colour.

How she shows that love is changing. She refers to the biblical accounts of Martha and Mary. Martha rushed around to get things ready for Jesus, while Mary just sat at his feet.

"As I get older, I think what Martha was doing was important but what Mary was doing was more important: to sit at the feet

of Jesus and just be. I think sometimes we try to help people, when it's better to just be.

"What do you say to a mother whose 18-year-old daughter has been well, then suddenly dies? Sometimes the role of a chaplain is to just be, not to say words, because there are no words."

Hospital chaplains seek support for front-line ministry

Hospital chaplaincy is a front-line ministry of the Churches, and its importance is growing.

This is view of Ron Malpass, national executive officer for the Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy Trust Board (ICHC).

Ron says due to the economic downturn people are not visiting their doctors as frequently, and this means some are being admitted to hospital a lot more unwell than in the past. This puts extra stress on families, many of whom seek help from chaplains.

September 19-26 is national Hospital Chaplaincy Week, which aims to raise the profile of, and funding for hospital chaplaincy.

Ron says the work that chaplains do providing spiritual, emotional and pastoral support in hospitals is wide-ranging. "It can be a demanding and sometimes a dramatic role supporting a patient and their family, as they face a sudden crisis situation as a result of an accident or other life changing event."

In the course of one recent week, for example, a hospital chaplain supported the families and friends of people involved in three fatal incidents. For the chaplain it required spending time with the families and friends at the hospital, while they waited for news from the medical team, wondering if their loved one would survive.

When the news was not what they had

hoped to hear, the chaplain was there to support them. The chaplain was also there for the hospital staff that had lost the battle to save each life.

Across New Zealand 85 chaplains and 300 voluntary chaplaincy assistants serve in 48 different hospitals. ICHC says last year they made more than 350,000 visits to patients, relatives of patients and hospital staff. And they provided nearly 80,000 individual acts of worship.

Government funds 50 percent of the cost of the service nationally. Ron says it is necessary for the ICHC Trust Board, together with its local chaplaincy support committees, to raise the other 50 percent, which amounts to \$2.3 million a year.

"The money comes from church members, hospitals and the wider community. The Hospital Chaplaincy Week Appeal is one way we do this."

This year Hospital Chaplaincy Week will be launched at a service of thanksgiving at the Anglican Cathedral in Hamilton, at 9.45am on Sunday 19 September. An invitation is extended to all those who may be in Hamilton, to join in this occasion.

For more information on Hospital Chaplaincy Week or to make a donation for the work of hospital chaplains visit www.ichc.org.nz or phone ICHC on 04 801 8008.



Barbara Walker

Life in ministry woven round the world

Rev Barbara Walker says her life is a tapestry and she can see all the threads God has woven into it.

The first thread was being born in Riverton to peripatetic Anglican schoolteacher parents.

Barbara studied nursing and midwifery at Greenlane Hospital and St Helens Hospital in Auckland, then went to the World Evangelical College in Tasmania. Lessons were not just in theology but also in carpentry, plumbing and car maintenance.

Barbara applied to serve as a missionary but she has dyslexia and was told she'd never learn a foreign language so she should stay home and support the work as a nurse here.

But Barbara knew God had called her. She heard an ad on the radio asking for nurses to go to Cambodia.

That was 1979 and another thread was weaving into her life – administering to people of many different cultures, beliefs and religions.

For 18 years Barbara nursed in disaster relief situations around the world, including Somalia, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Kenya.

She is positive about the experience: "We were empowering local people to take control of their lives and health systems and to dream their dreams."

It was a reminder of how resilient and beautiful people can be under stress. People were going to funerals everyday but carried on. Children would nurse their parents dying from AIDS and take over running the household and caring for the younger children.

There were also times that made her question God. "I've always known he's been there, but at times I wondered why this had happened, why it's allowed."

The hardest was on the bridge between Tanzania and Rwanda after the massacres.

"I looked down in the river and saw bodies floating down the river.

I remember saying to God, 'Why? How could people do this to each other?'

"Then it was like a voice inside me, from God, saying, 'Barbara, if you're hurting, how do you think I feel?'

"That day I had a lot of questions for God, and I was standing on that bridge, the only European around, and a rainbow came

from one side to the other.

"To me rainbows are God's promises and I knew God was there."

Her last assignment was in Mozambique in 1995 and ended with death threats. She hadn't wanted to leave but has the satisfaction of knowing she made a difference. Some of the programmes she set up are still running.

Barbara returned to New Zealand in December 1996 just as Southland nurse Sheryl Thayer was killed in Chechnya. Like many relief workers she thought, "There but for the grace of God, go I."

Bishop Penny Jamieson wove the next thread into the tapestry, by suggesting she get ordained as Barbara felt a call into the ministry of hospital chaplaincy.

"I believe God has called me to be a priest. It has enabled me to minister in a different way than when I was a lay person and I don't know how to explain that – it's opened up opportunities I wouldn't have had."

All the threads have woven her path to Hastings. "It's been challenging and it's been fantastic. We are able to minister to families, staff and patients and I just love it."

Doing theology with children at the centre

By Mary Caygill

There is an old and very wise Hasidic saying, "When a child walks down the road, a company of angels goes before them proclaiming, 'Make way for the image of the Holy One.'"

How seriously in our thinking and theology do we take of the Gospel imperative to envision the realm of God as being represented in a child. "Truly I tell you, whoever is not received into the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus' words about children appear in the context where the disciples were quarrelling about who was the greatest among them. A child is placed among them and the declaration made once again; "that the least among you all is the greatest." (Luke 9:48).

The Gospel witness is clear that it is in and through the 'icon' of the child that we will come to understand a model for our life and faith as representative of God: Godself.

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, children are seen as blessings for the future, signs of God's creative intent and faithfulness that surpasses all generations. All children are blessings of God entrusted to the community's care. In the framework of covenant, children are valued not simply for their incipient adulthood, but for whose they are, and who they are.

In welcoming a child, Jesus says, we face the being of Godself – inconspicuous, vulnerable, and powerful in eliciting compassion and cooperation. Those who harm the little ones, Jesus seems to say, place themselves outside true human community.

Becoming like children and welcoming 'little ones' means being in communion with God and all creation. The vulnerability of childhood conveys something of the essential nature of what it means to be created in the image of God, the 'imago dei'.

To approach childhood from such a theological perspective – to understand childhood as one dimension of the vulnerable, related existence into which human beings are called – impels us to reconfigure some church practices and to become vulnerable ourselves in those very places where children's lives are



Rev Mary Caygill first shared her thoughts on child-centred theology at a Canterbury workshop on children's ministry.

most seriously threatened.

Putting a child at the centre of theology must surely mean to be delivered over to mystery, a state children understand and engage with so well. It is a state in which we are open to expect the unexpected and commit ourselves to the incalculable.

It is a state that endows us with the power to play and recognize that the powers presiding over existence are always greater than our own designs.

To proclaim the reign of God through the icon of the child, is to see the world through children's eyes, a world in which all human persons are recipients of grace, in which all persons are valued simply because they are.

In the face of a society and church that place such a high premium on 'growing up', on becoming the kind of consumers that adults tend to be, we too

often forget to appreciate that children already are fully alive, fully present, fully endowed with promise in God's world. They do not simply grow into the future but rather already inhabit a present which is always fully pregnant with meaning.

Any theology that takes seriously the child at the centre must pay critical attention to the concrete realities of children's lives. To fully interpret childhood, we must ask as church where the children are and what their lives look like.

Here and around the world, the one thing children share in common is that too often their lives are threatened by the vulnerability and the systemic violence of poverty, disease, war, famine and malnutrition.

Children's ministry workshop creates buzz

'Why isn't our Synod doing anything about children's ministry? We focus on youth ministry but if we don't do something about children, we soon won't have any youth...'

Comments like this sparked the idea of a Children's Ministry Workshop in the Methodist Central South Island Synod.

Christchurch Presbytery was invited to be involved, and a planning group of both Methodists and Presbyterians put together the event, which drew 50 people from throughout Canterbury to spend a Saturday together in July sharing ideas and resources and buzzing about Children's Ministry.

Rev Mary Caygill started the day with an inspirational time focusing on the context of Hosea 11:1-11 and looking at the theology of the child. This was followed by presentations on connecting with children in the community by Morven Sidal, policies to promote child safety by Linda Cowan, involving children in worship by Rachel Judge, the use of multimedia technology by Melanie Koster, and alternative children's programmes by Mark Gibson.

In the afternoon there were workshop on storytelling, drama, music & dance, and art & craft. Each workshop leader was asked to choose one of the lectionary readings for the following week and focus on that so that everyone could take something away with them from the workshop that could be used in their parishes the next week.

At the end of the day participants were asked what had been the best thing for them about the day. Responses included sharing ideas, inspiration, hearing one another's stories, and practical workshops.

Other people said they appreciated Mary Caygill's input about the vulnerability of children and the ideas they picked up about bridging church services with community activities during the week.

There was unanimous enthusiasm for a follow-up workshop in October, to focus on Christmas themes and activities.

Those who attended issued a challenge to Synod and Presbytery to help parishes access children's ministry resources more easily and to jointly fund a part-time Children's Ministry Co-ordinator in Canterbury.

It was agreed that the wider church needs to recognise the training value in workshop days such as these, and to include them in the new ministry training intensive courses.

The new national Children's Ministry initiative set up by Mission Resourcing was warmly welcomed and affirmed, as was the Presbyterian Church's Kids Friendly programme.

There is renewed hope that parishes will no longer be working in isolation but will be part of a supportive Children's Ministry network, sharing ideas and resources and inspiring each other.

Child poverty as Kiwi as jandals

By Cory Miller

Joseph did not go to school today. Instead he is sitting at home, on the cold wooden floor staring at an old fuzzy television screen. He sniffs a bit, says hello and continues to watch the television.*

Is he sick? He says no.

Why did he not go to school? I had no lunch, he says. I'm not allowed to go to school if I have no lunch.

There is only a single packet of noodles hidden away in a dark corner of the kitchen cupboard.

Where is his Dad? In the bedroom, Joseph says.

The bedroom is dark, the curtains pulled shut, the air is damp. Dad shuffles out rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

Why is there no food? I've got no money, he says.

This is the reality of life for many New Zealanders – maybe even someone who lives in your neighbourhood.

Head of paediatrics at Auckland University's School of Medicine Professor Innes Asher says there are now twice as many New Zealand children – like Joseph

– who are living in poverty compared with the 1980s.

According to the Child Poverty Action group (CPAG), 300,000 New Zealand children under five years-old, live in families earning less than \$322 a week.

Those parents cannot pay the bills, buy healthy food, afford a warm house or even buy simple stationery for their child to use at school.

Director of the Mangere East Family Service Centre Peter Sykes says, "Child poverty is a statistical thing. The reality is families have to make choices about what to do with their resources. Families are under pressure, stretched by both expectations and by limited resources."

Elaine Lolesio, housing manager at the Monte Cecilia Housing Trust in South Auckland, says, "Those in poverty have no direct access to water or toilets, many are living in garages, sometimes sharing with a car. What choice do they have?"

Many children are living in overcrowded houses, creating an environment rife with disease. As a result, children become prone to a myriad of diseases.

Innes Asher says she is now seeing "worse disease and more of it than 20 years ago. Children born into poverty are more likely to be born prematurely, to have a low birth-weight and to die before the age of one."

The number of children walking through our hospital doors is higher than in other OECD countries.

Director of CPAG Julie Timmins says medical costs become a barrier for many families who cannot afford the doctor's bills or medicine.

Low income affects more than the health of children. Poverty is a burden they carry into adulthood, along with increased drug and alcohol use, poor educational achievement and higher rates of criminal activity.

Many of us question where our future will take us. But for Joseph, in the face of the statistics, the scary question is will he have a future?

Julie Timmins says, "at a philosophical level, everyone needs an ethic of caring. People need to care enough to look over the fence for the little boy who is missing

out on school because he has no lunch.

"People don't want to think we are a country with poverty. But it is happening and we do have a choice in this country. "We should not have such poverty here."

*Name changed.

DISTURBING FACTS

- NZ hospitalisation rates for pneumonia in children are five to 10 times higher than other OECD countries.
- NZ incidence of bronchiectasis is eight to nine times higher than other OECD countries.
- NZ hospitalisation rates for rheumatic fever in children are 13 times higher than other OECD countries.
- Hospitalisations for serious skin infections have doubled in NZ since 1994.

Church as Fale-‘o-Kainga

The Tongan word fale-‘o-kainga is a combination of two words ‘fale’ and ‘kainga’. The word fale generally refers to a house or a dwelling place: the oikos; the eco. It also means more than a physical structure that is built. It refers to any group of people with common interests and a shared sense of belonging – groups like families, communities, churches, and so forth. Fale in this sense indicates a commonwealth of people who are united by their responsibility and commitment to each other.

We can also speak of fale as ecological space. Wherever we are in the world, we belong to one fale that we share with other creatures. In Oceania, we belong to ‘a huge watery house.’ Belonging comes with a responsibility that, if not observed, would jeopardize the whole household and the well-being of those with whom we share that space.

Fale is also an economic space that is managed and maintained not by some

abstract philosophies but by a cultural network of relation and exchange known as kainga. Kainga refers to one’s kin. It also indicates that which is relevant, applicable, and well-connected.

Within the kainga network, goods and services are exchanged and that contributes to strengthening the relationship within the fale. This is one of the major drivers behind remittances sent to the islands. In return, people in the islands send island food or material as tokens of appreciation. That exchange amongst kainga transcends borders and crosses boundaries.

At the heart of the kainga network is a core value that is characteristic of most, if not all, Oceanic cultures: reciprocity (Tongan: tauhi va). Tauhi va elevates distribution above consumption; sharing above accumulation; peaceful co-existence above domination; communal well-being above self-interests.

As we begin our journey in the

month of September, we encounter readings that remind us that despite our differences—in terms of ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, economic status, and so forth—we have inherited one fale in which we must learn to live together as a kainga. The prophet Jeremiah invites us to ‘re-turn’ (re-direct) ourselves to God. Earth will mourn if we turn otherwise.

The readings from Luke point to the significance of listening, rejoicing, honesty, and sharing. In a world where more people are talking, we need people who are willing to listen. In doing so, we hope to hear the cry of the needy, and ultimately the voice of God. In a world where neo-liberalism encourages accumulation of wealth, we need more people who are passionate about sharing what they have with the less fortunate.

That is the direction of Paul’s advice to Timothy: “there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment.” The word ‘contentment’ is from the Greek ‘autarkeia’ meaning ‘a mind that

The June edition of Touchstone carried the last contribution Laurie Michie wrote for this column. Since 2004 Laurie was one of the three writers who take turns reflecting on the month’s Lectionary readings. We warmly thank him for his thoughts.

In his place we welcome Rev Dr Nasili Vaka’uta. Nasili is tutor in Biblical Studies at Trinity Methodist Theological College.

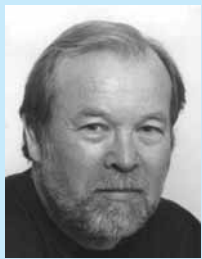
is contented with its lot.’

This is not to say that the poor should be content with being poor. Rather it is a call upon those who have more than enough to take their fair share and give the rest to their poor fellows. The economic and ecological crises we are facing have not happened because we don’t have enough resources. They happened and are happening because consumption has been elevated above distribution, accumulation above sharing, selfish interests above communal well-being.

Let us journey together this month as a kainga who belong to one fale, and move forward as one people with a common heritage, common call and a common destiny!

THE SEEDS OF FREEDOM LIBRARY OF FAITH

By Jim Stuart



In my personal library there is a small book I regularly return to for insight into the spiritual life. Its pages are frayed and tired. The smell is musty and the binding is beginning to

deteriorate.

The author observes at the beginning of the book: “There is too much passion and too much physical violence for humans to want to reflect much on the interior life and its meaning. Yet... the interior life and contemplation are the things we most of all need.”

The author is the late Cistercian monk, Thomas Merton, and the book is appropriately entitled *Seeds of Contemplation* first published in 1949.

Merton admits that his thoughts and ideas and aphorisms about the interior life are ‘a bit disconnected’ but he believes, nevertheless, if carefully considered, they can assist one in ‘the ordinary fulfilment of the Christian life of grace.’

As one who has spent a considerable part of my life studying theology, I am increasingly concerned about the growing disinterest in theology and to a lesser extent spirituality in today’s society. If you assume the spiritual life is not important, of course you will find nothing there. Our lives have become so cluttered with the stresses of daily life there is little or no place for the spiritual or contemplative life.

In our efforts to live our lives, we have become ‘too busy’ to live. For those who care about the contemplative life, however the first paragraph of Merton’s book is worth pondering:

“Every moment and every event of

everyone’s life on earth plants something in one’s soul. For just as the wind carries thousands of invisible and visible winged seeds, so the stream of time brings with it germs of spiritual vitality that come to rest imperceptibly in our minds and wills. Most of these unnumbered seeds perish and are lost, because we are not prepared to receive them. How can I receive the seeds of freedom,” he asks, “if I am in love with slavery?”

Merton clearly states that he didn’t write the book with the intention to be popular.

Rather, he invites us to be careful, take time reading the book and suspend judgement if necessary. He reminds us that in a world where everything has to be immediate, his book is about “spiritual things from the point of experience”.

Over time the life of the spirit is absorbed in the activity of God and loses all awareness of a separate existence. “This

is the kind of book,” he emphasises, “that writes itself almost automatically in the monastery.”

As I age, I feel drawn more and more to the contemplative life. I want to gather together my scattered thoughts, my fading memories, my many experiences of faith and doubt and silently trace the hand of God in all that I am and will become in the time I have remaining.

Merton’s small book offers a much-needed alternative for people of faith who are seeking to live meaningful lives amidst the busyness of modern life. I’ll let Merton have the last word: “One who knows by experience that God is always present everywhere and always ready to make Himself known to those who love God, we’ll not quickly prefer the uncertain value of human activity to the tranquillity and certitude of this infinite and all-important possession.”

LEPs breathe hope and life into Taranaki communities

By Tony Bell

Our communities have changed markedly over the last 10 years especially, and this means the nature of cooperation between churches has changed also.

The Anglican Church, and more recently, the Presbyterian Church have withdrawn from forming cooperating parishes. Behind their decision lie concerns about resources held by Cooperating and Union Parishes and the inability of the partner churches to access them. The Methodist Church has concerns in this area too, but has not taken the step of banning the formation of any more.

However way back in the early 1980s another form of cooperation came into being, called Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs). These were mainly set up to assist the formation of joint Food Banks and could include any denomination.

Recently three LEPs were set up in Taranaki, embracing Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist parishes.

One in particular, the South Taranaki Ministry Cluster is a good example of what can happen when we pool our resources and work together.

This LEP consists of the Hawera Anglican and Methodist Parishes, the Patea Anglican Parish, Patea Cooperating Parish (Methodist/Presbyterian) and Waverley/Waitotara Cooperating Parish (Anglican/Presbyterian).

No property or bank accounts are changed. These parishes have covenanted to work together to share resources for mission and ministry.

About the time of the forming of the LEP, the then vicar at Hawera had been approached by some community trusts who were looking for accommodation, they wanted to work out of a “community house” so they could pool resources and share a receptionist and office equipment.

Once the LEP was formed a possibility came in sight: the Wesley Hawera Sunday School rooms, were in a wing off the hall and were only

being used for storage! The Hawera Methodist folk were getting on in years and didn’t think they had the skills to see such a project through.

By working with the Bishop’s Action Foundation (BAF), Origin Energy was encouraged to gift \$100,000 for the project. Deirdre Nagel, the project manager for the BAF managed the project, the IT folk from the BAF looked after the computer needs, and a lot of labour was donated. Thus the Hawera Community House, Taiohi Oranga, came into being.

Te Taha Maori was involved all the way as they have their house – Tahupotiki on the same site, adjacent to the hall.

The various trust workers are delighted to be in the same place. They readily gave up working from



The Hawera Community House, Taiohi Oranga, is one of the fresh expressions of ecumenism emerging in Taranaki.

cold halls or from their cars, and are enjoying being able to network with one another.

In a couple of years, when the remaining small debt has been paid, the income from rentals will be split between Wesley Hawera and developing youth worth in the area. Hopefully, next year we will have a Deacon working with this LEP as Youth Ministry Enabler.

Not so long ago the churches that make up the LEP were without a lot of hope for the future, now they know about new life!

Imagine all New Zealanders made homeless....



LEFT: Rahim Gul walked for almost a day with his sick child on his back as he and his family sought help. RIGHT: At least 8 million people in Pakistan require food, water, health care, shelter and sanitation.

Think of a natural disaster so massive it made all New Zealanders homeless. This is the size of the disaster facing Pakistan.

The tally for those left homeless by the floods rose above four million on the 20th of August. This total is equivalent to our entire population.

This mind boggling statistic partially explains why the world is having trouble dealing with this latest huge natural disaster.

Both the speed and scale of the international response to the Pakistan floods has been slow compared to other catastrophes.

Yet the facts are now well known.

The worst floods in 80 years killed over 1600 people, affected over a tenth of the population, 20 million people, and directly hit about a third of Pakistan.

By late August the United Nations was estimating that at least 8 million people needed urgent assistance. The UN warned that up to 3.5 million children could be in danger of catching deadly diseases such as cholera, typhoid and malaria.

The floods follow on from years of disasters for many Pakistanis. The devastating 2007 earthquake was followed by

massive internal displacement last year as people fled fighting between Government soldiers and radical insurgents.

CWS has launched an appeal for Pakistan and is working with long term Pakistan partner, Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan.

When the flooding first began at the end of July, they immediately began relief efforts. These now include food, water, health care, shelter and handing out household goods as well as sanitation programmes to reduce the risk of disease.

CWS staffer Nick Clarke was

in Pakistan on a monitoring visit after the 2007 earthquake. He believes that effective aid is made better by the fact that the CWS partner group is "internationally backed but very deliberately Pakistani in nature."

Many flood hit people would be traumatised by years of disasters.

"Having been displaced in the 2009 conflict many of the Pakistan people would have only just gone home and got started again. Then the very little they had has been taken away again," Nick says.

The Pakistan partner group for CWS, Church World Service, has been collecting personal stories each day in an attempt to reduce the disaster to a manageable human scale.

This is one of their latest stories to be sent about a farmer and father of eight who lost everything except his family:

Before the floods, Mohammed Umar lived a simple but good life with his family farming cotton on 10 acres of land in Sultan Kot Village, Sibi District, Balochistan.

The money from the cotton was helping to fund his children's education in the local school system. His family had enough

food and drinking water.

However, in late July 2010 when the floods suddenly hit his village he lost everything."

He and his family escaped with just what they were wearing. Their house was buried, the crops mainly washed away and what was not destroyed then perished with insect infestations.

When Mohammad talked to the aid workers from Church World Service he was depressed and shared his feeling of futility at not being able to even salvage a blanket for his children.

Unsure about the future he said that he was grateful to Church World Service for the food and other relief items they had given him for the present. So many more families need our help now.

Support the CWS Pakistan Floods Appeal. Donate by credit card: Phone 0800 74 73 72 or online at www.cws.org.nz.

Or by mail to PO Box 22652 Christchurch 8142 or make a deposit into the Christian World Service Account: 06 0817 0318646 00 reference: Pakistan

(If you require a receipt please send CWS your name, address and details of the deposit).

Gaza hardships can't blight hope for peace

Constantine Dabbagh cherishes his memory of the kind Israeli soldier at the Gaza checkpoint who told him to "have a nice day."

The awful thing is that this memory is also his only one of humane treatment from the Israeli guards at the Gaza checkpoint.

"Normally it is hostile and aimed to offend. I cannot even put the passports for my wife and myself on the counter at the same time," Constantine says.

Constantine was in New Zealand for a few days in August to visit Christian World Service. CWS is a long time supporter of the Middle East Council of Churches Department of Service for Palestinian refugees. Constantine is the executive director of the programme in Gaza.

In this role he directs the provision of health care, education and community services for the mainly Muslim population of Gaza.

During his whirlwind five day visit he was a guest speaker at the Otago University Symposium on Faith and Development, met politicians and church leaders in Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington, and held two public meetings.

He also met with UN Development programme head, Helen Clark, after her speech at the first annual Christchurch Cathedral lecture.

Constantine impressed people with his integrity, commitment to peace and forgiveness and presence as a living witness to history starting with his escape from Haifa in 1948 with his family.

When the bullets coming into their apartment started to move downward from their ceiling it was time to move.

"When we left to become refugees it

was before dawn and we crept from building to building. I held my sister's hand while my parents carried the others."

Aged seven at the time he has technically been a refugee ever since. He is sad that his grandchildren are also refugees.

During the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2009 one of his three medical clinics was bombed.

He said that while debate about the use of tactics such as the attempted aid flotillas into Gaza raged globally he was quite sure that the publicity they caused had made a huge difference.

Controls on the constricting blockade of goods into Gaza had begun to relax slightly.

Until recently the blockade had been so total that even medical supplies were included.

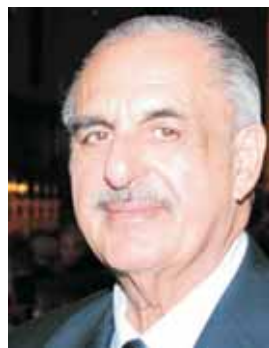
"We had a woman from our Jerusalem office try and bring in contraceptives who was told she could not," he says.

Other impacts of the blockade continue. At one point the aquifers under Gaza were increasingly polluted as sewerage leaked into them. Then salt from sea water added to the poor water quality.

Under the blockade replacement parts for pumps and piping are allowed in. Power is still spasmodic and on a good day might last six hours.

There is still no economy to speak of. "It's dead, with unemployment at 60 per cent."

Despite all these hardships Constantine says his ultimate wish for the Palestinian and Israeli peoples is to learn to live in peace together with mutual recognition. "Life is a gift from God, to be enjoyed by all of us," he says.



Constantine Dabbagh



PAKISTAN AN ONGOING CRISIS FLOODS

Five years ago it was an earthquake; last year it was conflict on the Afghanistan border; now, millions of Pakistani people have again lost everything in the biggest floods on record.

"Please continue to support CWS appeals for Pakistan floods so that we can provide life-saving assistance. Blessings and thanks for your prayers." Marvin Parvez, Church World Service Pakistan.

You can, and do, make a difference

PLEASE DONATE NOW

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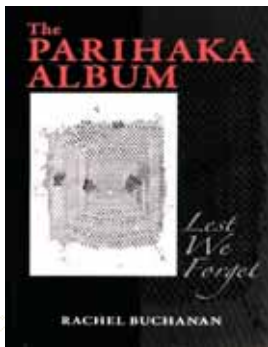


The Parihaka Album – Lest We Forget

Rachel Buchanan has written this book from the research she undertook in her doctoral studies. That work became a personal journey that led her to challenge the way histories are recorded.

She observes that sometimes pieces of history are omitted. This can be deliberate or it can simply be out of ignorance. It may be that particular stories and histories are unknown to a writer because he or she can only write from the purview of their own cultural understanding. Another cultural view remains hidden, or spoken of in different ways and through different media. This includes the oral record more suited to Maori accounts of history.

Such omissions might be forgotten and lost forever unless someone takes the time and effort to seek them out. This is precisely what Buchanan has done. She has revisited her family's story and their beginnings in Taranaki and in Wellington from her Pakeha ancestry and her whakapapa Maori.



Buchanan has journeyed her way through geography, genealogy and archaeology and through the oral histories. The Parihaka Album is the story of Parihaka but a Parihaka that reveals untold stories about people who sought justice and fairness in the land that was theirs.

One illustration of telling only part of the story is shown in the way that she describes the hurt she felt in reading the plaque on the Cape Egmont Lighthouse (Chapter 3). The plaque records how the lighthouse came to be sited on this area, how it had served on Mana Island in the Wellington Harbour prior to being installed on this particular coast. But, what was not spoken about was the context in time and place of this placement, the effort, the arduous tasks undertaken to install this lighthouse “forcibly, in this formerly independent Maori place” (p.61). Why forcibly?

And, in Chapter 10 she speaks about the excavation of the Bolton Street cemetery and the Te Aro Pa site during the work

on the motorway extensions in Wellington. She is particularly saddened by the many unknown – most likely Maori gravesites – that go unrecognised except in descriptions such as “to the memory of the Pioneers and Early Settlers of Wellington” (p.260). Does this include the original Maori inhabitants? Buchanan draws parallels between the lives of two peoples, her own family, who journeyed and sojourned in these places.

The book takes its name from family journals that link the Pakeha stories of Buchanan's family to the Wellington and Taranaki regions and to her whakapapa Maori. This very personal journey is made more vital by the way Buchanan unpacks and repacks the history from the two sides of her whakapapa.

She reveals how important it is for the oral histories to be given the mana and recognition that they deserve, that history revealed through perspectives other than that of Pakeha historians is every bit as important for all New Zealanders and every bit as valid as the written word.

By Rachel Buchanan
2009, Huia, 291 pages
Reviewer: Arapera Ngaha

Christology: A Biblical, Historical and Systematic Study of Jesus (2nd edition)

In the pattern of likeness and difference between the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the difference between Christianity and other faiths is most clear when we consider what Christians have come to believe about the nature and significance of Jesus of Nazareth.

The branch of theology concerned with these beliefs is generally called Christology. Implicit to its name is an understanding that this person Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one of God. Gerald O'Collins is one of the foremost experts in Christology today and this book is a revised and updated version of a highly popular work on Christology originally published in 1995.

He gives a good consideration of the Jewish background from which the earliest understandings of who Jesus is. He quotes Hans Hubner, who wrote that the first Christology was undertaken by Christians who put together their memories and stories of Jesus with “the ready made images and concepts they found to be relevant and illuminating in their inherited Scriptures.”

In the introductory chapter O'Collins identifies some key issues in the development of Christology. He then spends four chapters considering the biblical data and two on the developments and debates on Christological doctrine from the

ecumenical councils through to the present day.

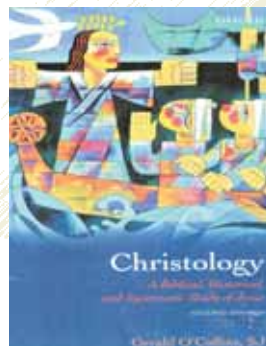
The book challenges us about what we are doing when we do Christology, do we apprehend the Christ or do we project onto him our own agendas, character and needs?

Being human we do project on to the Christ, how could we not? This is masterfully illumined by a critique of Adolph von Harnack – a liberal German theologian – who emphasised Jesus as moral reformer and teacher of wisdom. The Catholic theologian George Tyrell wrote:

“The Christ that Harnack sees, looking back through nineteen centuries of Catholic darkness, is only the reflection of a Liberal Protestant face, seen at the bottom of a very deep well.”

To do Christology well we need to be aware of what we bring to the project.

“Our preconceptions, interests, and value-systems are necessarily at work in our historical research and judgements. At the same time we need not only to be critically aware of this ‘pre-comprehension,’ but also to be ready to let evidence



By Gerald O'Collins
2009, Oxford University Press, 416 pages
Reviewer: David Poultney

revise our prior judgements.”

Covering such a huge scope in an accessible way in under 400 pages doubtless leaves some gaps. The specialist might pick up on these. Nevertheless, this is a fine introductory work for ‘professional’ theology students and for the person in the pew who wants to know and understand more about how Christians think, talk and invest our hope in Jesus the Christ.

I would note that while this is an excellent introduction to Christology it is very much a work in the western tradition and could hardly be anything else. Contemporary experiences of theology, including Christology, are no longer a matter of over arching truth narratives.

There are multiple accounts based on experience and reflection in particular communities and cultures and amongst particular sections or classes of society. In the face of this variety there could be no one book which does justice to the contemporary scene. That being said this book is a worthy addition to the bookshelf of anyone wanting to go deeper in their understanding of Christianity and the man for whom we are named Christian.

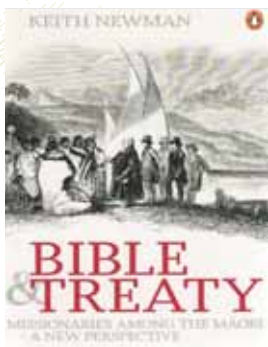
Bible & Treaty: Missionaries Among the Maori

For some time past, modern secular and academic historians have downplayed the role and influence of New Zealand's Anglican, Wesleyan, and Marist European missionaries, in the tumultuous decades of this country's founding and colonization.

They have been blamed for too much and credited with too little. Even their contributions to peacemaking between tribes and fostering of huge advances in Maori literacy, agriculture, commerce, governance, and spirituality have too often been belittled.

In this book, Keith Newman, award-winning journalist and author of two recent books on T.W. Ratana, has done a service in seeking to correct this bias. He writes, “My challenge was not to sanitise or romanticise valuable firsthand commentary, but to make it easier and even enjoyable for future generations to gain a fresh perspective on the past”.

In this new overview of the missions from 1814 to the 1860s he has succeeded in producing a very readable, popular account that the general reader will likely find enjoyable.



Newman allows the missionaries to largely speak for themselves by quoting extensively from contemporary missionary journals, letters and manuscripts, and from published accounts mostly written close to the times they cover. This is both the book's strength and a weakness.

It is timely to read again of the missionaries' heroism, industry, and commitment to Maori betterment. Newman gives proper weight to the many Maori missionary teachers like Tamihana Te Rauparaha, Aperahama Taonui, and Wiremu Te Tauri, who preceded their European overseers

with the gospel to the far corners of both islands, converting many tribes to a Maori Christianity before their European colleagues arrived on the scene.

Even Wesleyan Maori, such as mission teacher John Leigh Tutu, the South Taranaki martyrs Putakarua and Te Awaroa, and the pioneer to the South Island Taawao get a mention.

But too often, a mention is all the Wesleyans, English and Maori, get after 1840. John Whiteley's 1869 murder is written off with four lines in an endnote. William Woon gets no

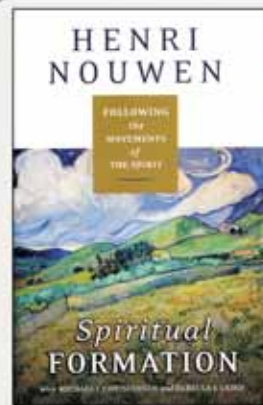
coverage of his colossal printing output, which rivalled William Colenso's, while Colenso is credited with some prominence.

Bishop Pompallier and his Catholic missionaries get even less coverage and even less credit. Bishop Selwyn is treated as unrelentingly hindering his CMS missionaries. Governors Browne and Grey, and early colonial politicians and administrators come across as totally venal, manipulative self-servers; Henry Williams, Octavius Hadfield and Thomas Grace as heroic, lily-white battlers for Maori justice.

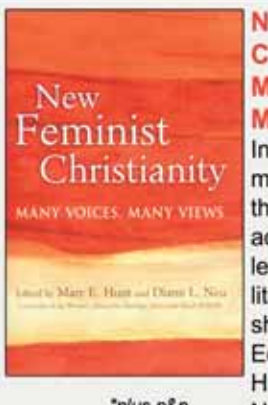
The truth was far more complex. Newman is better portraying the heroic, pioneer years before 1840 than the complexities of the colonial decades in the years following. Also, better editing would have avoided some misspellings and errors of fact. “Putakarua” becomes “Putakaurua”; “Te Manihera” “Te Mahihera”. Archdeacons William Williams and Octavius Hadfield, as missionaries, never worked “dioceses”, and weren't “Archbishops”.

In 322 pages of text Newman cannot do justice to everything about the missionary days. But, he gives us, less a new perspective than an uncritical regurgitation of an old perspective.

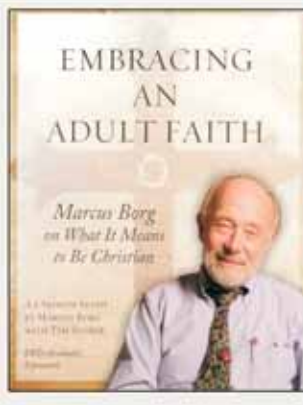
By Keith Newman. 2010,
Penguin, 367 pages
Reviewer: Gary Clover



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ON SCREEN

A film review by Steve Taylor

INCEPTION



Most movies work in a linear fashion. Time passes minute by minute. Inception offers us a strikingly different conception, a timeline in which dreams nestle within dreams. It is a plot-line similar to a set of Russian matryoshka dolls, multiple dreams, each nestling within another yet another dream.

The movie is a compelling mix of Oceans 11 meets The Matrix. A highly skilled thief, Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio), who earns a living breaking into people's dreams in order to extract important information. When a heist goes wrong, Cobb is offered redemption.

His task becomes to plant an idea, rather than extract. His target is Robert Michael Fische (Cillian Murphy) heir to a multibillion-dollar oil company. His goal is inception, to conceive in Fische's dreams the idea that upon his father's death he should dismantle the family fortune. Confused? Then you will love Inception. Cobb assembles his team. Yusuf (Dileep Rao) will send Fische to sleep. Ariadne (Ellen Page) will create the dream worlds that Fische will make his own, filling them with his own subconscious memories. Arthur

(Joseph Gordon-Levitt) will enter this dream world in order to connect Fische with Eames (Tom Hardy), who disguised as Peter Browning (Tom Berenger), a Fische family friend, will plant the inception.

However, dreams and the human subconscious prove unpredictable. Cobb is repressing his own personal nightmare, the death of his wife Mal (Marion Cotillard). It is a past that keeps finding ways to intrude, unpredictably, into the dreamworlds within which Cobb works.

It is all very Freudian, isn't it? Dreams exist as attempts by an unpredictable unconscious to resolve inner conflict.

Director Christopher Nolan has made a string of movies – The Prestige (2006), Batman Begins (2005), Memento (2000) and Dark Knight (2008) – that probe the human subconscious. Inception is no exception. To sleep is simply to slide into the pain, guilt and grief of one's past.

Inception is a rewarding movie, brilliantly conceived and creatively executed. It has plot, intriguingly randomised through the nestling of multiple dreams. These sleep scenes allow for mind-bending special effects and the interweaving of concurrent narratives. It has emotion, best seen as Cobb finds the courage to finally farewell his

dying wife.

All it lacks is character development. The movie, long at 2 hours 28 minutes, dedicates more time to teasing the audience with yet another dream sequence than it does to developing characters.

Nevertheless, Inception leaves viewers pondering their dream worlds. This provoked some lively table talk. Does Christian redemption include human nightmares and one's subconscious past?

A colleague said 'Yes, absolutely', and told a story of personal change in their subconscious as a result of Christian healing prayer.

This made sense of one of the great theologians of the church, Gregory of Nazianzen. Gregory famously declared that "the unassumed is the unredeemed." In plain English, the redeeming work of Christ includes the totality of human brokenness, from our dreams to our nightmares, from our past to our present.

Which makes for a faith worth falling asleep for.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is director of missiology, Uniting College, Adelaide. He is the author of *The Out of Bounds Church?* (Zondervan, 2005) and writes regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

ANIMALS FOUND IN SCRIPTURE

Animals get a fair showing in scripture. The book of Genesis could be described as 'the saga of an influential Hebrew family that made its wealth from livestock'. The patriarchs farmed cattle, sheep and goats and various other animals appear in stories, preaching and parables.

More than 30 mammals can be identified along with around 25 other creatures such as reptiles and insects. Surprisingly, rats do not get a mention although they have always existed in Biblical places, as indeed they do in all countries throughout the world, except the polar regions.

Bible Challenge

Balaam had a talking	A	Nm 22:30, AV
A very busy insect	N	Pr 6:6
The Prodigal lived among	I	Lk 15:16
Abraham saw a ___ in a thicket	M	Gn 22:13
Eve conversed with a	A	Gn 3:2, GNB
'...like fawns twins of a...'	L	SgSol 7:3
The first rider rode a white	S	Rv 6:2
Beware of the ___ in sheep's clothing	F	Mtt 7:15
Joseph's coat was dipped in ___ blood	O	Gn 37:31
John the Baptist ate wild honey and	U	Mtt 3:4
A small, two-winged insect	N	Mtt 23:24
Will eat crumbs, would prefer meat	D	Mtt 15:27
Samson killed a young	I	Jg 14:5-6
A man bought five yoke of	N	Lk 14:19
A rodent that 'swarms on the earth'	S	Lv 11:29
Job's 'Leviathan' is thought to be a	C	Jb 41:1
The 2 nd plague of Egypt	R	Ex 8:2
Creatures that weave but cannot clothe	I	Is 59:5-6
Jacob asked for the spotted ___ of the flock	P	Gn 31:32
Deer that graced Solomon's table	T	1Kg 4:22-23
Absalom's last ride was on a	U	2Sm 18:9
Most dangerous when robbed of cubs	R	2Sm 17:8
Jesus rode on a	E	Jn 12:14

Answers: ass, ant, ant, swine, ram, snake, gazelle, horse, wolf, goat, locusts, gnat, oxen, mouse, crocodile, frog, spider, sheep, hart, mule, bear, donkey © RMS



Carey Gray has played the organ at Marton Methodist Parish since 1950.

Marton organist's 60 years of service

For 60 years Carey Gray has played the organ at Marton Methodist Parish. Last month the Parish acknowledged her dedication with a recognition service.

Carey Gray (nee Prowse) was 21 when her father Rev Herbert Prowse came to Marton as minister to the Marton Circuit in 1948. Two years later Carey joined the team of organists and is now the only organist for the Parish.

At the service Graeme Hill of the Parish Council presented Carey a certificate. He spoke of the huge number of church services, weddings and funerals at which she has performed over the years. He referred to the preparation and practice time organists contribute.

The Service held on August 1st, was well attended and a women's quartet led the singing and sang the anthem "The Lost Chord" with Carey at the organ. The theme for worship led by Rex Millar was "Old age, humour and service."



Young People



**SAMOAN CHURCH IS AWESOME!
SAYS YOUNG PALAGI.**

Fatu Jnr Tufuga, Siauala Nili and Andrew Malcolm at the Sinoti Samoa annual conference in July.

We often hear that the Methodist Church of New Zealand is on a bicultural journey and many would say it's more a multi-cultural one. One person who definitely optimises this idea of cultural integration is one Andrew Malcolm.

Andrew is a member of the Wesley Samoan Methodist church (on Taranaki Street) in Wellington. The 20 year old is also an active member of the church's youth group and he is its current treasurer.

He travelled with the youth group on a recent trip to Samoa, and he was present at the recent Sinoti Samoa annual conference

held in Hastings. It was actually at this gathering where I first met him and quickly came to realise that there was something different about this guy, he just seemed to stand out from the crowd – and it wasn't because of some weird hair style or wearing real "out there" clothes or anything.

It was actually due to the fact that Andrew is white, a Caucasian, a Palagi, a Pakeha – a fair dinkum true blue Kiwi (if that's the terminology you'd prefer!). He was definitely one of a kind among the hundreds of Samoans who attended the Sinoti Samoa annual conference in July.

What? How? Why? These were the inevitable questions that went through my mind. If these same questions are floating around in your head right now then read on... all will be revealed.

Andrew attended Wellington College where he was also a member of the school's Polynesian cultural group. In 2007, while still at school, he decided to join a Samoan friend at his church – Wesley Methodist Church, Taranaki Street. He enjoyed it so much that even though his friend eventually stopped attending Andrew has carried on and to this day remains an active member of the congregation.

Andrew explained that his family attended a church when he was younger but for various reasons they stopped attending, so his spiritual walk was temporarily 'stalled'. Since joining the Wesley Samoan Methodist church, however, his relationship with the Lord, his love of praise and worship and Christian fellowship has been re-ignited and is burning stronger than ever.

So I asked him what was his family's reaction to him attending a Samoan church? "At first my family thought it was a bit weird, but they've been nothing but supportive of me and my decision to attend a Samoan Christian church."

And what has it been like settling into a

new church, where the Samoan language is the primary form of communication. Andrew says "the whole church has been awesome, so welcoming and very supportive of me."

Andrew is slowly overcoming the language barrier by continually practising to read and write in Samoan. He also receives help with the spoken language from various members of the church including church elder Seaga Toelupe and youth leader Seilala Leuila. Not only is he learning the language but he is also learning all the time about various aspects of the Samoan culture.

"It's a very unique and special culture. I just want to learn more and more about it," he says.

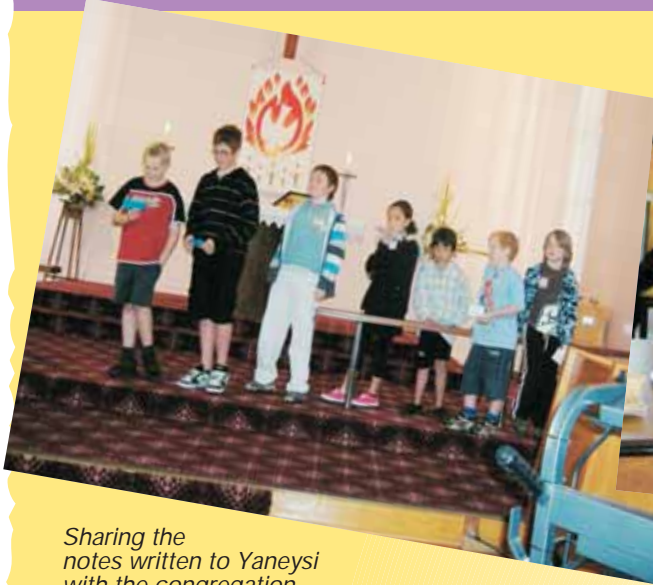
Andrew loves being part of the church youth group in particular and has a passion to do as much as he can as one of the youth leadership team to uplift his fellow youth members in any way possible. A practical example of this was a recent budgeting and financial planning workshop for the youth that he facilitated utilising the skills he has gained since working with the National Bank.

May God bless you Andrew in your ongoing Christian journey as a member of the Wellington Wesley Samoan Methodist church!

By Mataiva Robertson

Kidz Korna!

Welcome to the September Kidz Korna. I hope you are all busy preparing your poster for the display at Conference in November. I've heard from several churches that they are working hard on their presentations. I am really looking forward to receiving them.



Sharing the notes written to Yaneysi with the congregation



The younger children, with their teacher, waiting for customers at the cake stall.



Children with Rev Jan Tarrant preparing for the cake stall.

FUNDRAISING FOR YANEYSI

This month we hear from the children at St Paul's in Putaruru. They recently held a cake stall to raise funds to support Yaneysi Rojas who lives in Nicaragua.

The St Paul's kids have been sponsoring Yaneysi through World Vision for six years. To raise money, the children hold car wash days, sell firewood and hold a cake stall.

They look forward to receiving mail from Yaneysi and

take a keen interest in her life. They pray for her regularly, and Yaneysi has become an important part of their church family.

I know that many of you raise money to help people overseas and would like to hear from you. Write or e-mail me, please and we can share your news with other children who read Touchstone.

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

A Quiet Place Aladdin Paperbacks

By Douglas Wood Illustrator: Dan Andreasen

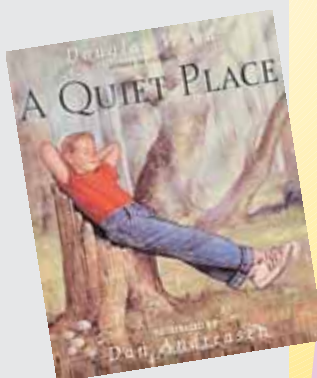
There are times when we all need to find a quiet place where we can be alone and escape from the noise and bustle around us.

In this book by Douglas Wood, there are wonderful ideas for hiding and finding peace. Sometimes it's not easy to find such a place but when you do you can let your imagination run away with you and be an explorer on a quiet beach, or a caveman in a sabre tooth tiger's den. The book is full of many possibilities.

There are beautiful illustrations on every page, each telling its own story.

The large format make it a good book to share with a family.

Douglas is also the author of 'Grandad's Prayers of the Earth' and 'Old Turtle'.



WORD SEARCH

In the word square are the names of 16 women in the Bible. They can read up, down or diagonally. When you have found them all there will be 11 letters left over. These will spell the name of a book in the New Testament. Solution to Last Month's Puzzle: 'GOSPEL'

E	A	N	N	A	A	I	D	Y	L
L	A	A	A	R	E	H	T	S	E
I	H	C	O	U	S	A	R	A	H
Z	T	C	M	T	C	O	S	R	C
A	I	E	I	H	I	N	A	T	A
B	B	B	E	R	N	I	C	E	R
E	A	E	H	A	H	T	R	A	M
T	T	R	M	A	R	Y	O	I	A
H	H	A	R	O	B	E	D	N	S

Te Awamutu church re-dedicated to God's work



Children received crosses made from recycled timber from the demolished buildings.

On Sunday 13 June 2010 Te Awamutu Methodist Church was re-dedicated. Methodist Church of NZ President Rev Alan Upson and Rev Maureen Calman officiated.

Why the re-dedication? After about 20 years of planning, and many committees and presbyters, plans and architects, the property was finally re-developed.

Previously on the site there had been a church, a hall, a fellowship block, a parsonage and a shed – all separate buildings. The shed was pulled apart, the parsonage sold, and the fellowship block demolished.

Now the church and hall have been joined together by a lounge, foyer, office, kitchenette and toilets. People can move from one part to another without going outside.

Overflow from the church can be accommodated in the lounge and foyer. The old annex has been

replaced with another more in keeping with the architecture of the church. The architect, bricklayers and builders went to a lot of trouble to use original bricks on the new part so that the whole building is in keeping with the nearly 100 year old church. The new annex is now the same as the rest of the church. Heating, sound systems and data projector blend into the older surroundings.

On the previous Sunday the congregation had been part of a Pilgrimage Service. They held the first part of the service in the hall where they'd been since January. After learning about pilgrimage, they made the pilgrimage with suitable Methodist luggage (hymn and song books) through the new development to the church. After exploring for a few minutes and deciding where to sit, they gathered for prayer and communion.

On the Saturday after the re-dedication an open day was held for the local community, other churches members and the Synod. Refreshments were served throughout the time and at 2pm some presentations were made to the people responsible for the refurbishment.

Each was presented with a wooden bowl made by a parishioner from rimu taken from the demolished buildings. A constant stream of people wandered through the buildings for many hours with lots of favourable comments.

Parishioners are amazed and proud of the finished project and look forward to getting on with the work of God.

Wesley Wellington volunteers 'honoured' to help rebuild Samoa

The tsunami that hit Samoa in September 2009 destroyed homes and lives, but emergency relief volunteers from Wesley Wellington Samoan Congregation have helped the people of Samoa to rebuild their lives.

Among the volunteers who have jumped in to lend a hand are Leatuavao Viko Leatuavao, Lealataua Maveve Holmes and Fatu (Junior) Tufuga.

"Wesley Wellington Parish in particular the Samoan Congregation is privileged to have the services of so many volunteers over the years including the Pasifika and Samoan community in Wellington. It is great that our congregation and parish supported us to volunteer our help," says Leatuavao.

More than 600 volunteers from all over the world, including New Zealand-based Samoans like Leatuavao, Lealataua and Fatu helped to build fales and repair homes in the worst-affected areas in Aleipata and Falealili districts in Samoa.

"The conditions were wet and humid and the work very physical, particularly hand-mixing concrete for the fales' concrete floors and abluton blocks, but it was an awesome experience," says Leatuavao.

"As Samoans based in Wellington, we were very interested to see for ourselves how our people have mended their lives after the disaster.

"The fact is you can never underestimate the resilience of Samoan people at home. The tsunami took so much away from them, including loved ones who can never be replaced. For many, everything they owned was claimed by the sea, yet they still want to give something back to volunteers, even though they have very little left themselves."

The overwhelming feedback from volunteers

was that it was an honour to be part of the emergency relief effort. They went to Samoa with the intention of blessing the Samoan people but returned home feeling blessed themselves."

The work done by the volunteers was coordinated by New Zealand Habitat for Humanity, which was appointed as principal builder by the Samoan government. Habitat for Humanity is a

not-for-profit organisation that helps more than 60,000 families across the world into homes every year.

Members of the Wesley Samoan Congregation who volunteered for two weeks in June, acknowledged the contribution of all volunteers from all over the world including New Zealand since the beginning of the 'Rebuild Samoa' project from November 2009 up to the end date of 28 June 2010.

Leatuavao noted that while undertaking this relief work in Samoa, they were embraced and empowered by the grace of the Holy Spirit as they reflected on the key principles

underpinning Wesley Wellington's ministry in relation to their contribution to 'Rebuild Samoa'.

Ecology: To care for creation;

Healing: To listen for hurt and work for healing;

Flexibility: To be flexible, creative and open to God's spirit in a changing world and Church, so that the Church is relevant to people's needs;

Justice: To share resources with poor and disadvantaged in New Zealand and beyond.

On behalf of Lealataua, Fatu and Rebuild Samoa Team 30, Leatuavao would like to recognise your well-wishes, messages and prayers whilst they engaged in the relief effort in Samoa in particular Rev Fatuata and Suresa Tufuga and the Samoan Congregation in Wesley Wellington Parish.



Wesley Wellington volunteers pitched in to help Habitat for Humanity rebuild Samoa.

Methodist memories Part II: Giving thanks to God always for all things

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Frank Paine

In 1963 we made a decision to move to Christchurch, and I needed to find employment. On 1 May 1963 I began work with Bascands Printers in Kilmore Street, and retired from the business in 1984.

One special job I remember, was to design the layout for the first Arts Festival programme in Christchurch. After about five years I was promoted to the Bascands production office. When the Bindery foreman resigned, I took over temporarily but was to stay in that position for eight years.

In my childhood, we gathered round the piano as a family and with friends, to make music. The party piece my two brothers and I sang was 'Pelorus Jack' from a collection of New Zealand songs. At the age of 11, I was recuperating from having my tonsils and adenoids removed and I asked my mother to show me where middle C was on the piano.

I began to pick out the melody line of hymns, and in time became able to play a hymn tune. By 16 I was playing the organ for Bible Class openings. Over the years I have played for many Church

services, particularly at Rugby Street Church. At times my lack of formal training meant that there were some hymns that I found difficult to play. We organists are privileged to lead the singing of hymns or play quiet music for meditation. The response of the congregation is very rewarding.

I loved singing in the church choirs. The first cantata I sang in was a performance of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' at a Methodist Conference. In Christchurch I joined the Christchurch Harmonic Society and enjoying singing some of the great choral pieces such as Bach's B minor Mass with its mighty Sanctus, and Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony with the words of Walt Whitman.

We attended the Rugby Street Methodist Church, originally called St Albans Methodist Church, and later on re-named Merivale Uniting Church.

We entered fully into the life of the Church. I became Sunday school superintendent. Our family, Anthony, Elizabeth and Catherine, moved into the life of the Bible classes, and the whole



At the 25th anniversary of the St Albans Methodist Indoor Bowling Club, September 1982. From left: Frank Paine (club president), Alph Andrews, and Elsie Andrews.

family sang with an all-age choir that travelled to Ashburton, Nelson, Blenheim and Timaru in the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1974 my wife Ann and I were divorced. It was a time of trauma for us all, and a time of new beginnings. Learning to live alone became for me a new way of life. I was helped by being part of a worshipping and caring congregation, and most importantly, the love and care shown by my children.

It was at the Blenheim

Methodist Church Conference in 1984 that I learned that the Methodist Church Archive in Christchurch needed assistants. I have always had an interest in history, and especially that of the Methodist Church, so I offered my services to Marcia Baker and began work in February 1985.

It has been a wonderful way of occupying my retirement and gaining a greater knowledge of our Church's life. Recording historical information from a number of sources, listing

historical items from parish records and creating an index of local parish and church histories are some of the things I have enjoyed doing.

I also enjoyed contributing articles to Touchstone. At the beginning of 2009 I was appointed part-time Archivist at the Christchurch Arts Centre.

As I look back, I return to the quote "Giving thanks to God always for all things," (Ephesians 5:20). I have much to give thanks for. Sure, there have been those events and times that were difficult. However, it's not what happens, but how we cope that counts.

I remember with thanks, those people who have helped in my faith journey. The Church has provided many learning experiences. Today, our minister Rev Hugh Perry, leads a small group that studies the readings for the following Sunday. Hugh always gives us a background to the readings and poses some penetrating questions.

I find that at 86 I can go on exploring my faith. Thanks be to God for life!

POLOKALAMA 'APITANGA POTUNGAUE EVANGELIO (VAHENGANGAUE AOKALANI/MANUKAU)

Kaveinga: “Ma’u Ivi ‘Ia Kalaisi, Pea Taha Ai Mo E Kakai Kehe”

‘Oku nau kei takoto na, hange ni sipi tukunoa, ‘ikai ha taha ke tauhia, ‘a e vaivai mo mahaki ‘ia.

Na’e fakahoko ‘a e Retreat ‘a e Potungaue Evangelio ki he Kemi Hunua Falls ‘i he ‘aho 23-25 Siulai 2010. Ko e kaveinga ena ‘o e apitanga ‘oku haa atu ‘i ‘olunga pea kuo ‘omi ai ‘e he Falengameesi hotau tala, ko ‘etau taha ke hange ko e Tolu-Taha-i-‘Otua.

Kuo fai ‘a e fakakaukau ki he langa ngaue ‘oku fai, ko e foki ki he makatu’unga ‘a ee na’e toka ai, kuo hoko ‘o tuliki tauolunga, ko Sisu Kalaisi. Ketau ma’u ivi ai pea fakafuo ai kitautolu, pea tau hoko ai ko e kau motolo, pea ketau a’u ki he kakai kehe ‘o taha ai mo kinautolu ‘ia Sisu. Na’e taki ‘i he apitanga ‘a e Faifekau Sea ‘o e Vahefonua Tonga, Faifekau Setaita K Veikune pea tokoni kiai ‘a e Talekita Evangelio mei Tonga: Faifekau Makisi Finau ‘o fai ‘a e Fakalotofale’ia ‘o anga pehe ni:

Falaite 23 - Na’e fai ai ‘a e malanga huufi (Faifekau Setaita K Veikune) ‘o fakamamafa ‘i he kaveinga; Ma’u ivi ‘ia Kalaisi pea taha ai mo e kakai kehe. Na’e me’a ‘a e Sea ki he mahu’inga ‘o e tahaa, he na’e ‘ikai toe kole ‘e Sisu ki he tamai ha me’a, kaa kena taha pe mo e Tamai. Ke pehe ‘etau taha mo e kakai kehe ‘ia Sisu Kalaisi - ko e fakapapau’i ia ‘o ‘etau tali ‘o Sisu Kalaisi.

Tokonaki 24, Na’e fai ai ‘a e **Fakalotofale’ia 1** (Faifekau Setaita K Veikune) kaveinga: “Ko e fatongia ‘o e Evangelio ‘i he Siasi” Ko e fakakoloa mei he Faifekau Sea, ‘a e mahu’inga ke fai



Ko e Faifekau Sea (Rev Setaita K. Veikune) Talekita mei Tonga (Rev Makisi Finau) mo e ni’ihi ‘o e kau apitanga.

hokohoko ma’u pe ngaue fakaevangelio hotau siasi, ‘o tatau pe ‘i he lautohi fakasapate, to’utupu, akolotu, potungaue ‘a Fafine etc, pea hoko ‘a e evangelio kenau tokoni ke fakaevangelio’i ‘a e siasi, pea ka lava ia, pea tau hu ki tu’a, ‘o taha ai mo e kakai kehe. Ko ‘etau ngaue fakaevangelio ‘i loto siasi, pea tau hu ki tu’a ‘o ngaue kiai. Kuo ma’u ‘a e tohi kakai fakamuimui, pea ‘oku tupu fakautuutu ‘a e tokolahi ‘o e kau lotu fanongo he loto siasi. Koia ai ko ‘etau tefito’i ngaue ia ke fakaevangelio’i ‘a e kau lotu fanongo koia ke fakapapau’i ‘oku nau tali a Sisu, pea ki he lakanga Lotu Fehu’i.

Na’e fakahoko ha Ako tohitapu ‘ehe faifekau ‘o e potungaue (Faifekau Viliami Finau) ‘i he (Matiu 28:19-20). Na’e fakamamafa ‘a e faifekau ni, ki he

mahu’inga ‘o e tangata ‘oku ‘alu ‘o fai ‘a e fekau, pea ko e ha ‘a e fekau koia, pea mahu’inga ke ‘ilo ‘a e fa’ahinga kakai ‘oku taumu’a kiai, ‘i he taimi kotoa pe, feitu’u kotoa pe, mo e kakai kotoa pe.

Ko e talaloto na’e fakahoko ‘e he talekita mei Tonga (Faifekau Makisi Finau) ki he ngaue fakaevangelio.

Na’e talaloto ‘a e Talekita ki he mahu’inga mo e fatongia ‘o e Evangelio, mo e fa’ahinga a’usia ‘oku ne ‘inasi he mala’e ni.

Ko e tangata evangelio ‘oku talangofua, mo fai loto lelei ‘a e ngaue, ‘i he tokoni ‘Ene palomesi (Matiu 28:19-20, “teu ‘iate kimoutolu ‘o a’u ki he ngata’anga ‘o mamani”) pea fakafanongo ki he tatakai ‘a e Laumalie.

Na’e lava mo e ngaahi ha’ofanga, pea mo e palani ngaue kihe kaha’u.

Haofanga: Na’e vahevahe kulupu ki he ngaahi kaveinga e fa

1. Ko e founa ngaue kitu’a ‘a e Potungaue Evangelio.

2. Ko e founa ngaue ‘a e Evangelio ‘i he loto siasi.

3. Ko e tokanga ki he ngaahi apitanga (Apitanga Pekia/Toetu’u, Apitanga Kavamalohi Tapu mo e Apitanga Lau Folofola ‘i Tonga).

4. Ko e tokanga ki he ngaahi me’a fakapa’anga ‘a e Potungaue.

Fakasiosiale - Kaveinga: “Famili ma’a Kalaisi”. Na’e fakahoko fakasiasi ‘a e fakafamili, na’e tapuaki ko e ngaahi talaloto mafana mo e hiva, lau maau, ngaahi hiva mo fakataata, taleniti pea mo e ngaahi sikiti. Na’e talaloto ai ‘a e ni’ihi ki he tapuaki mo e fiefia pea mo e kelesi fakalaumalie ‘i he apitanga.

Na’e faka’osi ‘aki ‘a e talaloto mafana ‘e he Talekita mei Tonga ‘ene fiefia, mo e langa ngaue kuo fai. Kuo hoko ‘a e misi he’ene faka’amu, he ngaahi ta’u lahi ke hoko mu’a ‘a e evangelio ko e mafu ‘etau ngaue. Pea mo’oni ‘a Sione Uaisele, “KO ‘EKU POTUNGAUE ‘A MAMANI”, pea na’a ne fakamamafa kemou tu’u aa, ‘o fai ‘a e ngaue fakaevangelio, pea faka’osi ‘aki ‘a e talaloto mafana mo e Lotu Hufia, mo fakafeta’ia ‘a e ngaue kuo lava. Ke ‘o e ‘Eiki pe ‘a e langilangi mo e kololia ‘o ta’engata. Ko e me’a tepu e ke ‘iate kimoutolu ‘a e ‘Eiki.

‘Ofa atu mo e Lotu, Viliami Manu.

Fakalotofale’ia

“Ko e matamatalelei ko e me’a ‘e ‘ikai ala falala kiai, Pea ko e hoihoifua ko e me’a hamolofia: Ko e fefine ‘oku ‘apasia kia Sihova, ko e fefine ia ‘e fakamaaloo’ia” (Paloveape 31:30)

Ko e maahina ko Sepitema ‘oku fakamavahe’i mo fakamamafa’i ai ‘e he Siasi ‘a e mahu’inga ‘o ha’afafine mo e ngaahi fa’ee, ka ko hono tefito ko e ‘ekea pe ‘oku feefee hono tauhi ‘e he fefine lotu takitaha hono vaha’angatae ki hono ‘Otua, pea faka’ataa ke nau tala loto ki he fetauhi’aki ko ia. Ko ia ai ‘oku tohoaki hoku laumalie ke fai ha fakapotalanoa ki he mahu’inga ‘o e fefine ‘oku mo’ui faka-‘Otua. He ko e ‘Taliui Sepitema’ ko hono ‘ekea ‘o e tauhi vaha’angatae ‘a e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua.

‘Oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi faikehekehe lahi he fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua mo e fefine ‘oku ‘ikai mo’ui faka-‘Otua (‘e ‘ikai lava ke lave’i kotoa ‘a e ngaahi faikehekehe heni), ka ‘oku haa mahino he Potu Folofola ‘i ‘olunga ko e ‘apasia kia Sihova ko e taha ia ‘o e ngaahi faikehekehe tefitoo, he ko e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua ko e aofivala ‘o ‘ene mo’ui ko e ‘apasia pe ki hono ‘Otua.

‘Oku ngaue’aki ‘a e lea “‘apasia” heni he liliu faka-Tonga, ka ‘i he ngaahi liliu faka-Pilitania lahi (English translations) ‘oku ngaue’aki ‘a e lea ko e “fear the Lord” (manavahee ki he ‘Otua). Ka ‘oku ‘ikai ‘uhinga ‘a e manavahee ko ‘eni ki he manavasi’i, ilifia, pe tailiili ki ha tokotaha pe mafai, ka ‘oku ‘uhinga ia ki he (i) Ongo’i to’oa mo faka’apa’apa koe’uhi ko e ngeia mo e ma’oni’oni ‘o e ‘Otua, (ii) Ongo’i momou mo teteki ke fai ha kovi koe’uhi ko e ‘a’apa ki he vakai mai ‘a e ‘Otua, (iii) ‘Ilo’i hoto tu’unga ma’ulalo ‘o fakahoa ki he tu’unga ma’olunga ange ‘o e ‘Otua, pea ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ‘apasia he loto ‘o ia ‘oku

Ko e Fefine Mo’ui Faka-‘Otua

ma’ulalo ange koe’uhi ko e ngeia mo e mafimafi ‘o ia ‘oku ma’olunga ange.

Ko e lea ‘apasia leva ‘i he Potu Folofola, ‘oku ne fakamatala’i ‘a e ‘ulungaanga ‘o e ‘ilo’i ‘a e ta’emahakulea ‘o e ngeia mo e ma’oni’oni ‘o e ‘Otua, pea ko e taumu’a pe ‘o e ‘ulungaanga ko ia ko e fakahoifua (worship) pe fakame’ite pe ke fakapapau’i ‘oku malimali mai ‘a e ‘Otua, pea ko e to’ongamo’ui ‘a e tokotaha ‘ulungaanga peehee ko e talangogua kakato pe ki he ‘Otua telia na’a ‘ikai malava ‘a e fakahoifua. Ko ha fefine ‘apasia leva ki he ‘Otua, ko e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua ia.

‘Oku kamata mei he veesi 10 – 31 ‘o Paloveape 31 ‘a hono taavalivali ‘a e ngaahi fakafotunga fakaikiiki ‘o e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua, pea ko ia ‘oku tau taku ma’u pe ko e fefine fitaa ia. Ki hono husepaniti, ‘oku ne hoko ko e tokoni ofi:

Ka ko e hamaa ke kiato ia ki hono kateaa: Moouu ai ee tafangaa ke fai ee takavahaa: Ko e taufa’ao ki he koloaa ‘oku ne toluhamaa: Tu’u ai ee falalaa talu ai ‘ena fakatoukateaa: Si’ene poo fakafita’a uli telia ha fakaevahaa:

‘Auhia kae kisu atu na’a ngatuvai ‘ene Kakala: Ngana ‘ene haangee ha fanafotu he katoangaa: ‘ikai ha ofo he ko Fine Fita ia ko e pakiamala.

Ko e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua ‘oku ne kavekavea’u he fai hono tokanga’i ‘ene fanau:

Ko Fine fita ‘ena kuo hopo pe ‘i toumu’a: He ko e ‘apii ‘a fefine ko ia hoto talamu’a: Hono sangasangaa ‘oku ne tuku mo failaa: Telia ee ngaahi to’ukai na’a fakakai tama: Ne manongi hengihengi pea maheikau ho’ata: Tufotufa atu ‘o nau makona ‘i hono ‘alaha: Lau monuu ai si’i kaunanga ‘uma’aa e kainga: Tala pea ngali he ko Fine

Fita ko e Tapukiteaa.

Ko e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua ‘oku ‘ikai siokita pe nofo pe ‘ene tokanga ‘iate ia mo hono famili:

Ka ko Fine Fitaa na’e ‘ikai ke ne fakamahama: Pe mata lupe kehea ‘o takitaha toko pe ma’ataa: Ko hono mafuu liliu koula he tulutaa ‘o e ta’ata’a:

Hiki tukitukii ai mei toumu’a ‘o tala’api ko e kaunangaa: Si’ene taa mafua fakakau ai ee kaunangaa fonongaa: Fiifii ika maka hono louhi’ii ‘o fa’oaki ki he’ene ‘oaa:

Toki takamilo ‘o ‘a’au he matafale ‘o ia ‘oku mahaa: Pea ‘aho-kai-fonu-ee ‘a e pa’a pea mo e hala ‘ataa

Ko e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua ‘oku ne mapule’i hono loto mo hono ngutu foki koe’uhi ko e ma’oni’oni:

Pea ka fakakahoa ‘aki ia ‘a e tukutala mei Kaliloo: Pe toutai tangata ‘o polopolo ta’u ma’a Ma’ananga: Ko e koto poto pe ‘oku halatu’u he’ene manavaa:

Hange tofu ha lingi lolo ki ha kongatahi peauaa: ‘ikai te ne ngutu tamulea pe ‘e hikihihi-kau-‘aa: Pe tupu’a-tala-kia-tamaiki telia ‘a hono fu’u ngeiaa:

Kae fufu pe hono lalo ‘aleloo ee lao koula ‘o e ‘Ofaa: Toki hange ha tahi hu’aa pe ha papani he toafa pakukaa

Ko e ngaahi ‘ulungaanga fakaikiiki kotoa ‘eni ‘o e mo’ui ‘a e fefine mo’ui faka-‘Otua. Ko e ngaahi matala kinautolu ‘oku nau fotu faka’ofu’ofa mai, pea ‘ikai ngata pe he faka’ofu’ofa, ka ‘oku ‘alaha pea manongi ‘o fai teunga ai ‘a e ‘Otua pea nonga mo kaimelie ai ‘a e famili, Siasi, mo e fonua. Ko e ngaahi to’ongamo’ui ko ia ko e fisi kitu’a ia mei he mo’ui ‘a e fefine ‘oku kanoloto ‘aki pea aka loloto ai ‘a e mo’ui ‘apasia ki hono ‘Otua. ‘Oku ne mo’ui pe mo fai fatongia ke fakahoifua ki hono ‘Otua.

Ko ia ‘a e matamatalelei mo e hoihoifua ‘oku mo’oni mo tu’uloa. ‘Oku tuha ke fai ha falala ki ai, he ‘oku tu’uma’u ‘o ‘ikai ‘auha, ‘o tatau pe he mo’ui ko ‘eni mo e mo’ui kaha’u. Ka ko hono fungani, he ko e fefine ia ‘e fakamaaloo’ia, ‘o ‘ikai ngata ‘i hono famili mo e kaunangaa fononga, ka ko e ‘Otua foki.

Ko hono fehangahangai ‘eni ‘o e matamatalelei mo e hoihoifua ‘o e matelie (‘a ee ‘oku ‘uhinga ki ai ‘a e Potu Folofola), ‘a e matamatalelei ‘o e fofonga, ‘a e hoihoifua ‘o e sino, teunga, pe koloa. Ko e fa’ahinga matamatalelei pe hoihoifua ‘o e matelie ‘oku hangee ia ko hano ‘ai ha kongata koula ki ha ihu ‘o ha puaka (hufanga he fakatapu), ‘oku ‘ikai lava liliu ‘e he faka’ofu’ofa mo e mahu’inga ‘o e kongata koula ‘o liliu ‘a e natula pe nanamu ‘o e puaka, pea mole ngofua leva ‘a hono faka’ofu’ofa he ‘e liliu pe ia ‘e he natula ‘o e puaka.

‘I he teu ‘o e ‘eke’anga ‘o e mo’ui fakalotu ‘a ha’afafine ‘o e Siasi he maahina ko Sepitema ‘o e 2010, ‘oku ou faka’amu ke fakamanatu atu, ‘oku ‘ikai ko e teuaki ke fakahaaha ha ngaahi matamatalelei pe hoihoifua ‘o e matelie, he ‘oku ‘ikai ala fai ha falala ki ai, ‘oku ngatuvai pea mole atu ‘a hono masani. Ka ko e faingamalie fisifisimu’a ia ki ha’afafine ke fai ai ha vakai ki he’eta to’ongamo’ui mo e tauhi hota vaha’angate ki he ‘Otua pe ‘oku faka-‘Otua nai hono angaa. Ko e uho ‘o e mo’ui faka-‘Otua ko e ‘APASIA ki he ‘Otua, ‘a ia ko e mo’ui ke fakahoifua mo me’ite ma’u ai pe ‘a e ‘Eiki, pea ko hono tonu taha ko e ta’ofi kita mei he fai angahala he ko e me’a pe ia ‘e taha ‘e ‘ikai hoifua mai ai ‘a e ‘Otua ki he mo’ui ‘a e fefine.

‘Ofa Atu mo e Lotu.

Faifekau Mele Suipi Latu