

TOUCHSTONE

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



Rev Siosifa Pole (seated centre) with the members of his Mornington Methodist congregation.

The changing face of ministry in New Zealand

Is New Zealand becoming a missionary ground for Pacific Island-born Methodist ministers?

By David Hill
Already a well-established pattern, Pacific Island-born ministers serving English-speaking congregations is a growing trend in the life of the Methodist Church of New Zealand says Mission Resourcing Taiwiwi director Rev Trevor Hoggard.

This year nine candidates offered themselves for ordained ministry, and seven were accepted. Of those nine, none were under 50 years of age, Pakeha or born in New Zealand.

Trevor says one of the candidates was South African and the rest were Tongan, Samoan and Fijian. Four of the candidates accepted were to train for English-speaking ministries, the rest for their own cultural parishes and some for both.

"It's a growing trend and it's likely to continue."

Candidates must be sponsored by a parish in the language group or groups they wish to serve.

Trevor says the candidate selection committee checks a candidate's background carefully to assess whether he or she will be able to cope in an English language parish.

Trevor predicts in future there will be more New Zealand-born candidates with Samoan or Tongan heritage.

"It's much easier if we have New Zealand-born candidates who have lived in the culture all of their lives."

Methodist general secretary Rev David Bush is unconcerned by the lack of Kiwi-born Pakeha applying for ministry.

"In the last few years I've had a lot of contact with young Pacific Islanders and they are very articulate. They are New Zealand-born, so they have a similar understanding and worldview to other young Kiwis.

"I'm much less concerned about a person's ethnic background than their capacity to work in a team setting. Our experience with Pacific Island ministry in English-speaking congregations is that they provide a very worthwhile and solid leadership."

David acknowledges there have been some issues when Pacific Island-born ministers had limited experience of New

Zealand culture or were difficult for some people to understand.

"But generally people have made allowances and have gone out of their way to ensure a ministry relationship has developed.

"There is some research which shows that where we have to listen more carefully, because of someone's accent, that we may actually get more out of it."

Rev Siosifa Pole

Never in his "wildest dreams" did Rev Siosifa Pole think that he was destined to minister to English-speaking congregations in New Zealand.

Siosifa was born and grew up in Tonga. He came to New Zealand in his 20s to further his education.

"Being able to speak English was a huge challenge for a person like me who never really spoke it before. I did learn it at high school but it was never a spoken language."

After finishing high school, Siosifa says he took some classes in English and French so he could apply for a job working for the Tongan government. He then received the call to ministry and came to New Zealand to study.

"I always had the intention to go back

to support the Methodist Church in Tonga but I never went back."

Instead Siosifa opted to enter English-speaking ministry here.

"I decided to have a new challenge and work in an English-speaking environment. It was a huge change for me. I am still learning and that is the challenge.

Siosifa says some members of the congregation find it difficult to understand his accent.

"Some people think of ministry as a career. But it's not a career it's a calling and it's not a comfortable place to be some of the time."

Siosifa served in English-speaking ministry at Mt Roskill for nine years and is in his fifth year in the Dunedin Methodist Parish.

He sees his ministry as a bit like the missionaries who brought Christianity to his homeland.

"The missionaries came into a culture which was totally unfamiliar to them but they persevered and they made a big difference. The language was a big barrier, so it is a similar situation for those of us working in an English-speaking ministry today."

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Chronicle of Methodist Unions and CVs

Did you know that more than 125 previously Methodist churches and congregations are today part of local unions that are variously known as Union Parishes, Cooperating Parishes, or Community Churches?

Did you know that 83 of these came into being in the decade from 1970-1979? And did you know that in the decade 1990-1999 a further 11 were inaugurated, or that three more unions involving Methodism have been formed since the beginning of the new millennium?

The vast majority of these local unions are with Presbyterian congregations but 22 are or were with Anglican congregations and seven are with both Anglican and Presbyterian congregations. A further eight are with the Churches of Christ, and three are with what was known as the Congregational Union.

In a small number of cases one

or other of the parties has withdrawn from the union at a later stage, and one or two have collapsed due to dwindling numbers and/or resources.

By far the majority remain active, however. Members participate in the life of their local communities as a witness to the gospel. They also make their presence felt from time to time at the Forum of Cooperative Ventures, the Presbyterian Assembly and the Methodist Conference.

These facts and other items of information about each local Cooperative Venture including date of inauguration (or signing of the agreement), denominational components, denominational property ratios if known, along with a listing of the Methodist properties that were taken into the union, are now available on line via the Methodist Church website (methodist.org.nz).

Once on the website, scan down the list of options and click on 'Property and Insurance', then go to 'Properties' and you will find the information there under the heading Methodist Church Properties and Uniting Congregations.

The information is set out in two parts. Part one is a north-to-south listing of all the CVs that Methodism has been officially involved with since the 1940s. It is set out in the Synod groupings that were in place until 2003.

Part two is a chronological listing of the parishes based on the known year of inauguration. As far as possible the year has been ascertained from the Union or Cooperative Venture agreement as the primary source rather than from the Minutes of the Methodist Conference though in some instances these do not agree.

This information results from research carried out by the Rev



Details of the history and status of Methodist Cooperating Ventures and Uniting Congregations is now available on-line.

Norman Brookes on behalf of the Methodist Connexional Property Committee and the Wesley Historical Society.

Norman has drawn on parish files held by Mission Resourcing in Auckland, the Methodist Connexional Office in Christchurch and the office of UCANZ in Wellington.

He is aware that there are some

gaps in the data and that there may be other local information not contained in the relevant files which may suggest an amendment to this information.

If you have such information Norman would appreciate receiving your comments (nebrookes@xtra.co.nz) as he would like to make the record as accurate as possible.

Medical insurance offer for Methodists

Methodist Church of New Zealand employees and presbyters currently enjoy medical insurance coverage thanks to a contract with the insurance company Accuro. Now Accuro is extending a special offer of insurance coverage to all members of the Methodist Church.

Accuro is a New Zealand company that operates on a not-for-profit basis, and this means it can provide insurance coverage at lower premiums.

Insurance broker Craig Gudsell handles the Accuro account for the Methodist Church.

Craig says many people may not have considered private medical coverage because of their pre-existing medical conditions. However, the offer from Accuro will cover pre-existing conditions with some qualifications.

"The offer from Accuro is available to all people who attend a Methodist Church or Methodist Uniting Congregation as well as their families," Craig says.

"There will be an initial stand

down period of 90 days for new claims from all applicants but after a person has belonged to the scheme for three years, coverage will be extended to all qualifying pre-existing conditions."

The policy Accuro is offering provides up to \$100,000 cover per year for general surgery and any diagnostic tests or consultations that take place four months before or four months after approved surgery.

Optional coverage can be purchased to cover standalone tests, doctors' visits, and dental care.

The offer is only for people who do not already have an Accuro policy.

Methodist members will be able to apply during the month of October with a closing date of 31st October 2015. Details of the offer will be made available during August and September.

For further details contact Rev David Bush in the Methodist Church office on 03 366 6049 or Craig Gudsell on 0274 843 276 or craig@avoninsurance.co.nz.

Methodists and Anglicans renew vows

By Sophie Parish

In May the Methodist and Anglican Churches in New Zealand marked the sixth anniversary of their covenant, which seeks to bring the two denominations into a closer working relationship.

The Anglican-Methodist covenant binds the two churches to move toward closer collaboration in witness and service. It calls them to work towards a united and interchangeable ministry and welcome each other's baptised members in fellowship, worship and mission.

Each year the Covenant is marked with an ecumenical service, and this year it was held at Pitt Street Methodist Church, Auckland.

Superintendent of the Methodist Church's Auckland and Manukau synods, Rev Marilyn Welch (who is herself Anglican) was asked to put the service together.

Marilyn says, as an Anglican

priest working in a Methodist role, the service is special for her because it brings the two denominations that are dear to her heart together as one.

"It reminds me that when we are together we are far stronger than when we are separate," she says.

About 120 people attended the 7:00 p.m. service on May 17th, which was followed by a supper and chance to connect.

Northcote Tongan Methodist choir and the Pitt Street Fijian choir brought their collective voices together, and Marilyn says many people commented on how the entire church sung with much gusto and celebration.

Three Methodist and three Anglican ministers lead the service together. Auckland Central Methodist Parish superintendent Rev Dr Lynne Frith began with a welcome and call to worship, and then Marilyn's opening prayer and continued with leading the congregation in a collect for Wesley Sunday.

Right Rev Ross Bay preached the sermon and discussed the progress that was being made by the workgroup of Anglicans and Methodists who are advancing efforts to bring the two churches closer together.

Methodist vice president Dr Arapera Ngaha led the congregation in passing of the Peace and she blessed the offering, which will go to the Christian World Service for emergency work in Nepal.

Dean of Auckland Cathedral Very Rev Jo Kelly-Moore led the prayers of the people, and Methodist president Rev Tovia Aumua led the congregation in the Litany of the Covenant. The Litany reminds Anglican and Methodists of the importance of their shared Wesleyan heritage.

In the Litany, the people give thanks to God for the Covenant between the two churches and ask for help to find ways to work together for the sake of Christ's mission to the world.



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Should the church ordain people in de facto relationships?

By Paul Titus

Should the church uphold traditional views of marriage? Or should it change with the times and accept that today people are in different types of unions and these can be as loving and fulfilling as marriage?

The question is not an abstract theological conundrum. Rather it is one that touches the lives of people in our communities and congregations and in the leadership of the church.

There is no explicit statement in the Methodist Church's Law Book that an ordained minister must either be legally married or single and celibate but this is longstanding practice and generally assumed to be the norm.

Last year the Methodist Church of NZ Council of Conference initiated a discussion about whether the Church could ordain and station people in de facto relationships.

Council of Conference has received a report on the issue from the Faith and Order Committee, and is set to appoint a presidential work group to further explore the issue.

Faith and Order convenor Rev David Poultney says in considering the issue, the Committee acknowledged that there have been major changes in social attitudes in recent decades. Nevertheless, there was discomfort about people in sexual relations outside of marriage being ordained.

"Members of the Committee held different views but the majority opinion was that presbyters should be married or celibate. Part of being a mature human being is that if you are sexually active you should be in a publically-recognised, stable and monogamous sexual relationship," David Poultney says.

Director of English-speaking ministry Rev Trevor Hoggard is a member of the Faith and Order Committee. He says the Church says marriage should be a mutually supportive, loving and enduring relationship.

"If the Church aspires to promote the legal and public recognition of marriage then those who perform marriages should be married themselves. If the Church wants to move away from this traditional approach, then we should have that conversation," Trevor says.

Social attitudes about divorced people have changed over time in New Zealand and other Western societies, as have attitudes

toward same sex marriages.

Should the Church follow the State and society and move to a wider acceptance of non-traditional relationships? Or should it be counter-cultural and uphold marriage as the best institution to provide for the welfare of children and adults?

Methodist general secretary Rev David Bush says the issue is one that many people feel strongly about.

"It is not abstract. Many people in our parishes or their children or grandchildren are in de facto relationships. What are we saying to them if we insist marriage is the only legitimate relationship?" David Bush asks.

He suggests that perhaps a better way to think about this issue is to stop thinking about the form of a relationship and instead think about what a good relationship should be.

"If we do this, the most important question the Church should ask is not whether its leaders should be married but what creates a loving, mutually-supportive relationship.

"We recognise that marriage does not in-and-of-itself guarantee a loving, supportive relationship and that many de facto relationships are everything that we would want a relationship to be. The logical extension of this is that people in de facto relationships should be able to offer themselves for ordained ministry," David Bush says.

If the conversations the Methodist Church has on the topic lead it to accept people in de facto relationships for ordination, local parishes would still have to decide whether someone in such a relationship is a good match for them.

David Bush says the Faith and Order Committee did not address the issue of whether all homosexual ordained presbyters should also be married or celibate because they have won the option to marry so recently that it is still a fraught issue for many. He believes ultimately one rule should apply to both heterosexual and homosexual ministers, however.

Council of Conference co-convenor Rev Dr Susan Thompson says that at its meeting in April the Council decided to set up a presidential work group to explore the issue and report to Conference. The work group will be appointed when the Council of Conference next meets, in September.



Methodist Church of NZ vice president Bella Ngaha (centre) with other Pacific church leaders at the MCCP gathering in Samoa.

Pacific church leaders delve into climate change

By Sophie Parish

Last month Church leaders from six Pacific countries met in Faleula Village, Samoa, at the bi-annual Methodist Consultative Council of the Pacific (MCCP).

From April 13th-16th they enjoyed the Samoan hospitality and shared their experience on two main topics - climate change and declining membership in the Pacific Methodist Churches.

Climate change was also discussed at the 2013 MCCP conference and New Zealand Methodist president Rev Tovia Aumua says he is passionate about the issue.

"We have a prophetic role and responsibility to challenge and raise the voice of God to remind people we are stewards of the world. The church has a pastoral responsibility to care for humanity. As John Wesley says 'The world is my parish.' We are all part of climate change."

Natural disasters are something churches and people in the Pacific face nearly every year. Last year 29 church buildings were destroyed when Cyclone Ian hit the Ha'apai Islands in Tonga.

The MCCP discussions focused on insurance policies for church buildings and greater resources for disaster relief.

The Samoan Methodist Church's report on climate change noted that ministers present their own views on natural disasters. It could be time to think about a unified response and theology when it comes to explaining natural disasters to the people.

The Fijian Methodist Church has been encouraging companies creating the most pollution to become carbon neutral and fund sustainable initiatives. However, the MCCP agreed that polluting companies often use small incentives as a sweetener while they continue to pollute.

Methodist Church of New Zealand (MCNZ) offered a practical resource called a shelter box, an idea borrowed from Rotary. The shelter box contains water purification equipment, a tent, solar light and other emergency supplies.

MCNZ general secretary Rev David Bush says, "The shelter box can be kept on site and can be used almost immediately after a natural disaster. The MCNZ has decided to supply one shelter box to Tonga, Samoa and Fiji."

Declining membership

All MCCP leaders agreed that it is vital to reach out to youth and make the Church relevant for the 21st Century to address declining numbers.

The leaders agreed that the church should have a clear identity to distinguish

it from other emerging religious groups. The view is widely shared that there is a need to rediscover our Wesleyan roots, and make the church a place that addresses today's social issues and offers a place to worship that reflects the changing times.

New Zealand Methodist vice president Dr Arapera Ngaha says, "It's a question of how might we grow our congregations. It's about getting back to grass roots Methodism but making it relevant to our own context."

Monetary expectations within the church were another reason given for decline in numbers for churches in the Pacific. The need for more pastoral care was also highlighted to retain numbers within the churches.

The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) is committed to finding new ways of being a church that provides a space for young people to express their faith in new ways.

Two new churches have started in the Marshall Islands and Rarotonga and they will work with the UCA.

Methodist Church of New Zealand (MCNZ) presented a research document by Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard that suggests alternative ways the church could engage with our communities. The growing number of immigrants from the Pacific and Asia in New Zealand could bring new life and change to the church.

Tovia says the Church acknowledges this and welcomes with open arms migrants from Asia, Pacific and other countries. "We cannot just sit back. Our calling is to continue to sow the seeds of the gospel in New Zealand and throughout the world."

United Church of Papua New Guinea (UCPNG) says its membership consists of 68 percent youth and children and yet only 30 percent of resources focus on this age group, something it will address going forward.

This year the Methodist Church of Fiji (MCF) celebrates its 180th anniversary. During the decade of military rule, the MCF restructured itself and redefined its mission, values and purpose. It hopes to open a university by 2018 and is focusing on training evangelists to work in Fiji and other Pacific nations.

The next MCCP will be held in Tonga in 2017. The theme will be John Wesley and Our Methodist Roots. Over the next two years theological colleges in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji will research the tradition of John Wesley and Methodism in the 21st century and that research will be the focus of the 2017 gathering.



METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND

Lectionary 2015/2016

Orders for the new Lectionary are due by Monday 22 June 2015.

Orders received by the due date are at no charge. After that date the cost is \$2 each.

The order form can be downloaded from www.methodist.org.nz/faith_and_order/lectionary.

Orders are to be posted to PO Box 931, Christchurch 8140 or emailed to wendyk@methodist.org.nz

Public Issues appreciated and needed

To the editor,

The work of the Public Issues Network will be severely affected by any reduction to its funding base.

In addition to Public Issues' educational task, there is a further need for the New Zealand Methodist Church to have an advocacy role on social issues.

This wider task cannot be done if the paid

hours for the office worker are reduced from 32 hours per week to 20 hours.

We need to hold on to our Wesleyan heritage. We need to remind ourselves of the gospel priorities taught and lived by Jesus.

I hope the Connexional review encourages wide discussion at all levels of the church, prior to the 2015 Annual Conference.

John Thornley, Palmerston North

Goodbye to the divine puppeteer

To the editor

It was with a sense of disappointment and some irritation that I read the fundamentalist skirmish in letters to you in the May issue of Touchstone.

Certainly, your editorial stance has to allow for differences of opinion but the general thrust of that correspondence cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged.

It is the implied denigration of serious modern scholarship by creationist adherents that disturbs me.

The mental gymnastics required to subscribe to theological and philosophical ideas which for many no longer have traction seem to inhibit any real engagement with the world in which we live.

Geoffrey Stubbs and Stuart Stevenson may well have come to their present sincerely held but anachronistic positions through not having been exposed to the intellectual rigour expected of serious researchers.

Alternative findings by scholars far more qualified and experienced than, for example, Michael Denton, author of the dodgy Evolution:

Questions that evolutionists cannot answer

To the editor,

It was a pity to have an agnostic sticking it to Christians in a Church newspaper (David Attenborough, March Touchstone). That wouldn't have been so bad if his statements on evolution were beyond dispute, which is far from the case.

For more than 175 years, evolutionists have been unable to give adequate answers to basic questions that arise from their hypothesis. These include an explanation of the mechanism by which an organism acquires more information and enhanced organised complexity in the evolutionary development process.

In nature, most species are dependent on other species. That is to say dependent on other species' abilities, functions and traits. A bee and a flowering plant, for example.

How did these species survive as each was evolving over the millennia, since the bee's wings hadn't yet developed to the stage where it could fly, and its senses weren't evolved

sufficiently for it to detect nectar and petal colour? Likewise the plant in its early stage of evolutionary progression would not yet have flowers, if we presume Darwinian logic.

Without each other's fully-evolved form, inter-dependence and hence survival would not be possible.

The matter of irreducible complexity is also beyond evolutionary explanation but perhaps most glaring are the difficulties tracing species transitions. Here the devil is in the detail.

A good example is with describing how non-mammals (or pre-mammals) morphed into mammals. Gradualism will not even begin to explain the mountain of bio-chemical and physiological change necessary for such a transition to occur.

Genesis is much more credible: "God made everything that creeps upon the earth after its kind."

Eion Field, Hamilton

Evolution does not rule out creation

To the editor,

I am concerned that Geoffrey Stubbs, in his discussion of whether or not David Attenborough's assertion that "evolution is a solid fact" is true, has limited himself to an either/or position.

This implies there is, of necessity, some conflict between the notion of the creation of the earth by God and the findings of science, which suggest the natural world has evolved.

Darwin's theory was a starting point for the development of a more fully-explicated theory of evolution. It was not the final explanation of life on earth, the reasons for it, or how species have developed in different ways over the epochs of geological time.

As I understand it, Darwin did not try to explain what started life or how life might have started in the first place. That is the realm of theology and philosophy rather than of science.

For me, the "problem" of evolution does

not argue with the understandings of current scientific knowledge that the planet and life upon it has evolved, grown, changed and developed over the aeons.

At the same time, I have no trouble at all believing that God created life in all its diverse forms, past, present and future. Indeed, I find that the words of Revelation 4:11 ring clear and true: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

A both-and-understanding of creation by God and development by evolution opens up whole new worlds of wonder.

It also presents a world to be concerned for, as we currently grapple with issues arising out of climate change and the theological and scientific implications of this for the continuation of life as we know it on this planet.

Valerie Marshall, Christchurch



Rev. Smith's radical 'less religion, more nachos' approach to funerals was proving popular.

Serious Christians must understand science

To the editor,

If the writers of the two anti-evolution letters in last month's Touchstone actually represented a significant fraction of our Church membership this would be a worrying commentary on the level of basic science and theological education encouraged in the teachings of our Church.

I would have thought ignorance of mainstream science and a championing of fundamentalist Bible knowledge in the face of modern biblical scholarship is not an appropriate prerequisite for 21st century faith.

Both letter writers appear to believe that Genesis should be treated as literal and scientifically accurate history. Yes, 6000 or so years would fit the age of the Earth from a literal reading of Genesis but I am aware of 16 mainstream lines of evidence from astronomy, radiochemistry, astrophysics, palaeontology, geology and other disciplines that show assigning the Earth this age is not only wrong but it is very wrong.

The relative proportion of various isotopes in ancient rock show that the oldest rocks on Earth are at least 3.5 thousand million (billion) years old and there is plenty of astronomical evidence which traces the Big Bang back to approximately 13.65 billion years.

In the wider scheme of things creation did not finish on the sixth day, and if you go to the M16 Pillars of Creation on the NASA website you can see new stars in varying stages of evolution. Even here on Earth, rock cycles trundle on. Continental drift continues and every now and again events such as the Christchurch earthquakes and rumblings on White Island remind us the earth continues to change.

Detailed fossil sequences correlate with the DNA changes and these continue to occur. The similar DNA genome in related species fits an evolutionary model far better than the two mutually exclusive alternative sequences of creation proposed in the first two chapters of Genesis.

The human species, Homo sapiens sapiens is by no means unique or separate and until 40,000 years ago varying hominin species competed for dominance. That we typically find up to four percent of Neanderthal genes in modern human genomes recalls that past.

New species are constantly evolving and old ones dying here on earth, many of the extinct ones leaving fossil traces. Even although such processes are typically slow, the relatively rapid appearance of new retroviruses and new bacteria provides a constant challenge for the medical profession.

As well as the standard forms of evolution every now and again an entirely new species spontaneously appears. For example in living memory (for older Methodists), the plant *Primula kewensis* suddenly appeared in Kew Gardens with twice the haploid number of chromosomes compared with the parent plant. One of your letter writers implied this could not happen.

Both letter writers show a profound ignorance of the current understanding of evolution, one writer using the outdated claim that scientists still believe some organs, such as bacterial flagella, had to be created fully formed and implying that the theory of evolution is still considered the same as Darwin's version which took no account of genetics. He even pointed to the difficulty of evolution happening by chance when even Darwin said it was by natural selection.

The other writer made even more extraordinary statements about the Bible. I do accept, however, his statement that if we cannot hold to the historical truth that God created the universe and everything in it in seven days, and that death started with the original sin of Adam and Eve then our faith is a lie.

The overwhelming consensus from science and from modern biblical scholarship is that this version of literal truth is indeed a lie. Why not develop a faith which fits the evidence?

Bill Peddie, Auckland



President
Rev Tovia Aumua



Vice-President
Dr Arapera Ngaha

In April the Presidential team and general secretary Rev David Bush were in Samoa to represent the Methodist Church of New Zealand at the Methodist Consultative Council of the Pacific (MCCP). The theme of the gathering was: Going Out and it focused on churches response to the decline in Methodist membership in the Pacific.

At the end of April President Tovia was in Australia to attend the moderators' and presidents' trans-Tasman meeting, which was held in Brisbane.

The delegates of the gathering were the moderators from the six synods of the Uniting Church of Australia, president of the Uniting Church of Australia, moderator

Talks with Australian leaders a chance to teach and learn

of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, and Tovia representing the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

Each representative was given an hour to make a presentation that included sharing key issues and matters each individual church is dealing with.

Tovia's presentation began with a brief overview of the structure of Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa and the bi-cultural commitment that is reflected in the power sharing and shared decision making between Tangata Whenua (Maori) and Taiuiwi (non Maori). This commitment is reflected in the membership of committees, boards, councils, and leadership of the church.

The reason to present this introduction was for the delegates to understand the context of the reports about key MCNZ initiatives. These include the 10-year vision 'Let the Children Live', which was an initiative by the Council of Conference, whose purpose is to have a visioning and decision-making role.

Tovia says there was a lot of interest

shown by the number of questions raised mainly by the UCA delegates, particularly regarding how the structure of our church reflects our commitment to honouring and respecting Tangata Whenua.

It is part of our response to follow the scripture, which says: To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.

The structure also reflects the significance of the places for individuals and groups such as English Speaking Parishes and Synods, Sinoti Samoa, Vahefonua Tonga and Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma who all pastorally, spiritually, theologically and culturally contribute to the life of Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

Another point Tovia raised was the negotiation that is taking place with Korean Methodist Church leaders in New Zealand, and the possibility that they will join the Methodist Church of NZ in the future.

Tovia says after the presentation he had a warm feeling and a strong conviction that he was so proud to belong to the Methodist Church of New Zealand because

the way the Church is structured and its practises reflect the reality of New Zealand society with its diversity of cultures, languages, races, and ethnicities.

Included in the programme of the presidents' and moderators' meetings were tours to observe different approaches to congregational renewal and development. The church leaders also visited Trinity Theological College in Brisbane, and Wesley House, where some social services are delivered. These services include Wesley Residential Aged Care, Wesley Community Care, Allied Health Services, Wesley Child Care, and Wesley Employment Services.

It was a worthwhile week full of discussions, conversations and experiences that offered new insights, new challenges and new learnings.

The most inspiring and proudest moments for me were seeing the name of Wesley at almost every place we went, Tovia says.

How do we define normal and abnormal?

By Brian Kendrick

Several years ago, our presbyter could see that the time was nearing when he would be moving on in his career, and he asked the congregation how we would feel about the possibility of having a gay presbyter.

The response, though not unanimous, was a resounding 'No'.

Over the following months, we listened to a variety of speakers and heard a range of opinions and facts related to this issue. At a later meeting when the same question was put to us, the answer was something like, 'Well, if he was the most appropriate for us, why not?'

When we are able to evaluate information free of emotion and prejudice, a more balanced outcome is a natural result.

During this process, it seemed to me that the necessary information was readily available if we wanted to seek it. I sought it because I had no problem with the issue but I did have difficulties discussing it with others who were driven by prejudice, fear, unfortunate experience, and ignorance.

Bible passages can be used in support of opposing positions. In personal discussions, I found that a common response was, 'It's not normal'.

A little study of human biology and a query to my doctor and to National Women's Hospital in Auckland led to some interesting facts.

Much of what I learned comes from discoveries made in my lifetime. It was not known when the earth was flat and the sky was a firmament holding back the waters above.

Many biological and social factors affect our unique individuality. They include hormones, neurological development, culture, diet, and family circumstances.

Let's consider two of these over which we have no control - hormones and neurological development. First, several facts regarding hormones.

There is no such thing as pure male or pure female. We all produce both male and female hormones with the result that we are either predominantly

female or predominantly male. Without a female content, why do males have vestigial nipples?

We sit towards one end or the other of a continuum between male and female, a delightful blend of each. At the same time, we must acknowledge the fact that each of us will have a different blend. This is our own special colour on the rainbow of shades, tints and hues of humanity.

It is not uncommon for babies to be born with ambiguous genitalia. Is this their choice? Their fault?

Let's consider brain development. Some months ago, The Listener published the result of research into the development of the human brain and its effects on sexual or gender identity. Science has discovered that at conception, the default setting of our brains is female. This means that as the brain of a male develops, it has to undergo substantial changes.

While we like to think that our growth and development processes take place without a single hitch, this is not a reasonable expectation because of the infinitely complex nature of these processes.

For some, this process of change from female to male has not been fully completed. There can be some resultant tension between what the brain would like the body to be and what the body actually is.

When we consider just the effects of hormones and brain change, perhaps we can accept that the effect on our gender identity can be either subtle or profound. What then, is normal?

What is normal for me is very much related to how I came into the world. Among other things, I am of Anglo-Saxon descent, blue eyed, predominantly male, married, and a father of four.

So, what is normal? Based on statistical calculations a 'normal' member of the species Homo sapiens would likely be olive to dark skinned, female (or predominantly female), about 20 years of age, and living in poverty.

Am I normal? Are you normal? How do we define abnormal? Who gives us that right?

Indian and African theology - A personal reflection

Methodist probationary presbyter Shadrack Davids says he has a rich cultural and religious heritage drawn from his Indian and South African roots. He has long been intrigued by Indian and African theology, and he offers his thoughts for critical reflection. This is the first part of a series on the topic.

The relationship between Christianity and Hinduism has always been important to theological traditions in India, and therefore the development of Christianity in the Subcontinent has been different to the Western experience.

Significant too has been the growth of Christianity in South Asia, as a result of globalisation in the 19th and 20th centuries. Since World War II this globalisation has taken place especially as a result of strong European and American commercial and cultural influences on the region.

Traditionally, it is held that the Apostle Thomas founded the Mar Thoma Christian church in India in the first century CE, although this allows for a local touch of what has been called 'pious exaggeration'.

It is clear that a significant Christian presence was established in India in the fourth century CE.

By 1498 Portuguese explorers were reporting a pre-existing Christian presence in India. The arrival of the Portuguese, English, Dutch and French expanded the influence of Western Christianity over indigenous Christianity.

The focus of European nations in India was mainly on trade, and missionary societies played a marginal role. The East India Company opposed Christian missionary work in India, in part because it did not want to offend locals.

However, the British parliament passed the Charter Act which promoted missionaries doing religious work in India. By 1830, Indians opposed to mission work formed associations such as the Dharma Sabha as to counter Western influence. The so-called Indian Mutiny of 1857 was an uprising spurred by a resentment against Westernisation of local cultural and religious life.

In this climate, a new stage of indigenous Indian approaches to Christianity developed. Local theologians sought to provide an Indian response and understanding to Christianity to

counter Eurocentric Christian theology.

Many Hindus assimilated aspects of Christianity to their own worldviews. For example, Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) founded the Atmiya Sabha movement in order to reform aspects of Hinduism. He held debates with Subramania Sastri, who believed that Christianity embodied a moral code that 'right thinking Hindus' could embrace.

In 1829 Sastri founded the Brahman Samaj theistic society, which drew upon ideas derived from Hinduism and Christianity. Among its practices was regular congregational worship, previously unknown in Hinduism.

Under his successor, Debendranath Tagore, however, the Samaj leaned strongly towards Hinduism.

Aspects of Ram Mohan Roy's critique of orthodox Christology came under strong criticism from Hindus who had converted to Christianity. These included the Bengali writer KM Banerjea, who argued that there was a close affinity between the Vedic idea of 'purusha' (sacrifice) and the Christian doctrine of atonement.

Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-1884) developed an approach to Christian theology which asserted that Christ brought to fulfilment all that was best in Hinduism. Unlike Roy, Chandra Sen embraced the doctrine of the Trinity with enthusiasm.

Chandra Sen argued that although 'Brahmin' was indivisible and indescribable in Hindu understanding, it could still be considered in terms of its inner relations. These are being, reason and bliss.

These three realities correlate with the Christian understanding of God the Father as being, God the Son as logos, and God the Holy Spirit as comforter or bringer of joy and love.

A related idea was developed later by Raimundo Panikkar in his book 'The Unknown Christ of Hinduism' (1981) in which he argued for the hidden presence of Christ in Hindu practice, especially in relation to matters of justice and compassion.

The great Indian Christian convert from Hinduism, Sadhu Sunder Singh once said that Christianity must be offered to Hindus in an 'Indian cup'. This speaks powerfully and poignantly regarding the need for sensitivity and understanding relating to cultural, linguistic and other context when it comes to Christian mission in the world.

HONEST TO GOD

Homosexuality, love and Christian morality

By Ian Harris
In the past half-century, most major churches have outgrown a lot of ancient cultural baggage about the nature and role of women. Prejudice about homosexuals is proving harder to dislodge, however, as recent letters to Touchstone show.



At the heart of the controversy are two distinct views of what the church is all about. Is it best seen as the prototype of a fuller, more inclusive humanity? Or is it the bastion and beacon for those who believe the Bible must be obeyed as God's immutable word?

Well, not quite immutable - the Bible allows you to own slaves, have more than one wife, and execute a stubborn and rebellious son but even biblical literalists don't go that far.

Nonetheless, they give its strictures against homosexuals a divine and unchallengeable status. In practice, their interpretations of God's immutable laws have often turned out to be racial or cultural prejudice in ecclesiastical drag.

One who made the journey from condemnatory prejudice to championing the place of homosexuals in the human continuum is John Spong, a retired bishop of the US Episcopalian (Anglican) Church.

Brought up in America's segregated south, initially Spong shared the traditional stereotypes about homosexuals. His autobiography tells how he took into the priesthood his view of homosexuality as "an aberration, a distortion of normal behaviour, perhaps even a mental illness".

In 1985, however, he initiated a study within his Newark diocese on changing patterns in sexuality and family life. A revolution in sexual attitudes and behaviour was occurring, and he believed the new times demanded a thoughtful response from the church.

The study broke new ground. It proposed that the assessment of all relationships, including premarital and post-marital, should be "in terms of their capacity to manifest marks of the realm of God: healing, reconciliation, compassion, mutuality and concern for others".

It even contemplated new liturgies to recognise and bless committed homosexual relationships.

That hit the headlines and controversy raged. The United Methodist publishing house commissioned Spong to write a book on the issues. He did but on the eve of publication, fearful Methodist leaders demanded it be abandoned.

Nine other publishers promptly queued to take it up, and it appeared under the title *Living in Sin? A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality*.

The book explores the issues clearly, especially for churches. It canvasses sexuality in relation to betrothal, marriage, divorce, homosexual commitments, post-married singles, the use and misuse of the Bible in coming to conclusions about all of these, and the role of the Church.

In preaching, the biblical book of Jonah proved invaluable. This gem of a parable is a classic expose of prejudice, set against the limitless and life-affirming power of God's love. Spong used it to challenge prejudice against homosexuals and invited congregations to welcome them into their midst.

Present at one such service was a doctor specialising in microbiology and sex-related brain research, Robert Lahita. A former Catholic, he had become disheartened by his own church's refusal to take account of modern science in its ethical pronouncements.

The brain, Lahita told Spong, is the primary sex organ - all else is equipment. The sexing of the brain occurred through a biochemical process in the womb. It determined a person's sexual orientation. Homosexuality is the outcome for five to 10 percent of people in every human society and among other higher mammals.

Homosexuality is therefore not of one's choosing but of one's being, and so part of the natural order. This made it necessary to rethink age-old moral and cultural taboos.

If that is so, it's hard to believe that anyone in the church would say: "Ignore all that! Stick with the understanding of biblical writers who could have known nothing about it."

At the very least, churches must relate to the world as it is, not as it was, and develop their moral teaching accordingly to promote an ethic that is life-enhancing for both individuals and society. That applies across the board - to heterosexuals and homosexuals, married and unmarried, men and women, young and old.

Christian morality grows out of love, and love does not crush people simply because they happen to be women, or coloured, or homosexual. Instead, love encourages them to be all they are capable of, extending the same freedom, consideration and respect that everyone would hope for themselves.

This mature, responsible love is not casual or indulgent, exploitative or controlling. Its hallmark is the steady direction of the will toward the lasting good of another. When love is like that, prejudice doesn't get a look in.

What's on our plate

THE DANGERS OF ROUNDUP

Dr Betsan Martin, Public Issues Co-ordinator

Roundup is one of New Zealand's most commonly used pesticides but many people don't realise that it is also one of the most dangerous.

Roundup is widely considered to have minimal toxicity but unfortunately, this public perception is incorrect. Roundup has been linked to increased cases of cancer, obesity, autism and diabetes, as well as reduced male sperm count.

We should be extremely worried about the prevalence of Roundup and its widespread use in New Zealand agriculture. It kills plants when applied to foliage but also binds to soil and can contaminate water.

Glyphosate is the main component of Roundup and it has been found in NZ harbours, yet testing for it isn't undertaken in New Zealand rivers because the emphasis is on testing for nitrogen and phosphorus pollution.

The Netherlands have accepted the toxicity of glyphosate and recently banned the sale of Roundup for private use. France and Brazil are likely to follow suit. These countries have made it clear that the dangers to the public are significant and I urge New Zealand to do the same.

When talking about Roundup, it is imperative to also mention genetically modified (GM) food products because GM is not only GM, all GM also contains Roundup.

To put this into perspective, it is important to look at how Roundup is made. Roundup contains two main ingredients, glyphosate and adjuvants.

Glyphosate combines with minerals such as iron, sodium, copper, magnesium, potassium. This has a demineralising effect and was utilised and patented in 1964 as a de-scaler by the pipe cleaning industry.

The demineralising effect of glyphosate is very detrimental to food. 47 tonnes of

GM maize was found to be 2.0 kg lighter than non-GM maize, due to loss of mineral content. Since 1940, vegetables have lost a staggering 50 percent of their mineral content and fruit has lost 20 percent.

Glyphosate inhibits aromatic amino acid synthesis and in turn does not allow people to smell what they are eating. Physicians and Scientists for Global Responsibility have described glyphosate as one of the most biologically disruptive chemicals in the human and physical environment.

The second main component, adjuvants are the chemicals that enable the glyphosate to penetrate the plant. Adjuvants were always considered to be inert or inactive and researchers have only recently begun testing its effects on humans.

Results of testing on liver, kidney and placental cells show that adjuvants act as cell membrane disruptors and induce severe mitochondrial alterations.

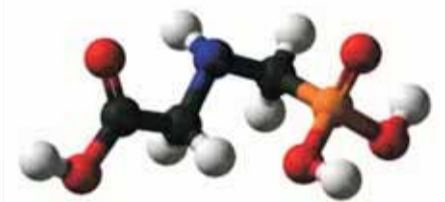
Given this, we can start to unravel the chemical equation for Roundup, $R = G + A = T2$ or Roundup equals glyphosate and adjuvants that equal toxicity multiplied by two.

French molecular biologist Gilles-Eric Seralini has examined the correlation of disease, including cancer, with the consumption of GM food. Gilles-Eric has focused recently on the GM components found in Roundup, including glyphosates and adjuvants.

As part of his research he conducted a two year investigation feeding rats GM corn with and without Roundup of quantities of one part per billion, as well as a control group. The results of this testing showed a dramatic effect on both the GM groups with increased tumours, liver and kidney degeneration and higher mortality rates after just four months (while no rats in the control groups developed tumours until at least 14 months of age).

These results were strongly criticised by GM company Monsanto. Interestingly Monsanto only tests for 90 days.

By the end of the two year period, 30



percent of the control group had developed tumours, compared to more than 50 percent of the rats in the GM group without Roundup. The rats that had been fed GM corn containing Roundup showed a staggering 80 percent tumour rate.

Research by scientists and physicians on behalf of the New Zealand charitable trust, Global Responsibility found that exposure to glyphosate can cause hormonal problems, miscarriages, pre-term births and birth defects. This has been observed in Argentina, the UK, North America and Brazil.

It is alarming to know that Roundup is widely used and sprayed onto the produce that we eat every day in New Zealand.

What can we do? We can strongly urge the public sector to regulate the use of Roundup at a national level or through local councils. The Auckland Regional Council has already adopted a non-chemical weed control policy and others, such as Nelson, may follow suit.

Boycott TV3 to protest Campbell sacking

To the editor,

I write to simply say that I consider Campbell Live to be the best and only programme that deals with real life and death issues among our current TV offerings.

John Campbell exposes with insight, humour and empathy the underside of stories that all too often are glossed over or ignored elsewhere. Recent publicity has talked about a review of that show and now the decision has been made to replace it.

So John, why were you pushed out? You highlighted child poverty, the insurance debacle in Christchurch, the situation of Syrian refugees and so on. But that does not fit with corporate or right wing agendas. They want us to dull our sense of fair play and to get out there and spend on stuff that will make us feel

better. Yeah, right!

Your caring attitude, sense of community and humility do not fit that neo-liberal mould. I am very sad to see you depart and I imagine that Prime Minister John Key and Minister Stephen Joyce (who shut down Channel 7) will have raised a glass in celebration. They can relax safe in the hands of Paul Henry et al.

I state categorically now that when Campbell Live is axed from its 7.00 p.m. timeslot, then I will no longer watch TV3 at all. I will urge my friends and friends in faith to boycott TV3 as well.

I have already canvassed others opinion and know there is much support for John Campbell and the recent dramatic increase in viewer numbers confirms that view.

Michael Dymond, Warkworth

Instead of using Roundup to control weeds in your garden, make a vinegar-based herbicide by mixing one gallon (3.8 litres) of 10 percent vinegar with one ounce (30 millilitres) of orange oil or d-limonene and a teaspoon of liquid soap. You can also encourage your local Church, office or community gardens to try using this mixture instead of Roundup.

Give me to drink

GREG HUGHSON
REFLECTS ON THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

On the evening of Pentecost Sunday May 24th I preached to an interdenominational congregation gathered at All Saints Anglican Church in Dunedin.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Churches provided the resources for this occasion and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity that preceded it.

The theme this year was Jesus Said to Her: Give Me to Drink (John 4:7), and the order of service was prepared by an ecumenical group from Brazil. Our biblical passage was John 4:1-42.

In Jesus' day, it was not common for a Jew (Jesus) to ask a Samaritan woman for a drink. This transaction sets the scene for a more spiritual dialogue between Jesus and the woman.

Quite quickly, the conversation moves into a dialogue around living water. Jesus

declares that whoever drinks of the water that he gives will never be thirsty again. The woman struggled to understand what Jesus was saying and went off to tell people about this man who had told her everything she had ever done.

Many Samaritans came to believe in Jesus due to the woman's testimony. How willing are we to engage in dialogue about spiritual matters with people from other cultures and faiths?

In John 4, Jesus is a foreigner who arrives tired and thirsty. He needs help and asks for water. The woman is in her own land - the well belongs to her people, to her tradition. She owns the bucket and she is the one who has access to the water. But she is also thirsty.

Their encounter offers an unexpected opportunity for them both. Jesus does not cease to be Jewish because he drank from the water that was offered by the Samaritan

woman.

When people of different cultures and faiths recognise that we need each other, breakthroughs in communication and sharing can and do occur.

The request 'Give me to drink' implies an ethical action that recognises the need for one another. It compels us to change our attitude and to be more willing to ask people of other cultures and faiths for help.

Last year in Dunedin we hosted a National Interfaith forum. Many times during the planning of this forum the organisers had to ask each other for help. When we ask for help from those who are different to us, and receive it, we enter into a new and deeper dimension of fellowship and friendship.

Let's be more open to asking each other for help, both within and beyond our Church communities. Jesus deliberately chose to cross Samaria on his way to Judea

in Galilee. Similarly we need to deliberately interact more with people of different faiths, if there is to be peace in our nation and world.

Within Christianity as a whole, we need to find a greater unity from which we can relate to people of other faiths. On our path towards Christian unity there is a well available to us filled with water, the water and sustenance Jesus gave us as a source of spiritual refreshment.

The water Jesus gives is living water. It enables us to carry on our journey of caring for others and for the whole of creation.

As we move through the post-Pentecost season of the Spirit may we draw deeply from the well of refreshment to sustain ourselves spiritually through prayer. May our hearts be strangely warmed but also strangely watered and refreshed by God's love, grace and mercy.



Works of grace

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



A few weeks ago, I joined a group of friends to dedicate a small fitness room in the Wainoni Methodist Church in Christchurch. It is an addition to the Wainoni Avonside

Community Service programme (WACS).

WACS was the dream of Averil Yearbury, who proposed it to me when I was first appointed minister of the church in 2001. Thanks to the dedicated work of Averil and others in the parish plus a generous gift from the Prince Albert College Trust fund, WACS came into being. There was some resistance when the programme started but once it was up and running more and more members got behind it.

A WACS organiser - Betty Chapman - was appointed and under her dedicated leadership the programme has gone from

strength to strength. In some weeks, I estimate more than 800 people from the surrounding community participate in WACS programmes.

Exercise programmes like 'Sit and Be Fit', tai chi and line dancing are popular. Then there are knitting, ceramic and other classes along with walking groups. On Thursdays films are popular and community meetings are well attended. There are cooking classes and talks on health issues - almost something for everyone.

Now with a small fitness room there is opportunity for people to undertake gentle exercise.

Building this programme has not always been easy. There have been tensions with groups within the parish over sharing the space for example. Most disappeared when the earthquakes struck Christchurch and the community began to see the church as a gathering point to discuss the many issues confronting it. Four years on, hardly a week goes by without a meeting on

something related to earthquake recovery.

Because the church building is in the Red Zone its future is uncertain. Nevertheless, WACS continues providing day by day encouragement, support and hope to people in east Christchurch.

Today if John Wesley visited Wainoni Methodist Church, he would congratulate the people called Methodists that he found in that place and would see WACS as a work of grace.

In many ways Methodism started not so much as a theological idea but as a community organising initiative through its prayer groups and class meetings. An Anglican vicar once asked Wesley about these emerging activities, and Wesley replied they were works of grace.

He added, "They had no previous design or plan at all, but everything rose just as the occasion offered. They saw or felt some impending or pressing evil, or some good end necessary to be pursued. And many times they fell unawares on the very thing which secured the good and

removed the evil." (cf A Plain Account of the People called Methodists).

According to Wesley these works of grace did not happen because of some kind of haphazard experimentalism. He clearly saw faith required discipline and discipline enabled the early Methodists to see opportunities that offered hope and direction to people.

Today Methodists use the term discipline to describe the ordered agenda of their meetings. Much is prearranged and from my observation over many years there is little room for works of grace in our very structured agendas.

For the church to engage the world, we need to make room for the unexpected and prepare to respond to the impending or pressing evils of our time. With our eyes and ears open, we too can experience the works of grace that were the cornerstone of Methodism's explosion in the streets and countryside of Britain.

Changing colour of the Church

David Hall, St Johns Bucklands Beach and member of UCANZ Standing Committee

A few weeks ago I was taking a Sunday Service at St Johns Buckland's Beach, when I realised how our church has changed over the last 27 years since we joined St Johns.

We have a children's church that joins the rest of us when the collection is blessed and as they came into the church and sat in the front row I realised that only one of the children was Pakeha, the rest were Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Thai, Sri Lankan and Malaysian.

I should not have been surprised as our church's mission statement is 'Being the Gospel to All People', and our local community has changed very significantly over the last three decades.

Possibly the makeup of our children's church is more

representative of our local community than the adult English speaking fellowship because we also have a Mandarin speaking fellowship.

What does this mean for our local church and the wider church?

We have tried to diversify the leadership of our church and we do have Mandarin speakers on our leadership team. We also have Sri Lankan, Thai and Filipinos on the Team but, if we are honest, it is the grey haired mainly male Pakeha members of the leadership team who are the most vocal and probably have the most influence.

What does the future hold? In 20 years most of the Pakeha members of the leadership team will be either dead or in their dotage (including the author of this article).

Our church structures from the

parish level to the national churches were very much formed by the then prevailing Anglo-Saxon Pakeha culture.

The challenge of how to work cross-culturally is not new for the New Zealand churches.

The early Anglican Church in Aotearoa was very much influenced by Maori, at least until the pushback from the settler church in the 1860s. Maori were side-lined in the leadership of the Anglican Church until the late 1980s when the move to the three tikanga structure - Pakeha, Maori and Pacifica - changed at least the governance structures.

Our Presbyterian and Methodist partners have also set up structures to address the multi-ethnic nature of the churches with specialist divisions - Maori, Pacific Island, and Asian.

But how soon will it be before Pakeha will be in the minority? Not long I suspect. It may well be longer, however, before the leadership of the churches reflects the changing ethnic makeup and perhaps more significantly before the control of denominational resources - finance and land - is no longer in Pakeha hands.

I am on various denominational committees including the Presbyterian Resource Sub Committee and the Standing Committee of UCANZ but as I look around those committees I do not see the ethnic diversity I see in my own church.

We need to start planning now how we transform our churches so that this diversity is reflected in our structures, including finance, property, and leadership.

From Page 1

Pasifika ministers lead English-speaking parishes

Rev Suiva'aia Te'o



Rev Sui Te'o says the biggest obstacle to her ministry has been her gender, not her ethnicity

Gender rather than language or culture has been the biggest barrier for Rev Suiva'aia (Sui) Te'o.

In 1993 Sui became the first Samoan woman to be ordained as a minister in the Methodist Church of New Zealand.

She has served in both English speaking and Samoan parishes and says overcoming tradition among her own people was the biggest challenge.

"A woman can be the Prime Minister of this country or be an MP but when it came to being a minister in the church it was just too much for some Samoan men.

"Our own men felt threatened by women in leadership. I think they felt their power would be lessened."

Sui was born in Samoa and came to New Zealand when she was 17 to continue her education. She converted to Methodism through marriage, attending St Paul's in Otago, which had English-speaking and Samoan congregations.

When she was in her 30s the Samoan minister encouraged her to become a lay preacher and then candidate for ministry. However, Samoan men in

the congregation tried to talk her out of it.

Her first appointment was in Greytown and Featherston, an English-speaking parish in Wairarapa. There her gender could also be a barrier. On one occasion, she was first invited and then barred from officiating at a funeral on a local marae.

Sui later served in the Wesley Multicultural Methodist Church in Petone for 10 years where she worked with Samoan, Tongan and Palangi families. She was then stationed at Birkenhead where she had an English-speaking and a Samoan congregation, and she is presbyter for the Mangere Central Samoan Parish.

"I have had a wide experience meeting people from different backgrounds and different faiths and made good friends."

Sui has also returned to her home village in Samoa and been invited to preach twice, something which would have been unthinkable when she left.

"I don't feel that I am important, but I am pleased and grateful that I have walked that road. I have been challenged and it's allowed others to come on that same journey."

Rev Misilei Misilei

Rev Misilei Misilei says he has been in New Zealand long enough to consider himself a Kiwi.

Misilei grew up in Samoa and came to New Zealand at age 24.

"I spoke English mostly in school. At high school we were not allowed to speak Samoan. So when I came to New Zealand I was quite confident speaking English but I still had to get used to speaking English all the time."

When he first arrived in New Zealand, Misilei worked in a factory and one of his workmates invited him to worship at Pitt Street Methodist Church, where he remained until he candidated for ministry.

Misilei has served in the Mahurangi parish at Warkworth,

which was predominantly English-speaking, but also had a Fijian family. Last year he moved to Papatoetoe Methodist Parish, which has 12 different ethnic groups. "It's an advantage to know different cultures," he says.

He also serves as Trinity College chaplain.

"When I candidated it was probably 50/50 Pakeha to Pacific Island candidates but now there are very few Pakeha, and they are mainly older students.

"You don't just serve God through ministry. There are all sorts of ways of doing it. We do what we can for the church and most importantly for God, whatever we are called to do."



Rev Misilei Misilei (right) with the other members of his 2011 ordination cohort.



Rev Manoa Havea (standing centre) says his ministry is all about walking beside and encouraging the people in his multicultural New Plymouth congregation.

Rev Manoa Havea

Rev Manoa Havea believes his multicultural background is a huge advantage in his ministry.

Manoa was born in Tonga but later moved to the Solomon Islands with his family where he did most of his schooling. In the Solomon Islands he attended a multicultural church where worship was in English.

He moved to New Zealand when he was in his 30s and candidated for ministry at age 42. As he has always been a member of

English-speaking parishes, he candidated for English-speaking ministry.

"Even though English is my second language, it doesn't mean the worship is different. I learn a lot from the older folk, as a 'young minister'. They have a lot of wisdom.

"Every day I learn something new. When I first came to New Plymouth there was a retired deaconess who has been walking alongside me and there are other long-time members who help me in my ministry."

Manoa was ordained last year and is in his first ministry appointment. He is the only Methodist minister in the Taranaki region. He serves two congregations and is superintendent for two Uniting Congregations.

He says the majority of his parish is Palangi, with eight Fijian families and one Tongan family.

"The language is not too big a challenge. My style of leadership is I want to walk alongside you. When I first arrived they

asked me what I was going to change, but I prefer to identify people with gifts and talents and encourage them."

When Manoa arrived in New Plymouth he aimed to attract more young people. He established a youth group with 13 Fijian and Tongan teenagers and it has since grown to more than 40, including Pakeha, Maori and an exchange student from Vanuatu.

Why is housing in NZ now a privilege rather than a right?

Dave Marsh, Christchurch
Methodist Mission

It is the human right of everyone living in New Zealand to have adequate housing.

There is no grey area in this statement that leaves it open to debate. No one should be excluded from adequate housing, and no conditions should be put on the right. Everyone living in our beautiful country has the basic right to adequate housing for themselves and their family.

The human right to adequate housing is recognised in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. New Zealand has signed the Universal Declaration and ratified other international human rights treaties that incorporate good housing into the right to an adequate standard of living.

It is distressing to read the stories of Kiwi families forced to live in terrible conditions because they can't afford adequate housing.

Some families with many children are forced to live in vans. Others live in garages or overcrowded houses that they share with another family. Some families go from friend to friend, night after night because they have nowhere else.

These are not isolated instances. There are currently more than 5000 people on the Ministry of Social Development's social housing register. That means 5000 people without a place to call their own.

The problem is getting worse. People on the waiting list classified as Priority A are "households with a severe and persistent housing need that must be addressed immediately". Their number has more than doubled from 1290 in June, 2013 to 3188 in June, 2014.

There are measures that could increase the availability and affordability of housing but they require intervention from central government.



The right to adequate housing is recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which NZ has signed.

Firstly, increase the supply of affordable rental properties. A recent report from the Salvation Army indicates that the current housing stock in Christchurch has recovered to almost the same number as it was pre-earthquake.

But the same research found that rents in the city had risen by 20 percent since the earthquakes. In Auckland weekly rent has increased 10 percent in the past 12 months.

One way to increase the number of affordable rental houses is to provide capital to community housing providers so they can build or purchase houses.

Secondly, increase the Accommodation Supplement for individuals and families living in places where rents have risen sharply. At present a couple with two children earning the minimum wage in Christchurch received less than half of what their Auckland counterparts receive - yet they are faced with higher median rents.



Christchurch Methodist Mission is one of Christchurch's largest social housing providers.

The Christchurch Methodist Mission (CMM) provides warm, secure and affordable housing to families and older people who need support and would struggle to pay market rents. CMM is one of Christchurch's largest social housing providers with 26 bedsits, 12 one bedroom units and eight townhouses for families.

As a registered social housing provider we can access the Government's income related rent subsidy (IRRS) for tenants who are on the government's housing list. With this subsidy, tenants only pay 25 percent of their income on rent, and the Government makes up the difference between that amount and the market-rent.

This way young families and older people priced out of the rental market can get into a warm and

affordable house of their own.

Of equal importance is the social support we give to tenants so they can feel safe and secure and gain confidence and skills. We provide anything from furniture to food to help with understanding their tenancy agreement.

We also seek to build a sense of community for the families in our social housing and reduce the sense of isolation many of them feel. We do this through social events and a dedicated staff member who builds relationships with them.

CMM is committed to give people their right to adequate housing and to help them build a home for themselves and their children.

Methodist Missions plan to form national alliance

New Zealand's Methodist Missions are seeking to join together in a national alliance that will leave them the independence they need to provide social services to their communities in their own way.

Currently the Missions are linked through Methodist Missions Aotearoa (MMA) network, which has the ability to review their performance but not enforce its findings.

MMA chair Rev John Murray says today the Mission landscape is changing, as is the nature of the Church and the type of relationship Government wants to have with social service providers. This has prompted MMA to seek input from the Connexion as it moves towards a national structure.

Historically there were four major urban Methodist Missions - in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin - and each was a parish in its own right in the Church. Today Sinoti Samoa and Vahefonua Tonga have Missions that belong to MMA and there are Missions in Hamilton and Palmerston North.

All of these are members of MMA and there are other aged care and social service providers in the Church, such as Tamahere Eventide Retirement Village that could benefit from belonging to a larger body.

"Successive governments have said they want to work with national-based organisations to deliver social services. We want to be able to deal with government as a national provider but still maintain the autonomy of local Missions," John says.

"Another advantage of establishing a national body is that it would be a better way to provide training and assure the quality of services. Also Missions face increasing compliance costs and complex audit requirements. A national body would make it much easier for individual missions to meet these demands."

John says the Missions are no longer parishes. They are overseen by boards rather than parish councils and most are run by directors, who are not ordained ministers and.

"Conference has recognised this, and the Law Revision Committee has removed the Missions from the section of the Law Book relating to parishes. In doing so it has not defined what the Missions actually are or how they relate to the Church so that is what we are seeking to do now."

To do this MMA has invited the whole church to join in a conversation about its Missions and the future shape of Methodist social services.

This process has been underway for several months and MMA has received feedback on its proposals.

John says in response to some of the comments he emphasises no one supports the idea of a top-down model but everyone wants a Connexional model.

Membership in the body should be voluntary but there would be a code of conduct for members, clear principles, and a Memorandum of Understanding would ensure all members understand the limitations of the alliance.

Members would agree to a code of professional standards, ethics and protocols.

Sinoti Samoa and Vahefonua Tonga are positive about being in the alliance as the discussion within MMA indicates that the proposal will not take away cultural focus.

"Going forward, we will use an external consultant to help draft a formal proposal to present to synods and ultimately Conference. We intend to have a face-to-face meeting with Te Taha Maori as part of this process," John says.

Poverty steals from Kiwi kids



Support Methodist Missions

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We do this every day by working with families and children who need extra support.

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For more information contact the chairperson of Methodist Mission Aotearoa, Michael Greer
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The way of the gospel in the Solomon Islands

By Cory Miller

Dressed in the humble white garb of a Dominican priest, adorned with a salt and pepper beard and a warm smile, Father Peter Murnane stands above a crowd of Melanesian islanders as he prepares to conduct a baptism.

The Australian-born priest has slotted quite nicely into the Dominican community in the Solomon Islands where he has lived since 2012.

At 71, Peter might be looking to relax and enjoy the fruits of years of hard work but he is doing anything but that.

He has chosen to continue the work of the Dominican mission that has been in the Solomon Islands since the 1950s. It works to improve basic health care, provide education, and establish schools, clinics and parishes.

Peter mentors young Solomon Islanders who want to enter the order, teaches English and administers Mass and Holy

Communion.

Seven years ago Peter became notorious in New Zealand, as one of a trio who damaged a satellite dish at the US-controlled spy base in Waihopai in a symbolic gesture of protest against the military.

While it may appear a move to the Solomon Islands has provided a refuge from such notoriety he is quick to dispel the myth that he is hiding out there.

"Some people have wondered whether my departure from New Zealand was to escape from the GCSB or even the NSA," he says. "The answer is definitely no."

Peter quips it would be silly to think one could hide from the spying eyes of the Government, even somewhere as remote as the Solomon Islands.

Initially his work brought him to the picturesque western Solomon Islands, but he is now based in the capital, Honiara.

Peter says the days are long because the heat and humidity make

an early 5:45 a.m. start preferable. A typical day includes mediation, classes, a short siesta and time spent in the food garden or playing sport.

On the weekend Peter presides over mass, and may officiate at a marriage or baptism.

The obvious challenge he says is the climate with the temperature exceeding 30 degrees most days with humidity close to 100 percent.

"Different and deeper are the cultural challenges," Peter says. "There was significant culture shock to handle at first, then the task of learning to value the differences in the various cultures of the local peoples."

With a population of around 500,000 and about 70 languages the Solomon Islands provide ample opportunity to learn.

He appreciates Solomon Islanders' leisureed approach to life, their ability to value persons before goods, their strong community spirit, and their faith that outshines Western individualism.



"While all the problems that our culture suffers from are there already, it would be true to say that indigenous cultures and social structures are naturally closer to the ideals of the gospel, than is our hyper-consumerist society."

Peter says has been fortunate to have the experience.

"Having lived for more than

three years among the people of the Solomon Islands, I find even more reasons to sustain this joy daily, despite the discomforts that come with the extremes of the tropical environment.

"In my eighth decade I am blessed to find a strong and constant joy in life."

Teaching peace to reform a nation

By Cory Miller

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world." - Nelson Mandela, 1993.

Pakistani children live in a nation troubled by poverty and ethnic and sectarian conflict. They are automatically on the back foot when it comes to many of life's basic necessities, such as food, security and education.

Now teacher Nadeem Ghazi is pushing for a reformation of Pakistan's education system, which he hopes will be the first step towards a more peaceful nation.

The education system in Pakistan is troubled by corruption and bullying. Teachers and students are often armed, and in that climate it is hard to imagine the different world Nelson Mandela envisioned.

Nadeem has witnessed the hardship many of Pakistani children face on a daily basis.

In his community, in the conflict-torn city of Karachi, he has witnessed many children struggling to get a basic of education.

When students are armed petty antics such as name calling and gossiping can quickly lead to violence.

Despite these challenges Nadeem says simply expelling the problematic children from the schools was not the solution.

"I felt the need for positive behaviour education to tackle these issues," he says. "It's not just enough to teach the basics. When we educate the minds of our youth we must not forget to educate their hearts."

"Pakistan needs peace education. It is an emergency," Nadeem says.

"Without education youth are at risk of being used for extremism and terrorism. It is easier for radicals to take advantage of the youth and use them. Until we get the students into schools it will be hard to find peace."

In search for just how he could help stem the violence from an early age, Nadeem sought support from the



Pakistani teacher Nadeem Ghazi is helping schools teach peace as well as 'the three Rs'.

international community and the likes of Dr Hetty Van Gorp, of Peace Schools International.

With their help Nadeem has established his own hub for peace education in Pakistan - the Peace Education Welfare Organisation.

As founder and director, Nadeem is helping 100 schools and their teachers in Pakistan's underprivileged and conflict-torn areas teach peace as well as academic subjects.

The programme gives schools access to tools, resources and training so they can start to create a culture of peace.

Free of charge, 2,000 Pakistani children from kindergarten age through to their teen years are able to have access to an education they may never have had.

The programme offers English, maths and science classes but it also has other initiatives. These include no-name-calling weeks, no gossip weeks, anti-bullying weeks and art and sporting activities.

Nadeem says the positive focus of the schools is helping children resolve issues more peacefully and better understand how to make the most of the opportunities available to them.

"The positive education approach can help the youth to learn about the different opportunities available to them if they want to excel and how they can do it positively."

"It's about empowerment. Education provides positive options to youth for jobs and other socio-economic issues."



Christchurch North MWF marked Mothers' Day with a celebration of motherhood.

Papanui women celebrate motherhood

The women at Christchurch North Methodist Parish celebrated motherhood this year by having a luncheon on the day before Mothers' Day.

About 50 mothers, daughters, granddaughters and other women gathered together at the Falkingham Centre in the Christchurch Methodist Mission's Wesley Care complex to share a special time together.

Methodist Women's Fellowship arranged the function.

The women told stories about their mothers or daughters, shared photos of past MWF events, sang, and danced led by our local MWF president Moe Petaia and her family.

Funds were also raised for the kitchen in the church complex which is currently being built to replace the old church building and hall that were damaged then demolished after the 2011 earthquakes. It was a very happy occasion and enjoyed by all.

Warmer welcome for Nelson refugees

Although Nelson city has just one percent of New Zealand's population, it is allocated 10 percent of the country's annual intake of refugees.

This year, 25 families from Myanmar and Bhutan have made Nelson home and more families are to arrive in June and July.

Although the Government provides basic furniture for the immigrants, everything else they receive is donated.

For the second consecutive year, the congregation of St John's in the City has chosen to make those arriving in winter a little more comfortable by donating 30 sets of new pillows, cases and covered hot water bottles.

After the congregation obtained a special price from The Warehouse, members donated accordingly. This year the donations exceeded what was required so they provided saucepans as well.

The congregation handed the gifts over to representatives of the Red Cross Refugee Services at a Sunday service.

One of Red Cross representatives was Sui Ting Cinzan, herself a refugee from Myanmar. Sui Ting told of the harrowing experiences she and her family had endured before they arrived



Brian Kendrick (left) and Sui Ting Cinzan with some of the household goods donated by St John's in the City

in New Zealand in 2006.

Red Cross team leader Barbara Whittaker explained the thorough process by which new arrivals are brought into the community.

St John's in the City member Brian Kendrick says it was a real thrill for all concerned on that Sunday to have people representing the refugees at the service to collective the offering.

New trends lay traditional funerals to rest

By Hilaire Campbell

Once funeral directors wore top hat and tails and everyone else was in black. Today jeans and jandals are acceptable.

Retired Methodist presbyter Rev Ken Russell remembers when most funerals took place in churches and were very sombre affairs led by clergy.

"Heavens, how things have changed. Now services are usually held in funeral chapels and taken by a celebrant. Families decide what they want, and all the technology is available. The service can even be live streamed overseas," he says.

Ken conducted his first funeral in Hokitika in 1957 for a young mother who left behind three young children and a grief stricken husband.

"Despite three years of theological training I had had no training in conducting a funeral. I had to ask around and get what help I could."

By the beginning of the 1980s Ken says there had been a generational and a cultural shift. Fewer people had church connections. They didn't want to be preached at and they didn't want a service that was imposed on them.

"When the first funeral celebrants came on the scene in the 1990s they quickly became popular because they offered an alternative with fewer religious trappings."

Barry Hayman has been a funeral director for 30 years and is currently with Patterson's Funeral Services in Ashburton. Barry says funerals have not become entirely nonreligious but people want more honesty.

Modern funeral establishments include a reception lounge and catering facilities and some have a crematorium. Gone are the days when you went back to the house for a cup of tea."

Rev John Meredith says funeral companies never used to advertise.

"They had a low profile. Now companies like Lamb and Hayward fund wetland gardens and sponsor concerts."

John also notes recorded music has taken the place of communal singing at many non-church funerals. It can be anything from classical music to rock.

His memories of the hearse leaving the church and people in the street taking their hats off or crossing themselves seem long ago.

When John took his first service in the late 1960s he relied on the hymn book and set prayers. He spoke only briefly, and the name of the deceased was barely mentioned.

"Now funerals are more centred on the person. People laugh and let themselves go and memories are shared."

Ken says he was happy to cross the line between the religious and the secular when he was in ministry. While stationed in Whangarei in the 1980s, he conducted many funerals outside the church. His congregation supported him because it believed in meeting people at their point of need.

He says funeral celebrants have become very popular and clergy have joined their ranks.



Today funerals may feature the release of balloons or live butterflies.



Caterers, celebrants and PowerPoint presentations are all part of contemporary funerals.

Until recently Elizabeth Bennett was the president of the Celebrants Association of NZ.

Elizabeth has worked as an academic and health consultant, focused on palliative care. She says as society changes, so does its rituals.

"Death is confronting. Whatever society a family comes from, they almost always want some expression of transcendence. However, its enactment may be different to a liturgical approach. It might be through poetry or music but it's almost always there."

While styles have changed the skills needed to conduct a funeral remain the same.

"To write and conduct a funeral that is authentic and real, you first have to read people, listen well, and engage with them deeply," Elizabeth says.

Barry says funerals are more complex today.

"Service sheets are used instead of hymn books, and PowerPoint is almost a necessity. Funerals can be indoors or outdoors, and may include the release of helium balloons or live butterflies."

A funeral home draws on many professionals to do a funeral - doctors, police, ambulance staff, caterers, florists, cemetery managers, crematorium staff, ministers and celebrants. "We're all part of a team that makes the day a very personal experience for families and friends," he says.

"Prepaid and prearranged funerals have become popular in the last 15 years, and it honestly makes our job easier because we have definite instructions for the deceased. Families aren't left in total shock...and for those going into care it safeguards their money."

Ken believes the secularization of funerals is not a bad thing.

"It's just a shame that the church has been somewhat marginalized through this process. Clergy still have a great deal to offer in the way of comfort, reassurance and remembrance.

"In their time of grief families need skilled and sensitive people to help them verbalise their memories and assemble resources that express their thoughts and emotions. Families should be encouraged to be active participants in a funeral service."

Waitara church enjoys last of the summer wine

God is not done with you yet, Methodist Church president Rev Tovia Aumua told the members of the Waitara Methodist congregation, when they worshipped together in their church for the last time.

Tovia was present for the Sunday March 22nd closing ceremony of the Waitara Church, and he reminded the current and former members of the congregation that they have done nothing wrong and that the church lives on even though the building has closed.

Waitara Methodist Church was part of the North Taranaki Methodist Parish and parish superintendent Rev Manoa Havea says more than 100 people gathered for an afternoon of remembering and storytelling on Saturday the 21st and the closing service on the next day.

"Past ministers and members of the Waitara congregation joined us for the afternoon of reflection and the service. Speakers talked about what they had done and their memories of the church and how it had nurtured them."

Manoa says the Waitara church building needs some strengthening to bring it up to seismic code but the main reason it was closed is that there were only 15 active members in the congregation and most of them are in their 80s.

Graeme and Susan Orr were stewards in the Waitara congregation. Graeme jokes that he and Susan were referred to as the congregation's youth group because they were under 70.

"Our numbers had been dwindling for some time so it has been on the radar that we would close the church," Graeme says.

"We made the decision ourselves and we were not pressured by the church higher up. Manoa and our previous minister Rev Alan Upson were very professional and respectful and gave us good guidance as we reached the decision."

Graeme says the remaining members of the congregation became known as The Faithful 15. They formed a choir for the final service and called themselves The Last of the Summer Wine.

"We have had a wonderful time together. We formed a harmonious relationship and close friendships, and



The final Methodist service in the church drew past and present members and ministers.

we will continue to meet together once a month though we have not yet decided on a place."

Graeme says some members of the congregation will worship with other local churches in Waitara and others will join Methodist congregations in Urenui or New Plymouth. A group from another denomination is currently using the Waitara Methodist church building.

"Our congregation was made up of extremely committed and faithful Methodists. Some are from Methodist families that have been here for five generations. It is sad but we are comfortable with our decision," he says.

WINTER SCHOOL ON ECUMENISM

MONDAY 13TH TO SATURDAY
18TH OF JULY, 2015
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, MEADOWBANK

TOWARDS A COMMON VISION

The course is held in conjunction with Charles Sturt University, Canberra. It is open to students seeking credits toward a degree or to those who wish to audit.

Cost - Students \$300, audit \$175. Fee includes course material and lunch.

Course content and registration details are available through the Methodist Mission & Ecumenical office.

Guest presenters include Rev Prof Emeritus Robert Gribben, Rt Rev Prof Steven Pickard and Rev Dr Ray Williamson from Australia, and Rev John Roberts and Cardinal John Dew from NZ.

For further details, contact Rev Prince Devanandan at the Methodist M&E office:

princed@methodist.org.nz • 09 571 9142 Or 021 168 6279
• Private Bag 11903, Ellerslie, Auckland 1542

Those who wish to apply for funding from Methodist Travel & Study must submit their application before 15th May, 2015 to Travel & Study Committee.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE COURSE CLOSE 15th JUNE, 2015.

Successful relief work in Vanuatu

Two months after Tropical Cyclone Pam devastated much of Vanuatu, Christian World Service is pleased to report on successful aid deliveries to a number of communities.

CWS has worked with the Vanuatu Christian Council and Australia's Act for Peace to make sure relief supplies reached communities who need help.

Food, water, water purification kits and tablets, tarpaulins and clothes met some of the immediate need on more than six islands and at church evacuation centres in Port Vila.

A community nursery has been established at the secondary school on Tongoa Island. Students have cleared debris and put up fences.

Seeds and plants are in the ground and will provide much needed food in a few months as long as pigs and cattle are kept out. More gardens are to be planted and water systems replaced as the appeal moves to help restore lost livelihoods.

The extent of the damage and the loss of telecommunications made the response a big challenge for the small National Disaster Management Office. Local disaster committees trained with support from Act for Peace were able to step up and provide needed leadership.

While some have been critical of the speed of the Vanuatu government's response, Act for Peace staff member Geoff Robinson believes it was timely and effective. He said the government appealed for financial support for its work and recognised the role of agencies.

"In any disaster, the government has certain responsibilities and communities have others. Both need resources. What is most important is that all Pacific nations learn from Vanuatu's experience because we are all vulnerable to



Church groups have provided tools and help so the people of Vanuatu can replant gardens. Photo: Act for Peace/Julia Loersch.

natural disasters," says CWS international programmes coordinator Trish Murray.

CWS is grateful to the generous supporters including parishes and Vahefoua Tonga which have donated to the Vanuatu Cyclone Appeal. With few resources left on some islands, CWS will fund the rebuild programme.

Donations for the Vanuatu Cyclone Appeal can be sent to CWS, PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140 or on line at www.cws.org.nz.

Refugee Sunday - Pray and act for displaced people

Christian World Service is encouraging parishes to remember Refugee Sunday on 21 June.

Refugee Sunday is a day to celebrate the many contributions that refugees have made in our communities and to pray for those who have fled their homeland in fear for their lives.

According to figures from the United Nations, there were 51.2 million refugees in 2013, the highest number since World War II. Escalating conflicts make it likely that this number will increase when the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports for World Refugee Day on 20 June this year.

CWS is supporting the campaign to increase New Zealand's quota, currently 750 people a year.



Caption: Palestinian-Syrian Refugee Fatimah Abdallah shares a temporary home with two other families. Photo: ACT/Natalie Naccache.

"New Zealand has room and our government needs to step up to help. As a member of the Security Council, the government should shoulder some of the burden facing the global community. Refugees have contributed much to this country," says CWS national director Pauline McKay.

CWS has worship and other resources to help parishes pray and take action for refugees. They can be downloaded at www.cws.org.nz or requested from Emma at 0800 74 73 72.

Shaken Nepal needs more help



After the earthquakes ACT Alliance Nepal built 100 temporary pit latrines in Gorkha, Nepal. Photo: ACT/J Blindheim.

One month after the magnitude 7.8 earthquake first rocked Nepal, relief operations are entering the recovery phase. Working through ACT Alliance Nepal (Action by Churches Together), Christian World Service has been grateful for the strong support from New Zealanders.

"More than \$90,000 has been given to the Nepal Earthquake Appeal. It is a tremendous effort and much needed in Nepal where there is so much damage. If you can, please support this appeal to help local people rebuild," says CWS national director Pauline McKay.

ACT Alliance Nepal is made up of church groups that have been working in Nepal for more than three decades. It has been working closely with the United Nations and government.

In the first month after the quakes they have helped well over 160,000 people. ACT Alliance staff were forced out of their building by the initial quake, and spent the afternoon setting up relief operations.

They provided warm food and organised the distribution of food, water, blankets, tarpaulins and medical supplies in and beyond Kathmandu.

After more than 50 aftershocks over magnitude 4.5, ACT Alliance training programmes are helping people and especially children deal with the uncertainty and stress.

Many people are sleeping outside or under tarpaulins. Landslides and the terrain make delivery difficult but ACT Alliance has made it a priority to reach outlying areas. Desperate for help, local people continue to trek some distance to get supplies.

"The top priority is shelter. Many homes have been destroyed or so badly



Allan Robert is selling his paintings to help the people of Nepal.

damaged people can't use them anymore," says ACT Alliance Nepal convenor David Smith.

There is heavy demand for corrugated iron roofing as agencies prepare for the monsoon season which starts in June.

Already 100 temporary pit latrines have been built in Gorkha and water tanks have been repaired. ACT Alliance is working with local nongovernmental organisations to build homes and livelihoods, repair or replace water and sanitation systems and provide psychosocial support.

Allan Robert from Wesley Church in Tauranga has raised more than \$800 to help. In his retirement he has taken up painting. Moved by the devastation he has been selling his paintings and is accepting commissions. Examples can be viewed on the Wesley Tauranga website which can be found through the Methodist Church's website: methodist.org.nz.

Donations to the Nepal Earthquake Appeal can be sent to CWS, PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140 or made on line at www.cws.org.nz.

NEPAL QUAKE APPEAL



PLEASE DONATE NOW
Nepal's people need mountains of help. Can you help them with food, water, shelter and livelihoods?

CREDIT CARD Phone 0800 74 73 72 or online www.cws.org.nz/donate
DIRECT DEPOSIT Name of Account: Christian World Service
Account number: ANZ 06 0817 0318646 00, ref: Nepal Appeal.
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Young People

Tune up for Perfect Pitch youth camp

By Filo Tu

It has been a long time coming and a long time in the making but it's just around the corner so I thought you should be aware of it. The Lower North Island Synod is hosting its very first synod youth camp!

There doesn't seem much more that anyone can say to this but get excited. So let me fill you in with the appropriate information: The theme is Perfect Pitch (1 Tim 4:12), it takes place Labour Weekend 2015 (October 23rd-26th) at El Rancho Christian Camp, Waikanae, and it is open to young people 13 to 30 (but we're flexible).

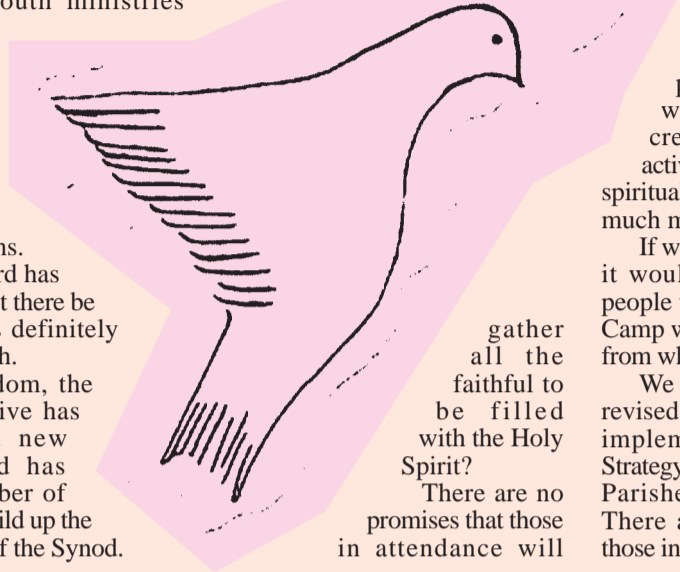
Taking a lead from the movie Pitch Perfect this event will bring together a group of unknown individuals from even more unknown places throughout the Lower North Island Synod (LNIS). Covering one of the largest geographical areas in the

country, the LNIS has its southern point in the windy currents of Wellington, and encompasses the picturesque sights from Hawkes Bay to Manawatu and Taranaki. Since amalgamation into a super synod, the youth ministries around the Synod have progressed a l m o s t secretly on their own with n o m a j o r interconnections.

But the Lord has announced: 'Let there be light' and it is definitely shining through.

In its wisdom, the Synod executive has headed in a new direction and has started a number of initiatives to build up the work and life of the Synod.

Youth ministry is one of them, and what better way than having a synod camp to



gather all the faithful to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

There are no promises that those in attendance will

depart as a refreshed a cappella singing group but they will enjoy a full programme of fellowship, music and fun.

It is envisioned that those who dare to be a part of this historical event will engage in workshops, creative corners, sporting activities, theological debates, spiritual development and much, much more.

If we can guarantee one thing, it would be that those young people who gather at this Synod Camp will leave totally different from when they cross that border.

We are looking to share the revised vision of the Synod and implement the Tauivi Youth Strategy with more fervour within Parishes and Congregations. There are no expectations for those in attendance - nor are there

any criteria (besides the age zone). We expect that all our young people within these regions will come as they are.

So if this sounds like something you wish to engage in, please contact me (filo.tufaleupolu@gmail.com). Even if you know any young people who would be interested in attending, do not hesitate to contact me.

You don't necessarily need to have young people in your congregation or parish but if you have the passion for them, that's all we need.

More information and registration details will be coming out soon. But don't wait until then, let's spread the fire and get young people engaged!

Watch this space!

Kidz Korna! Welcome to Kidz Korna June 2015!

What a great time we have had with the celebrations in church recently. During March, April and May we have celebrated Easter, Faka-Me, Mother's Day and Pentecost with lots of

different services and activities. Thank you to the Tongan children of Wesley Church, Wellington and Ashburton Methodist Church, who have told us about their Faka-Me celebrations.

Pentecost Quiz

How much do you know about Pentecost?

Choose the right answer to answer these questions.

1) Which Christian celebration does Pentecost follow?

A) New Year's Day; B) Christmas; C) Easter.

2) When the people were gathered together celebrating the feast what did they hear?

A) Fire crackling; B) Rushing wind; C) Running water.

3) What happened to the disciples when the Holy Spirit entered them?

A) They spoke in different languages; B) They danced together; C) They cried.

4) Which disciple spoke to the crowd of people?

A) Thomas; B) Peter; C) Matthew.

5) Who did Peter say in Acts 2:25 was sitting at God's right hand?

A) Jesus; B) James; C) Moses.

6) Where did the first Pentecostal celebration take place?

A) Nazareth; B) Jerusalem; C) By the Sea of Galilee.

Check your answers in next month's Kidz Korna.

White Sunday in Wellington

On Sunday 3 May 2015, our young people looked amazing dressed in white.

Parents were up all night preparing food and ironing uniforms and traditional accessories for their children to wear.

During the service the children re-enacted Bible stories, recited hymns and Bible verses, and sang beautifully.

Our Sunday school has seven classes from Kindy to Class 6. Each class performed a song, action song or a drama. Weeks of practice all paid off. At the end of the day, everyone was invited to the hall to enjoy a feast and to celebrate the fifth birthday of Vakata Me'afo'ou

Ashburton's multicultural Faka-Me

Ashburton Methodist Church is multicultural church that includes European, Tongan, and Fijian families. The Sunday school is multicultural too but this year everyone took part in the Tongan tradition of Faka-Me.

The children of each family prepared a presentation. They recited or read a verse, said a prayer, or performed an action song.

All the children joined together to sing songs too.

Ashburton minister Rev Tevita Taufalele says it was really good to see parents support their children and help them prepare their presentations.



Wesley Wellington's Tongan congregation put a big effort into Faka-Me.



Ashburton Methodist Church's children took centre stage on Sunday, May 3rd.

What are the kids in your church up to?

Kidz Korna wants to hear from you so we can share your stories. Send stories and photos of your activities to Doreen Lennox at dlennox@extra.co.nz or to touchstone@paradise.net.nz

Sunday

ON SCREEN

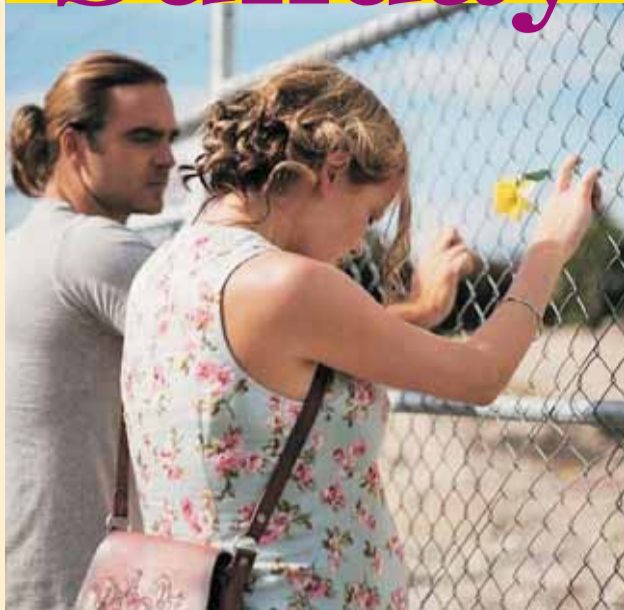
A Film Review by Steve Taylor

Sunday is a ditch-crossing story. Aussie (Dustin Clare as Charlie) meets Kiwi (Camille Keenan as Eve). They fall in love, enfolded by Australian sun and surf.

In time, Eve finds herself pregnant. Unwilling to raise a child in a relationship in which Charlie is absent for long periods with work, she returns to Christchurch.

Charlie crosses the Tasman to see her. Together over 24 hours, they explore their past, examine their present insecurities and ponder their future. Their conversation, a mix of romance, comedy and pathos, is set against the backdrop of Christchurch post-quake.

The dancing diggers, twisted metal fences and wrecked cathedrals are an arresting visual and a probing metaphor. Is it worth either of them investing in a rebuild of their relationship? Or will their past remain a scene of untended destruction?



Sunday echoes the plot line of director Richard Linklater's generational trilogy, *Before Sunrise*, *Before Sunset* and *Before Midnight*. All of these films involve a couple exploring their relationship; past, present and future.

In each film, tension is built by the immanence of a departure and in each one, the geographic backdrop is an important character. At the risk of being accused of

being parochial, Christchurch post-earthquake is far more impressive than Linklater's Vienna, Paris or Greek Islands. The dawn scenes as Eve takes Charlie to the airport past cathedrals, walled containers and the quirk that is Gap Filler, is disturbingly beautiful.

In another similarity, as with *Before Sunrise*, *Before Sunset* and *Before Midnight*, the writing of Sunday is a collaborative activity. In the Linklater trilogy the director and actors, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke, worked together on scenes and script.

Similarly, the actors and director (Michelle Joy Lloyd) of Sunday spent time work-shopping the characters and themes. Each actor then wrote different scenes, and Eve (Camille Keenan) edited them to ensure a coherent voice.

Sunday does little explicit theological work. The title is not a reference to a religious day of rest. Rather it is one potential baby name. Outside the broken Catholic cathedral, we hear that the baby, when born will be christened. But the

conversation then drifts to the absurdity of a christening gown being wedding white.

The faith present in Sunday is a faith of ritual and impractical irrelevance, dissected in front of a broken and empty building. It seems to have little to offer a couple, or a city, contemplating a rebuild.

Sunday is a work of artistic love. Director Michelle Joy Lloyd self- and crowd-funded the project. In the search for an audience it became the first movie in history to be released simultaneously on five platforms; cinema, online, TV, airline, and DVD. It can be downloaded, hired or purchased on DVD, on either side of the Ditch from sundaythefilm.com.

It might be low-budget, but it remains an appealing treat, perfect for a high-quality Sunday evening in with friends.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is principal at the *Uniting College for Leadership and Theology, Adelaide*. He is the author of *The Out of Bounds Church?* (Zondervan, 2005) and writes widely in areas of theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

AN ALPHABET OF BIBLICAL VERSES

When I was young, learning Bible texts was a popular Sunday school and Bible Class activity. Some keen types were able to recite a text for each letter of the alphabet.

See how you go at supplying the missing beginning word for this alphabet of texts. With longer texts only the starting phrase is written here. I encourage you to look up the whole verse, and maybe memorise it?

Bible Challenge

A	_____ all, hold unfailing your love for one another...	1 Peter 4:8
B	_____ I stand at the door and knock, if any one hears my voice...	Rev 3:20
C	_____ to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.	Mtt 11:28
D	_____ near to God, and he will draw near to you.	Jas 4:8
E	_____ youths shall faint and be weary ... but they who wait on the Lord...	Is 40:30-31
F	_____ by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not...	Eph 2:8
G	_____ thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God...	1 Thes 5:18
H	_____ your father and your mother, as the Lord your God...	Deut 5:16
I	_____ any one serves me he must follow me; and where I am there will...	Jn 12:26
J	_____ said, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life...'	Jn 14:6
K	_____ your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.	Ps 34:13
L	_____ is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful	1 Cor 13:41
M	_____ you be blessed by the Lord, who made Heaven and earth!	Ps 115:15
N	_____ faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of...	Heb 11:1
O	_____ my eyes that I may behold wondrous things...	Ps 119:18
P	_____ I leave with you, my peace I give to you...	Jn 14:27
Q	_____ all the flaming dart of the evil one.	Ep 6:16b
R	_____ in the Lord always; again I say rejoice.	Phil 4:4
S	_____ faith, hope and love abide; these three but the greatest of these is love.	1 Cor 13:13
T	_____ is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.	Ps 118:24
U	_____ the Lord builds the house; those who build it labour in vain.	Ps 127:1
V	_____ me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity...	Ps 26:1
W	_____ your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord, not men	Col 3:23
X	_____ yourselves, to see whether you are holding to the faith...	2 Cor 13:15
Y	_____ are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its taste...	Mtt 5:14
Z	_____ shall be redeemed by justice, and by those who repent...	Is 1:27

© RMS
Answers: Above, Behold, Come, Draw, Even, For, Give, Honour, If, Jesus, Love, May, Now, Open, Peace, Quench, Rejoice, So, This, Unless, Vindicate, Whatever, Xamine, You, Z



Enid Gush.

Conference off the bucket list

While attending Methodist Conference may not strike everyone as an adventure they must try, it was one of the items on Enid Gush's bucket list.

Enid is the recently retired steward of North Taranaki Methodist Parish and she attended last year's Conference in Hamilton.

Now 81, Enid is a former primary school teacher and registered nurse. She has a list of things she wants to do before she is too old, and one of them was attending the annual gathering of the Methodist Connexion.

North Taranaki Parish presbyter Rev Manoa Havea was ordained at the Hamilton Conference so a large party from New Plymouth, Urenui and Waitara was on hand to support him.

Enid stayed on for the business sessions of Conference to represent the Parish.

"Conference was slightly more interesting than I thought it would be though I was disappointed in the lack of debate," she says.

While Enid might seem mild mannered, the other items she has ticked off her bucket list are far from tame.

She has ridden a Harley Davidson from New Plymouth to Inglewood and back and taken a helicopter ride around Mt Taranaki. Next on the list is to drive a race car.

Enid was born into a Methodist family in Remuera, Auckland. She was married for 50 years and has four daughters.

She is the executive of the North Taranaki Parish council, and is a member of the Methodist Women's Fellowship and Grey Power.



Earthed in Hope - Dying, Death and Funerals, a Pakeha Anglican Perspective

By Alister Hendery
2014, Philip Garside Publishing, 300 pages
Reviewer: John Meredith

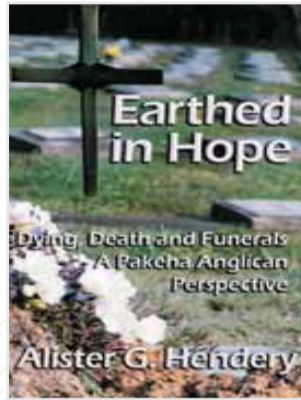
Alister Hendery remarks that over the past four decades funeral practices in New Zealand have undergone sweeping changes. Celebrants who are not clergy conduct well over half Pakeha funerals and offer a highly personalised, life-centred alternative to churches.

Although the church is no longer the chief provider of funeral ceremonies, Christian faith has a realistic approach to death and grief that is grounded in undying hope in God.

Writing from an Pakeha Anglican perspective, Hendery addresses significant issues of Christian faith and practice and touches on matters relevant to all who exercise funeral ministry.

A funeral marks the ending of a human life and, as Hendery points out, people today have a wide choice in style and content of a funeral service.

When a minister of the church is requested to officiate it cannot be taken for granted that the community for this funeral either understands or accepts the Christian story.



Listening is a key part of the minister's preparation. It is also important for a minister to accept that profound feelings of the loss of a physical presence cannot be assuaged by religious formulae. Several places in the book the author stresses that whatever form a funeral takes, the most effective feature will be the embodiment of compassion by the minister. While those attending the funeral may forget what was said they will probably remember the attitude of the minister.

While a minister of the church is a spokesperson for the gospel, Hendery stresses this does not mean imposing on people. Ministers must be flexible and willing to offer guidance rather than ruling on matters such as choice of music and form of tribute.

Hendery expresses concern about the way euphemistic language may diminish the reality of someone's death. Too often a person passes away to become the deceased. Instead, the author prefers unambiguous language. His practice of

referring to someone who has died as 'the dead person' indicates both respect for the person and an acceptance of reality.

The idea of 'closure', as it is popularly termed, is addressed thoughtfully. Writing of the pastoral care of people who are grieving, Hendery suggests that while, over time, those who have been bereaved may become reconciled to their loss, this does not mean that closure is an appropriate end to the experience of grief.

Those who are left continue to relate to those who have died through memory and abiding influence.

For those concerned with funeral ministry there is much in this book that will repay careful reflection. This includes how God and Christian hope are presented, the avoidance of euphemisms and idealistic eulogies, ritual during and after the funeral, funerals following suicide, funerals of children and children at funerals.

Hendery writes, "We need to be able to look death in the face and be willing to wrestle with the theological, spiritual and emotional demands that this takes." Earthed in Hope offers significant help for those who are serious about doing this.

My Door is Always Open - A Conversation on Faith, Hope and the Church in a Time of Change

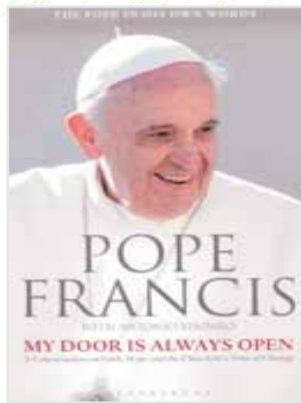
By Pope Francis with Antonio Spadaro
2014, Bloomsbury, 196 pages
Reviewer: Lynne Frith

I have not been in the habit of reading books by or about pontiffs. That is not to suggest that such writings are always unworthy of attention; simply, they have not been high priority on my reading list.

On 19 August 2013, Antonio Spadaro had an appointment with Pope Francis. One month later, that interview was published in La Civita Cattolica and 15 other Jesuit journals around the world. Fr Spadaro, by his own admission, did not anticipate the deluge of attention that resulted - more than 1000 communications from ordinary people from all parts of the world.

Consequently, he was encouraged to write a book about the interview, and this is that book. It is a sharing of experience, a 'behind the scenes' description of the interview, and a published form of the dialogue with Pope Francis.

Fr Spadaro says "Talking one to one with Pope Francis is a spiritual experience... You feel you're with a free man, a man with a freedom that is spiritual while also being fully involved in life, in its dynamics, in emotions. He is a resolute



man who is comfortable in his own skin." This sense of spiritual freedom and comfort with self, along with a deep connection with humanity is evident throughout the book.

The first chapter introduces the reader to Jorge Mario Bergoglio, why he became a Jesuit, the way he lives out his ministry and the spirituality that shapes it.

This is followed with the chapter Thinking about the Church, in which Pope Francis likens the church to a field hospital, an image which is recurrent throughout the interview.

In his words "what the church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful... It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds."

The reader is then invited to reflect on spirituality for our time in Chapter 3, creativity and human self-understanding in Chapter 4, and prayer in Chapter 5. Chapter

6 is devoted to a conversation about the religious life that Pope Francis held with his own order. It concludes with a reflection on the frontiers of mission, which, as he sees it, are marginalisation, education, and culture.

The narrative style of this book makes for easy reading, although I found it sometimes confusing as to whose voice I was reading - that of the Pope or the interviewer.

It provides some insight into the character and gifts of an already great religious leader who has stepped through the traditional constraints of the Papal Office, and who continues to demonstrate his deep humanity.

While I would personally wish for a more radical response to questions about such matters as the role of women in the church or same-gender marriage, nonetheless the attitudes of compassion and openness for which this Pope is known are evident.

This book is in itself an open door, a window into the person of this present Pontiff, who scorns bulletproof vehicles and goes out of his way to not cause work for the Vatican staff, who admires the art of Chagall and is fulfilled by Mozart, who watches movies and reads poetry.

I was moved, challenged, and inspired by this book, and return to it again and again.

Going Where the Need Is - The Story of Erica Brodie

By Anthony Dreaver
2014, Avion Press, 167 pages
Reviewer: John Meredith

In a world where people often seem preoccupied with personal advancement, Erica Brodie devoted her energy and talents to improving communal wellbeing.

The list of social and community organisations that she has served is extensive and many individuals and groups in New Zealand and around the world have benefited from her commitment and leadership.

Erica acknowledges the early influence of her family in setting her upon the pathway of compassion and public service. Beginning as a school teacher in Auckland, her volunteer work with the YWCA led to her being identified as a leader.

Helping women immigrants displaced from Europe settle into their new community fired her desire to work with the YWCA. She was appointed as Programme Secretary for the YWCA in Dunedin. This involved her directly in developing the skill and confidence of young women and contributed to her own growing vision of what the YWCA could do.

From Dunedin Erica moved to Whanganui where she



established a hostel for country girls coming to the city and expanded a range of classes, camps and clubs.

She also had opportunity to attend a three-month training course in Geneva that further enlarged her vision. On her return a part-time appointment as National Programme Advisor was added to her other duties.

After completing a professional social work training course, Erica was appointed general secretary of YWCA New Zealand. She was convinced that the way ahead was not just continuing what had always been done, but going where the need is.

She led the YWCA to respond to issues such as gender equality and employment for women, drug and alcohol abuse and the resettlement of migrants and refugees.

Eventually she was the first woman elected as president of the New Zealand Association of Social Workers and spokesperson and advocate on matters of social policy affecting the lives of all New Zealanders.

Erica attended a number of conferences and meetings overseas. This made her a well-known figure in the YWCA internationally and led to her appointment as programme secretary and then general secretary of the World YWCA, based in Geneva.

This allowed her to expand her special interest in training women for leadership. She also became a respected voice on matters of human rights and world peace.

After seven years in Geneva, Erica returned to Wellington. She was appointed Executive Officer and Manager of Wesley Social Services Trust Board where she made a particular contribution to the care of older people. When she retired she was appointed private secretary to the Minister establishing the new Ministry of Senior Citizens. She also served as a chaplains' assistant at Wellington Hospital.

This scarcely does justice to Erica's life of going where the need is. She was a thinker, a leader and a pioneer in new areas of service. Her story is one of compassionate insight, warm humanity and service freely and gladly given.

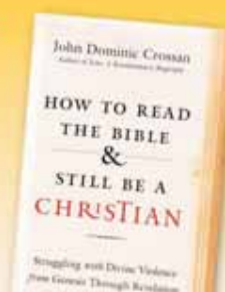
This is an inspiring story. It deserves to be known and read by everyone.



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Unsung Methodists

Rev Christopher Abernethy

Emma Louisa Moody-Bell - 1854-1931**ANOTHER WOMEN PATHFINDER
IN NEW ZEALAND METHODISM**

In her aptly entitled book *Out of the Silence*, Ruth Fry draws our attention to Sister Moody Bell, the first woman to be appointed to take charge of a Home Mission Station in New Zealand Methodism.

This claim is not entirely accurate since Amy Lill had been placed in charge of the Primitive Methodist Station at Inglewood in 1904. Nevertheless, Emma Louisa Moody-Bell was a pathfinder, and it would be good to know much more about her.

She had been born at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, the daughter of William Moody Bell, a surgical instrument maker. She is recorded in the 1881 Census as being involved in that same skilled trade.

The last two decades of the 19th century saw women becoming increasingly involved in public issues, and one area of particular interest was the temperance movement. Under leaders like Frances Willard and Mary Clement Leavitt of the USA the temperance movement had become a significant world force for social change.



Directors of Dunedin YWCA circa 1905, the time when Emma Moody Bell was secretary. Emma is probably the young woman standing to the right in the back row. Photo courtesy of Hocken Collections.

Emma Moody-Bell was an active worker in this cause when she came to New Zealand in July 1903. Her first years were spent in Dunedin, involved with the inter-denominational City Mission and the Young Women's Christian Association. Her roles in these organisations may be why she was

called 'Sister' - recognising that her work matched the 'Sisters of the Poor', the precursors of the deaconesses.

She very quickly became a leader in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and remained so until she returned to England.

She may have spent some time

in Nelson, because it was the Nelson District chairman, CH Garland, who overcame Connexional scruples in gaining approval to appoint her to Kumara as home missionary. That was typical of Garland, who was one of the more enlightened Methodist leaders.

Emma remained there for two years, and then went to Shannon in 1909. She then returned to WCTU leadership and was working in Invercargill from 1911 until about 1916, before she returned to the West Coast.

She had by then become a notable lecturer on a wide variety of topics, and seems to have travelled widely, talking on such subjects as the temperance theme *How to Fight the Devil*; *Love, Courtship and Marriage*; *Sweethearts*; and *The White Slave Traffic*.

Emma returned to England in 1920. Though she seems to have intended initially to return to this country, she did not do so. A newspaper article in 1922 reported that she had settled back at Cheltenham.

She became involved in the British Women's Temperance Association, the National Women's Council, and with prison reform - all the while keeping her hand in as a Methodist local preacher. 'Sister' Emma Moody-Bell deserves to be remembered as a pioneer.

When the Methodist Church shared its story at NZ's Centennial Exhibition**METHODIST ARCHIVES**

By Jo Smith, Methodist Church archivist

At the New Zealand Methodist Conference in February 1939, a resolution was passed to set up a committee to have stalls at the forthcoming New Zealand Centennial Exhibition.

The Centennial Exhibition covered 55 acres of land near Wellington's airport, and it was in place November, 1939 to May, 1940.

Rev Percy Paris was appointed chair of the Methodist Centennial Committee, Rev RB Gosnell the convenor, and the first organising committee meeting was held on 13 April 1939. The minute book for this committee is held in the Methodist Archives in Christchurch, along with two visitors' books.

Stallholders at the United Churches Court in Block 13, Building B, (the New Zealand Manufacturing Industries Court) included 19 religious bodies. The churches who did not join in the United Churches Court were the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, the Salvation

Army and the Catholic Church, who had their own stalls in Building E.

Sub-committees were formed to deal with finance, stalls, programme and buildings. A programme was developed where different departments of the Methodist Church took it in turns to promote their department. For example 11 December-30 December 1939 was allocated to Methodist orphanages, and the three weeks at the end of the Exhibition were the domain of the Youth Board.

The United Churches Court was set out in a number of stalls but the Methodist Centennial Committee decided to merge their three stalls into one large stall 21 ft x 10 ft. On the stall were displays and Methodist literature, overseen on a daily basis by volunteers from the Church. There was a film projector which showed silent films in the vicinity of the stall.

Sadly we have no photographs of the Methodist stall in the Methodist Archives. This may be because there were

official Exhibition photographers appointed. To use your own camera, you had to pay a fee of sixpence.

A sign "The Methodist Church of New Zealand" was painted in black and gold on a white background for the stall.

Rev Paris found the duties associated with organising the exhibition stall to be excessive, so he obtained leave from his circuit responsibilities. "Knowing that I have the full support of this committee and not only so but the authority of the whole Connexion in an endeavour to make the contribution of Methodism to the Centennial Exhibition, one worthy of our great and historic Church," he wrote.

To add to the organisational workload, war was declared in September 1939. This led the committee to cut back on some of their plans, at all times trying to keep the costs down. £500 had already been paid to the NZ Exhibition Company to rent the stall.

In addition to the displays,



The visitors' book and special brochure the Church prepared for the Centennial Exhibition.

the brochure *Methodist Cavalcade* was produced and 6000 copies were distributed at the Exhibition.

The New Zealand Centennial Exhibition opened on 8 November 1939 and closed on 4 May 1940. Daily attendance at the Exhibition could number up to 28,000 people. It cost adults one shilling and children sixpence per visit.

No figures were kept for how

many people visited the United Churches Court at the Exhibition but it is known that 3000 people attended screenings in the adjacent lecture hall of scriptural movies. The visitor's books at the Methodist stall were signed by 5833 people.

When the Centennial Committee reported back to the Methodist Conference in 1940, they declared that the Exhibition had been a success.



'O le fa'amoemoe ua taunu'u o le la'au lea o le ola'

Na fa'atumulia le maota tapua'i o le Matagaluega i Bainbridge Rotorua i le taeao le Aso Sa, 17 o Me i aiga, uo ma le Matagaluega e molimau le tu'ufa'atasia o le susuga i le ali'i faifeau ia Jeremia A Amituana'i ma le faletua ia Matila.

O lagona olioli ma le fiafia o lea aso, na maitauina i le lolofi atu o le au vala'aulia ma le Matagaluega ae maise o le aufaigaluega ma o latou faletua e fia auai i lea sauniga taua.

Sa ta'ita'i le Tausi Matagaluega ia Paulo Ieli i le sauniga, a o le susuga i le Tausi Itumalo ia Iakopo Fa'afuata sa saunoa i le

upu o le aso.

Ina ua mae'a le sauniga, alo loa i le taumafutaga sa tapenaina e paia i aigagalua, ma fa'aaloaloga masani o aso fa'apenei. O le fetalaiga ia Tiatia (malaga mai Samoa) sa fai ma sui o paia i aiga, a o le fetalaiga ia Vaimauga Unasa mai le Matagaluega i Papatoetoe na fa'aleoina le agaga fa'afetai o le aufaigaluega ma le au vala'aulia.

Alofagia e le Atua le ulugali'i fou ma lo latou aiga fau-fa'atasi ma le fanau ia Latu, Danielle ma Felecia ia iai pea le agalelei o le Atua i la'asaga ma fa'amoemoea uma o le lumana'i.



Susuga ia Jeremia ma lona faletua ia Matila ma le susuga ia Iakopo Fa'afuata.



Ulugali'i fou ma nisi o aiga sa auai i lo la aso fiafia.



Susuga i le ali'i faifeau ia Jeremia, faletua ia Matila ma nisi o aulotu i Rotorua.



Aiga fiafia ma le fanau ia Latu, Danielle ma Felicia.



O se va'aiga i le ulugali'i fou ina ua mae'a le sauniga.

Sagato Faranisisi o Asisi le tagata Fatupese

O fuaiupu faavae: Salamo 145 10,11: "Le Alii e, e vivii atu ia te oe mea uma na e faia; e faafetai atu foi ia te oe ou tagata amio Atua E tautalatala atu i latou i le mamalu o lou malo; ma ta'uta'u atu i lou mana" ua avea ma fa'avae o le pese na tusia e Sagato Faranisisi o Asisi, "All Creatures of Our God and King", ua avea ma faaaliga o le fia vivii o le 'Au Kerisiano i le Atua, ma toetoe lava a maua lenei pese i tusi pese a Ekalesia Kerisiano uma i le lalolagi.

Na uluai tusia lenei pese i le tausaga e 1225 ua silia i le 800 tausaga talu ai, a o le'i taitai ona o le Tala Lelei i Samoa, e se tasi o poutotoa o le Ekalesia Kerisiano, ma o se toa iloga o le Tala Lelei, a o le'i vaeluaina le Ekalesia Kerisiano, o Giovanni Bernardone, lea ua lauiloa e le Au Kerisiano ma le lalolagi i lona suafa o Sagato Faranisisi o Asisi, le igoa ua filifili nei i lenei tausaga e le ta'ita'i fou o le Ekalesia Katoliko Roma e fai ma ona suafa, o Pope Faranisisi.

O Faranisisi o se faifeau sa talitonu i le tatalo, ma ia sailiili i le finagalo o le Atua e ala lea i le tatalo. O se faifeau

monike sa fealuai i soo se nuu e fai ai ana sauniga faaevagelia, ma lauga ai ma fesoasoani i tagata matitiva o Italia.

Na fanau Sagato Faranisisi i Asisi i Italia i le tausaga e 1182. E le'i lelei le olaga o Faranisisi i uluai tausaga o lona ola lea sa avea ai o ia ma fitafita, peitai na suia ona uiga mai le itulau muamua a o faato'a 25 ona tausaga, ma ia filifili ai e auauna atu i le Atua, i lona faaa'oa'o lea i le soifuaga na soifua ai le Alii Faaola, i soo se mea na te fai.

E ui lava o le aiga na fanau mai ai Faranisisi o se aiga mau'oloa ma le maumea, ae na fultua iai Faranisisi i le 'oa ma le taumasuasua o le tamaoaiga a lona aiga, a ua filifili lava lona loto e ola ia Keriso.

Na ia fultua foi i lona tofi o le 'oa mai lona aiga, ae ia talia na o mea lava na te mana'omia e ola ai i aso taitasi.

Na ia tuuina atu 'ato'atoa lona soifua e fealuai ai e fai o ia ma sui o Keriso i lona nu'u ma nu'u tuaoi. Ina ua atoa le 28 o ona tausaga, ona ia fa'atuina ai lea o le Ituaiga ua ta'ua o le Franciscan Order of Friars, lea na mulimuli ane ua avea ma se tasi o

Ituaiga tele e auai ni alii se toatele, ma ni tamaitai, o e na talitonu i aoaoga a Faranisisi, ma latou faaaoao iai o latou foi soifuaga i aso taitasi.

Sa lauiloa Faranisisi i lona fiafia i le natura o mea, poo le siosiomaga o le laueleele ma le vanimonimo, ma ia iloa atu ai le 'a'ao mamana o le Atua i lana foafoaga. O se tasi o tatalo na tusia e Faranisisi a o talavou lava o ia, lea ua fai nei ma ta'iala i le ola o le toatele o tagata Kerisiano i le lalolagi, ma sii soo i sauniga a faifeau o le Tala Lelei ia Keriso. Tatou te iloa mai ai foi i lenei tatalo, le talitonu o Faranisisi i le mafutaga vavalalata ma le Atua, e ala i le tatalo. O le tatalo leni i le gagana Peretania:

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace, When there is hatred, let me sow love, Where there is injury, pardon, Where there is discord, unity. Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is error, truth.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is sadness, joy.

Where there is darkness, light.

O divine master, grant that I may not so

much seek to be consoled, as to console.

To be understood, as to understand.

To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving, that we receive.

It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned.

It is in dying, that we are born to eternal life. Amen

"All Creature of Our God and King" o se pese mai se tasi o tusitusiga a Faranisisi lea e ta'ua o le "Canticles of the Sun," faapea na tusia i le vevela o le taumafanafana o le tausaga e 1225, a o toe tasi lea o tausaga ae maliu Faranisisi mai sona gasegase na tigaina ai o ia, i lea lava foi taimi ua tauau atu lava ina po atoatoa lana vaai. Sa matua faataua lava e Faranisisi viiga o le Atua i sauniga uma e faia, ma e sili atu i le 60 ni viiga na ia tusia mo le monasari sa nofo ai.

Na ia talitonu, o viiga, poo pese, o se vaega matua taua lava lea o le tapuaiga i le Atua.

Ias vi'ia le Atua i le soifua o leni auuuna, ma ia avea le Sinoti Samoa e atagia ai le Mamalu o le Atua e ala i ana tapuaiga.

Soifua-Paulo Ieli

NA YALO TABU NA ICEGU-BULA NI VEIKA BULA KECEGA

Rev Dr Ilaitia Tuwere

Eda mai vakananuma ena siga Lotulevu nai ka 14 ni siga ni vula o Me na Nona 'kau cake' (Ascension) se lesu tale ki cake vei Tamana na Kalou ko Jisu Karisito, ni mai qarava oti na Nona itavi eke e vuravura. Oqori ni mai oti tale e 40 na siga/bogi na nona tiko voli e vuravura na Gone Turaga, ni tucake cake oti mai na Mate.

Tarava sara yani na kena sovaraki na Yalo Tabu, ka golevi ena Siga Tabu sa oti, nai ka 24 Me na kena lotu. Meda kila talega na i ka 24 ni Me 1738 e Siga ni Sucu ni noda lotu na Lotu Wesele e vuravura taucoko.

Au vinakata meda goleva vakabibi na Yalo ni Kalou na Yalo Tabu ena ivaqa vakayalo oqo. Meda raica totolo mada yani na veivola ka koto ena "Lectinary" me baleta na Siga Tabu nai ka 17 ni siga ni vula ko Me. Volavola tiko o Luke ena ivola ni nodratou Cakacaka na i Apositolo ka dolava na nona ivola ena vosa "I Ceofilo"... Vei ira kecega era nona itokani na Kalou, se vei ira kecega era lomana na Kalou..." ena gauna se vanua cava ga era bula kina.

Vosa vei ira era soqoni ena siga oya na Turaga...wili kina o iratou na tisaipeli lewe 11...ni mai yali o Jutasa Isikarioti...o koya ka soli koya yani vei ira na nona meca... Oti, 'kau cake' na Gone Turaga. "... ni ra sa vakaraica tiko na nona kau cake, sa dua na o sa tabonaki koya mai na matadra...Ia ni ra sa rai matua ki lomalagi, ni sa lako yani ko koya, sa lewe rua na tamata sa tu voleka vei ira e rau vakaisulu vulavula. A rau sa kaya: Oi kemudou na kai Kaleli, dou sa tu ka rai matua ki lomalagi ena vuku ni cava? Ko Jisu oqo o koya sa kau tani cake vei kemudou ki lomalagi, ena lako tale mai vaka kina me vaka dou sa raici koya ni sa lako ki lomalagi".

Oti, era mai gole lesu yani ki Jerusalem. Vosa vei iratou na tisaipeli ko Pita me baleti Jutasa...Sa vakayacori na vosa ni Yalo Tabu vei Tevita na Tui na ka ka yaco oqo vei Jutasa Isikarioti. Era vakawiri madigi ka golevi Mataiasi na madigi me sosomitaki Jutasa Isikarioti.

Same 1:1-6...sa cavuta vinaka ni sa dodonu me levu na noda dau vakavinavinaka vua na Kalou na Tamada. "Sa kalougata na tamata sa sega ni muria tiko na nodra ivakavuvuli na tamata ca, se tu ena nodra sala na ivalavala ca...ena tautauvata kei na kau sa tei ena bati ni uciwai. Sa vuataka na vuana ena kena gauna. A drauna talega ena sega ni malai. Ia, na ka kecega sa cakava ko koya ena yaco..."



Ilaitia Tuwere

Ena 1 Joni 5 - sa vakabibitaki kina na noda sema vinaka vei Jisu Karisito na Luvena na Kalou. "Oqo ga na itukutuku ni sa solia vei keda na Kalou na bula tawa mudu, ia na bula oqo sa tu vua na Luvena. O koya sa tu vua na Luvena, sa tu vei koya na bula; o koya sa sega ni tu vua na Luve ni Kalou, sa sega ni tu vua na bula" (11-12).

Ena Joni 17 - sa koto kina na nona qaqa ni masu na Gone Turaga ko Jisu Karisito vua na Kalou na Tamana, ni mai qarava oti na nona itavi ka talai mai kina. Ia, e se bera ni gole yani me sotava na veivakararawataki kei na mate mai Kalivari. O Joni duadua vei iratou na kosipeli e maroroya na masu oqo.

Sa cavuti vinaka kina na nodrau veivolekati sara na veitamani ena loma ni Vuvale Levu mai lomalagi. Eso na vosa ka vakayagataki eke e rogoci vinaka kina na veivolekati oqo vakatama:

Sa tacake ki lomalagi ko Jisu ka kaya: "I Tamaqu, sa yaco mai na gauna: Vakarakorokotaka na Luvemu, me vakarakorokotaki kemuni talega na Luvemu..." Rogoci vakavica vata na kaci ni Turaga - "I Tamaqu" ena qaqa ni masu oqo... "Sa nomuni na noqu ka kece, sa noqu na nomuni ka kece..." (tikina 10). Na nona sega vakadua ni guilecavi iratou na tisaipeli...kei ira kecega era vakabauti Koya ka muri Koya e vuravura na Gone Turaga - "Tamaqu yalo dodonu, maroroi ira ena yacamuni, ko ira koni a solia mai vei au, mera duabau ga me vakataki kedaru. Niu a tiko vata kei ira e vuravura, au a dau maroroi ira ena yacamuni, ko ira koni a solia mai vei au kau sa maroroya, sa sega ni yali edua vei ira, ko koya ga sa dodonu me rusa me vakayacori kina na i Vola Tabu' (tikina 11-13).

Sa yavutaki ena noda vakabauta ka tusanaka ni Kalou e "duabau" ia e sereki na 'duabau' oqo ena sala e tolu: Kalou na Tamana, Kalou na Luvena kei na Kalou na Yalo Tabu.

Duidui kina na Lotu Vakarisito mai na vakabauta vakalotu tale eso sa tu edaidai e vuravura. Eda cavuta vata kece ni sa "dua ga" na Kalou. Ia, na kena sereki se vakamacalataki na 'dua' oqo eda duidui sara kina vakalevu. Na noda Vakabauta na Lotu Vakarisito e sereki, vakamacalataki, ka bulataki ena nodratou cakacaka-vata na Kalou na Tama, Kalou na Luvena, kei na Kalou na Yalo Tabu...Trinitarian Faith. Na vanua e raici kina edua vei iratou, eratou tiko taucoko kina... Ena nona bulia na Kalou na vuravura mai na i vakatekivu...eratou tiko taucoko kina... Ena nona yaco me tamata na Kalou ena vuku ni Luvena ko Jisu Karisito, eratou tiko taucoko kina...Mai Peceliema me yaco ki Kalivari, eratou tiko taucoko kina... Nona lesu cake vei Tamana na Karisito ena siga oya ka soli mai na Yalo Tabu...eratou tiko taucoko kina.

Ena rarama ni noda raica na i Vola Tabu, sa raici kina na vuravura eda tiko vakalekaleka kina qo ni vaka edua na loma ni vale. Eda lewe taucoko ni vuvale oqo. Sa kena iliuliu ga na Kalou na Tamada...kena kena sala kei na kena katuba ko Jisu Karisito. Kena iCegu-Bula na Kalou na Yalo Tabu.

E vica na iyaloalo me baleta na Yalo Tabu e boroya vei keda na i Vola Tabu sa dodonu meda maroroya: Yalo Tabu sa vaka na Cagi. Cagi eda ceguva ena veisiga. Segga ni dua e segga ni votai ena isolisoli oqo. Eda votai kece na tamata - kei na veika bula kecega, e wai...e vanua talega.

Ena vuku ni ka oqo, eda sa wili kina meda lewe ni dua ga na vuvale - keda na tamata kei na veika bula talega. Eda ceguva na tamata na oxygen ka solia tani yani na carbondioxide. Eda veisolisoli kina kei na kau kei na veika bula kecega. "I Jiova, sa ka levu vakaidina na nomuni cakacaka! Ka sa caka vakavuku kecega. Sa roboti vuravura na nomuni iyau. Sa vaka kina na wasawasa levu oqo sa rabailevu. Sa bula voli kina na ka e segga ni wili rawa, na ka lalai kei na ka lelevu...Era sa vakanamata vei kemuni na ka kecega oqori, moni solia na kedra ena kena gauna. A ka koni sa solia vei ira era sa rawata. O ni sa dedeka na ligamuni, ka ra sa mamau ena ka vinaka. O ni sa vunia na matamuni, era sa qai leqa. O ni sa kauta tani na nodra icegu, era sa qai mate. Ka ra lesu tale me kuvu ni soso. O ni sa tala yani na Yalomuni, era sa buli; Io koni sa vakavoutaka tale na delai vuravura. Ena segga ni mudu rawa na lagilagi i Jiova...Mo vakavinavinaka vei Jiova, na yaloqu. Dou ia vei Jiova na vakavinavinaka," (Same 104: 24ff).

Noda ika, kau kei na manumanu mai Viti...me maroroi vinaka. Eda sa lewe ni duaga na vuvale ka kena iliuliu na Kalou...kena iCegu-Bula na yalo ni Kalou na Yalo Tabu. Na veisau ni draki (climate change) sa tarai keda mai ni da vakawaletaka na Yalo Tabu kei na nona cakacaka.

Yalo Tabu sa ikoya na Yalo ka bula ka cakacaka voli kina na Gone Turaga ko Jisu ena nona bula vaka-tamata e vuravura. Nona yaco me tamata na Kalou ena vuku ni Luvena ko Jisu Karisito (Incarnation) sa kovuta edua na iwase levu ni noda Vakabauta na Lotu Vakarisito. Meda taura vakabibi ka kakua ni vakawaletaka. Noda bula vata vakaveiwekani...noda vanua...kororo...itovo vakavanua...vosa...vuvale. Veika kece oqo e curuma, vakavoutaka, tuvalaka vou na Turaga me kune kina na Bula. "Au sa lako mai me rawa vei kemudou na bula, io me rawa vakalevu sara".

Meda veiqaravi ka kakua ni vuturi se gu ce kina... "A ka kecega sa vakaitavi kina na ligamu, mo kitaka ga ena nomu igu; ni sa segga na cakacaka, se na vakasama, se na kilaka, se na vuku, ena ibulubulu, o koya ko sa lako tiko kina" (Dauvunau 9: 10). Na Yalo Tabu sa iKoya na Kalou vakataki Koya ena nona itutu vakatina. Domo ni tina oqo e rogo ena i Vakatekivu: "Tou ia, tou bulia na tamata me itovo vata kei kedatou, ka uci kedatou..." Rogo matata koto kina na domo ni 'veiwekani'...Tou (plural) segga ni nanumi koya tikoga vaka ikoya. Segga!

Na domo vaka-tina oqo ni Kalou e veisusugi...veituberi...vukea na leqa...Voqa koto kina na domo eda rogoca ena macawa sa oti yani oya ena Siga Tabu nodra na Tina: "Au na laivi iko vakaavei Ifereimi? Au na soli iko yani vakaavei Isireli...Au na segga ni vakayacora na noqu cudru katakata. Au na segga ni lesu tale meu vakarusai Ifereimi: niu sa Kalou, kau segga ni tamata. Sai au na Yalo Savasava..." (Osea 11: 8ff).

Kaya ko Paula na i Apositolo: "Ia na vua ni Yalo Tabu na loloma, na reki, na vakacegu, na vosota vakadede, na yalo malua, na yalo loloma, na vakabauta, na yalo malumalumu, na ivalavala malua. Sa segga na vunau sa cudruvi kina na veika oqo...Kevaka eda sa bula ena Yalo Tabu, tou lako voli talega ena Yalo Tabu. Meda kakua ni gadreva meda dokai walega, se veicudruvi, se veivuvutaki" (Kalatia 5: 22ff.).

Ko e Mahu'inga 'o e Famili

'Oku hoko 'a e mahina ko Me ke fakamanatu ai 'a e mahu'inga 'o e famili. 'Oku kamata'aki pe 'a e fanau 'i he katoanga faka-Me. Pea hoko ai 'a e Sapate Fa'e pea mulituku'aki 'a e Sapate 'o e ngaahi Tamai. Ko e ni'ihini eni 'o e ngaahi 'ata kuo lava 'o tanaki mai ki he ngaahi Sapate mahu'inga ni.



Kofa e kau 'apitanga 'a Pukekohe.



Ko e famili 'o e Faifekau Pule Vahenga Ngaue Saione Papatoetoe, Faifekau 'Ikilifi Pope.



Ko e famili lauhingoa 'i he Sapate Faka-Me (Vahenga Ngaue Saione Papatoetoe).



Ko e Palesitini Malolo Rev Dr 'Alifaleti M Mone pea mo e Faifekau Pule 'o Kosipeli Rev Kepu Moa pea mo Maa'imoa Moa pea mo e to'utupu 'a e Kainga lotu Vahenga Ngaue Kosipeli, Christchurch.



Ko e 'ata mei he Fakame 'a Levin.



Ko e failautohi ko Ha'angata Kuli (teunga 'uli) pea mo e fanau lautohi ko Teuhiva jr, Kolonioni mo 'Eva.



Ko Siale Pani (taupotu ki to'ohema) 'oku ne taki'i e hiva fakatata 'enau kalasi. Papatoetoe Saione.

BATTLE FOR THE TRUTH III

"IF YOU OBEY MY TEACHINGS, YOU ARE TRULY MY DISCIPLES. YOU WILL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE"
JOHN 8:31-32

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Ko e fakamanatu atu pe 'etau Vahefonua hoko, 'e fai ia 'I Siulai 'aho Falaite 31 ki he 'aho Sapate 'aho 2 'o 'Aokosi. 'Oku kamata 'ehe kau faifekau 'a e fakataha kuata he pongipongi Falaite

FANONGONONGO MA'AE KAU SETUATA MO E TOKONI SETUATA PEA MO HONAU NGAAHI HOA

'Oku fai e kemi ma'ae kau setuata mo honau tokoni pea mo e ngaahi hoa ki Camp Morley, Clarkes Beach. Ko e kemi kumi ivi eni ma'ae kau setuata mo e hoa kau setuata. 'Oku fakahoko 'eni ki he efiafi 'aho Falaite 14 'o 'Aokosi ki he Sapate 'aho 16 'o Aokosi 2015. Mo u kataki toki fetu'utaki mai ki he 027 6767053 'o fakapapau'i mai teke kau mai kiai pe ko e talakai@xtra.co.nz.

Malo 'aupito.

