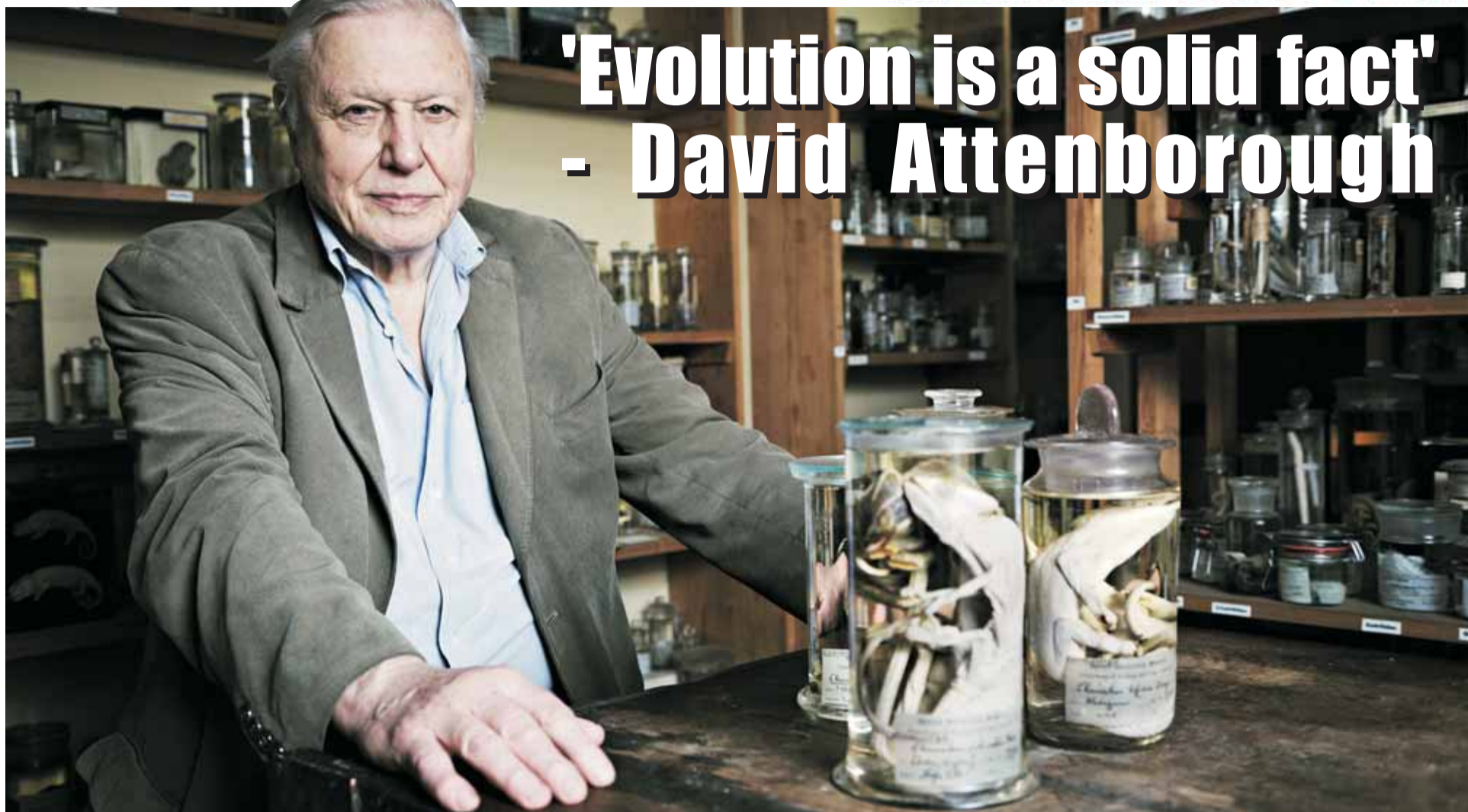


TOUCHSTONE

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



'Evolution is a solid fact' - David Attenborough

David Attenborough says evolution is a fact but it does not preclude the existence of God.

With his passion for wildlife and handy film crews, legendary broadcaster and prominent naturalist Sir David Attenborough has guided audiences around the world through the earth's living wonders for more than half a century.

In an interview with Touchstone, Sir David says his past opinions on the origins of our world have been much discussed within Christian communities.

Despite describing himself in 2012 as an agnostic, the 88-year old wildlife expert feels that a belief in God and belief in evolution are not mutually exclusive. But he is adamant that, "Evolution is as solid a historical fact as you could conceive."

His latest television series 'Natural Curiosities' draws on the idiosyncrasies and delights of our planet's species and the shared traits between them.

Scientific advances can aid our understanding on the planet, he says.

"Science is proceeding at an extraordinary pace. When I was at university, nobody believed that continents drifted around the surface of the earth. Now that's not only accepted but the absolute basis for understanding volcanoes and tsunamis. You can't make sense of the world now without knowing that sort of thing."

Modern advances have led to significant discoveries within just one lifetime.

"We didn't know about DNA when I was an undergraduate. Now these discoveries are going on all the time. There's a realization that genetics, which I was taught when I was at school, is now only part of the story."

"There is a science called epigenetics which explains how, in fact, characteristics can become involved with genes, which was heresy when I was a student."

The engaging presenter turns to metaphor to help make his point.

"Things are changing fast, which is of course very exciting. I mean, if you felt the story of life is all there in a book and you've read to chapter 25 and you've learnt

it, how boring that would be? You might have read to chapter 25 by the time you're 17 and think, what am I going to do with the rest of my life? But it's not like that, it's continuous discovery, and an exciting revelation."

While Sir David suggests that faith and belief in evolution can co-exist, he struggles to reconcile his ideas with those of strict anti-evolutionists.

"I find it incomprehensible that people won't look at evidence," he says. "The whole issue is: Do you believe what is written in the Book about what is out there or do you believe the evidence of what is out there?"

"It's no good me arguing with somebody who is a fundamentalist Christian, and who believes Eve, the first woman, was formed from the rib of Adam, the first man, by God. If you believe what is said in the Bible is literally true, there's nothing I can say - nor anybody else - because you'll say 'No, it's not true, because that's what it says in the Holy Bible and that's true'."

He says the people who wrote Genesis were writing down the myth that their

community held about the creation of humanity. But there are a lot of other myths about creation.

"There's another in Thailand, where some people believe that the first human beings were curdled from milk by pulling a python through it. How do you know which of those is true? You just say, 'I believe the one that my parents told me.'"

In his time, Sir David has brought viewers face to face with gorillas, greenfly and all that comes between.

He treats all animals with deserved reverence, and laments that some renowned species are no longer upon this planet.

"I would have liked to have seen the marsupial wolf. I'd have liked to have seen the dodo but that's almost sentiment. That's just me being inquisitive."

Happily, Sir David will forever be curious about the world we live in, and all creatures great and small.

"I'm delighted that, despite my advancing years, I'm still being entrusted to convey the majesty of nature to a watching public," he says.

INSIDE

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It's time to celebrate with your neighbours

Do you know there are more than 100 ways to say hello to your neighbours in New Zealand?

Kia ora, Goeie More, Malo e leilei, Namoshkar, Ni hao, Sai tahay, Talofa, Bog, G'day, Jambo, Apa khabar, Chao, Nameste, Ahoj, Oy, Dydd da, Merhaba, Halo and sign language are just some of the options you could choose.

Neighbours Day Aotearoa 2015 runs over the weekend of 28-29 March. It is your chance to put some of these greetings into practice and connect with the people that live behind, beside, in front and across the road from you.

The annual celebration of neighbourliness, which began in Auckland in 2009 and has run nationally since 2011, has its origins in Methodism. It arose from a community development partnership between Takapuna Methodist Church and Lifewise/Methodist Mission Northern.

For 2015 a new website has just been launched with lots of resources to download and opportunities to share your ideas and stories.

Methodism Mission Northern and Lifewise executive director Rev John Murray says the weekend is a chance for people to get to know their neighbours,

if they don't already, and to grow local connections with the people who live around them.

"Neighbours Day Aotearoa is not about big events. It's about everyday Kiwis, reaching over their fence and engaging with their neighbours. There are a lot of inspirational stories and ideas on the website to get people thinking and acting," John says.

"It could be as simple as waving and saying hello to neighbours you don't know, sharing a cuppa or asking your neighbour if they need a hand with anything. Or it could be something as big as putting on a street party or BBQ."

In past years churches have used Neighbours Day as a way to support their local community, with ongoing community projects often having their beginnings in the connections created through Neighbours Day.

John says he would love Kiwis to show a little neighbourliness this Neighbours Day - by going to the website www.neighboursday.org.nz, signing up and then downloading the ideas and tools they think would work best in their street.

If you have a great neighbourly story, Neighbours Day Aotearoa would love to hear from you. Simply email kiaora@neighboursday.org.nz.

New support service gets people the help they need

By Hilaire Campbell

If you can't get a benefit or you're about to be evicted from your home, help is at hand.

Methodist Mission Southern found that many people who are stressed and under pressure are falling into the red tape that bedevils welfare entitlements. To help, it set up Independent Advocacy Service (IAS).

Mission director Laura Black says IAS deals with entitlements administered by "a whole bunch of agencies" including Work and Income, Housing NZ, ACC, the DHB and Inland Revenue. It receives requests for its specialist service from other groups such as CCS, Catholic Social Services, nurses, rural resource centres, and Presbyterian Support.

"Many vulnerable people are living well below the poverty line and our job is to ensure that they receive the assistance they're entitled to. That's what an entitlement is," Laura says.

While most support services deal directly with the client, IAS deals almost exclusively with the agencies themselves.

"Rules and regulations are constantly changing and busy social workers, mental health support workers and public health



Independent Advocacy Service coordinator CJ Smith.

nurses struggle to keep track of them. We are specialists in this area so we can help speed things up."

Laura says CJ Smith is IAS coordinator. "She's a lovely lady who is solely responsible for keeping our own and other agencies' social workers informed."

More than half of enquiries to IAS relate to Work and Income entitlements. New rules mean staff don't have to tell clients what they're entitled to unless they ask. Even if they fit all the criteria, entitlement to a benefit is not automatic.

"Fortunately we've got a good relationship with local Work and Income staff, who are very supportive of our work and will help in any way they can. "CJ has direct dial phone numbers for many of the staff, which means we don't have to go through the 0800 number every time we need to untangle a problem."

A quarter of IAS enquiries relate to problems getting or keeping housing. They include a client who wasn't eligible for the Women's Refuge safe house but who didn't feel safe at the night shelter, and a disabled Housing

NZ tenant without a case manager.

Enquiries also come from men out of work who have shared custody of children but can't get a sole parent benefit because only one parent is eligible.

To add to their difficulties, many people IAS deals with don't have a computer, and when they're referred online from a call centre after hours of waiting, they give up.

"What these people need is a dedicated support person to follow their issue through," says Laura.

Because IAS deals with complex issues it has to have paid staff, and Laura says funding is its biggest hurdle.

"If it wasn't for our three main funders - the Dunedin City Council, the Mercy Hospital Trust, and the Otago Community Trust - we wouldn't be here now. Even with their support, we're fighting hard to keep the service going."

IAS is only seven months old and already it's struggling to meet demand.

"We're pleased with the number of enquiries and positive feedback from clients," says Laura. "We're very keen to keep IAS going and we're constantly looking for new sources of funding."

Laura points out that while advocacy services are almost unheard of in this country they have been common in the UK for decades.

Laura says the Mission is very committed to pursuing a socially just and humane society, where everyone has a voice. "That's what drives us."

Methodist Mission Southern's website is www.dmm.org.nz and the Independent Advocacy Service has its own website www.toadvocate.org.nz.

ORAKEI METHODIST PARISH

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, REMUERA

*The parish seeks to appoint an organist.
Expressions of interest are welcome.*

Glenys Riggir • Tel: 09 524 5594 • email: abc.society@xtra.co.nz



Join Neighbours Day Aotearoa 2015

NZ's biggest celebration of neighbourliness!

- Over the weekend of 28-29 March 2015, thousands of Kiwis all over New Zealand will go one step further to get to know their neighbours.
- It's easy to get involved and the benefit is better neighbourhoods for us all.
- Social connection is good for our wellbeing.
- Connected neighbourhoods are stronger, safer neighbourhoods.

Visit our website: www.neighboursday.org.nz to find out how you can get involved



Methodist Trust Association

Results to 31 December 2014

	6 Mths to 30/6/14	12 Mths to 31/12/14
Income Fund	5.60%	5.53%
Growth and Income Fund	4.97%	4.39%

Income Distributions for the quarter totalled \$3,474,591

Contact email: info@methodist.org.nz

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

NZ's Fijian Methodists go from strength to strength

As the number of Fijians who make New Zealand their home grows, so too does the presence of the Methodist Church of New Zealand's Fijian synod - Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi.

Fijians are a small part of the Pacific population in this country but in the last decade the population has doubled. More than 15,000 Fijians now make Aotearoa their home, and because a significant number of these are churchgoers, the Methodist Church is looking to meet their needs.

Kula Bower is Wasewase ko Viti secretary and her husband Niko is Wesley Wellington Parish's lay representative for Wasewase ko Viti.

Kula was one of a number of young Fijians who came to NZ in the early 1980s.

"There's a huge difference between then and now," she says. "At that time our numbers were still small and we felt quite lost. Now we have a strong identity in public as well as in Church."

"The Methodist family is truly inspiring. We feel very accepted in our parish, and its leaders continue to help and advise us. What matters most is our Church, our culture and beliefs, and our language embodies these."

Niko says the news is good for Fijian speaking congregations in Aotearoa. "We've got strength in numbers and our young people want to belong. We just have to move with the times."

He says there has been a sharp increase in the numbers of Fijian individuals and families immigrating to NZ. Many are professionals in their 30s working in the telecommunications and

health areas.

"They'll keep coming," Niko says, "and if you add seasonal workers to that mix, our language and culture can only thrive."

Wasewase ko Viti has grown to such an extent that in 2016 it will split its Lower North Island and the South Island circuits in two.

Niko is also encouraged by the number of Fijian ministers in New Zealand. Rev Rupeni Balawa Delai is presbyter of Auckland Central's Fijian congregation. Rupeni is the fourth and most recent minister to be ordained in the Fijian Synod.

"The Synod's strategy five or 10 years ago was to double the number of Fijian ministers. We had two, now we've got four, so we're on the way. Our goal is 10 more before the end of the decade."

Wasewase ko Viti is still stuck on gender balance he says, "but we hope that will come."

The three Wasewase ko Viti circuits in Auckland include one Rotuman speaking congregation at Kingsland. The biggest groups are in Meadowlands and Papakura, with congregations of 200.

The other circuits are in Hamilton (Waikato-Waiariki Synod) and the Lower North Island from New Plymouth as far as Christchurch.

"Invercargill is also on our radar," Niko says.

There are also small congregations in Ashburton, Aoraki/Mt Cook, Northland, Whangarei and Gisborne.

Most Fijian Methodist congregations are in English speaking parishes.

Young people born in NZ



Members of the Wasewase Ko Viti kei Rotuma Women's District Committee



Wasewase ko Viti is pushing to make its services more attractive to its young people.

have only a smattering of Fijian language and feedback shows that the church environment is challenging for them.

Kula says Wasewase ko Viti has recently introduced language classes to help them. "We are also working closely with our young

people and children as part of the NZ Methodist Church's 10-year vision 'Let the Children Live'."

According to Niko, Wasewase ko Viti superintendent Rev Peni Tikoinaka also wants Fijian language services to be more colourful and relevant for young

people.

"Some hymns will be sung a cappella but we'll have more guitar and piano accompaniment. Before the service there will be skits, drama, and such. Our kids are our future so we must look after them."

Getting real to help young Tongans achieve

By Cory Miller

Pasifika communities are taking active responsibility for the future of their children's success in education.

The tutoring service Reality Services was established on the belief that Pasifika students will achieve on par with their peers given the right support from parents, families and communities.

Edwin Talakai is the director of Reality Services Limited (and also secretary of Methodist Church of NZ's Vahefonua Tonga).

He established the service four years ago when he was given the opportunity to work with the Ministry of Education.

"Our focus is on helping our young Pasifika learners participate, engage and achieve in education," he says.

Reality Services runs a range of after-school programmes for bilingual students aged 5 to 12. The programmes help students use their Tongan language and the wider Pasifika culture to raise their achievement.

It is funded through the Ministry of Education through its Achieving Through Pasifika Languages (ATPL) initiative.

Nearly 1,000 school-age children have free access to one of Reality Service's eight educational hubs across Auckland for two to three hours one day a week.

There they are given a half-hour Tongan language class and extra homework and study support. They can enjoy socialising with their peers and have some afternoon tea, which is very popular especially when it's pizza.

"We add Tongan language to the mainstream curriculum," Edwin says. "This helps the students maintain their identity,

language and culture. There is a strong emphasis on supporting students in the core subjects of reading, writing and maths.

"Once they are secure in their identities, languages and cultures they can contribute fully to New Zealand's social and economic well-being."

Throughout the year the children's progress is regularly monitored through their school reports to ensure their individual needs are being met by the extra teaching and learning offered by the registered teachers and mentors at the educational hub.

Edwin says the programme also takes into consideration the needs of the whole community - including younger and older siblings.

Reality Services holds tailored workshops to help parents understand the education system. NCEA ma le Pasifika workshops have been delivered through Reality Service's educational hubs.

These workshops are run by NZQA, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Pacific Peoples and CareersNZ.

Parents can also attend the hub so they can learn alongside their children about ways to better support their education.

Pre-school age children are offered a separate space within the education hub, where they can learn through reading, songs and playing together.

"The ATPL brings whole families into the education hubs," Edwin says.

"Parents report how their children's academic progress has improved. They are very proud to share the successes of their children when they get awards during end of the year prize givings. This motivates us and the teachers to provide support to gain



Reality Services provides after-school mentoring to 1000 students at eight 'hubs' around Auckland.

merit and reach higher achievements.

"We try to create a positive environment where students constantly strive to give their best. Once this is accomplished, eventually they will overcome their immediate problems and find they are ready for greater challenges."

Edwin cites Proverbs 4:13 "Always remember what you have learned. Your education is your life - guard it well."

Reality Services also provides a radio

programme on Planet FM104.6 tailored to young people. It is called 'Ui ki he To'utupu' or 'The Call to Our Youth', and it encourages young people to speak out or seek help when they need it.

Reality Services' hubs are held at community halls, church halls and schools in Kelston, Ponsonby, Mt Eden, Ellerslie, Mt Wellington, Otahuhu, Mangere, and Otara.

Immaculate but in this case inaccurate

To the editor,

Ken Maynard's article in the February Touchstone contained an interesting new departure.

He refers to the "Immaculate Conception" and then to the Virgin birth. This is correct as the two doctrines are different but I suspect many Touchstone readers will wonder what the Immaculate Conception is about.

The Immaculate Conception is a doctrine held by Roman Catholics that the Virgin Mary was conceived without the transmission of original sin

by virtue of the son she would later give birth to.

It became formal Catholic doctrine in 1854. It has never been a doctrine held by the Protestant churches and is problematic in a number of ways in how it presents sin and its transmission through conception.

In presenting it as a necessary core of authentic Christian faith Ken is doing something at variance with the historic witness of both Protestantism in general and our own Methodist tradition.

David Poultney, Nelson

An open letter to Parliament

We strongly oppose the commitment of any military support by the New Zealand government to the war in Iraq and Syria, and are appalled by the Prime Minister's use of the Gallipoli anniversary as a mantle to cloak a new deployment of combat troops to the Middle East.

The further involvement of Western armed forces in the Middle East will bring more violence, killing and hardship to the peoples there. Military trainers will add nothing of value to peace processes in the region.

Any solution to this crisis must come from the people of Iraq and Syria, with diplomatic support from the international community. As the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq and others have stated, comprehensive solutions will only come about through an inclusive political process.

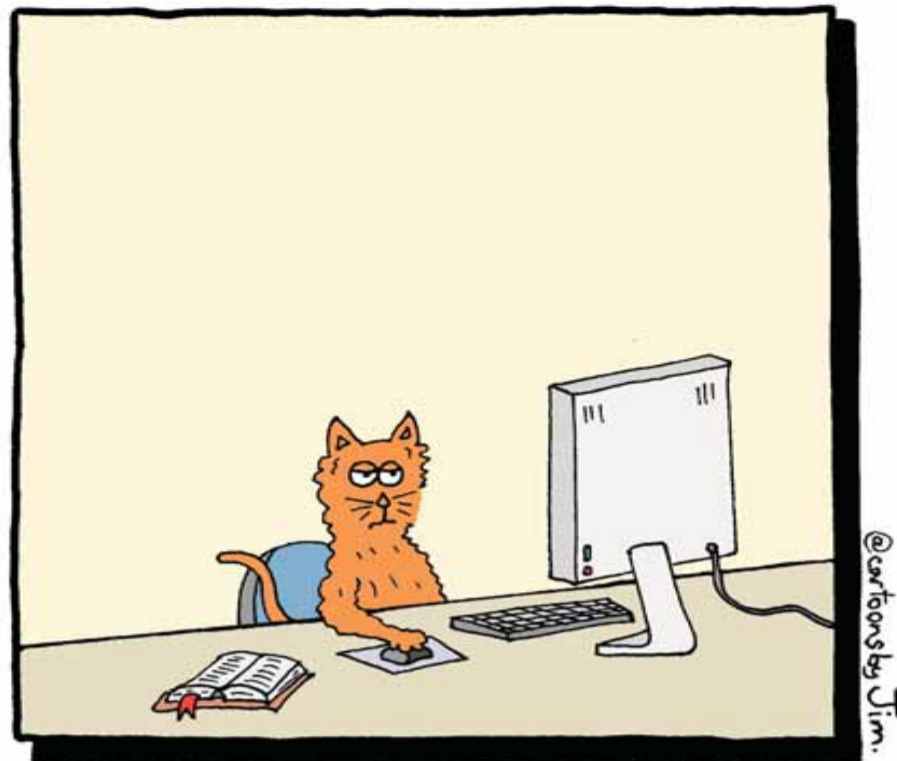
The Prime Minister's assertion that the deployment of combat troops to Iraq is the price of membership in the exclusive Five Eyes "club" implicates New Zealand in atrocities and human rights violations committed by any of the states involved.

This diminishes rather than enhances our security, and will make it more difficult to be an independent honest broker on the Security Council. Such a "club" is completely at odds with the government's stated commitment to an international order based on respect for human rights.

If endless overseas military deployments are the price of membership of the Five Eyes "club", which in any event is New Zealand's most significant contribution to US and UK-led military interventions in other countries via the Waihopai Spy Base, then it is clearly not in our best interests and New Zealand must withdraw from it.

We call on the government to make a positive contribution to peace in Iraq and Syria by providing non-military humanitarian aid to intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations working in the region; and by increasing support for diplomatic processes to bring about comprehensive and long term solutions to the crises in Iraq and Syria.

Peace Movement Aotearoa



Without the convenience and flexibility that online theological education afforded, Tiddles may never have managed to complete his Doctorate in Divinity.

FROM THE BACKYARD

Become like children?

Gillian Watkin

There was a scratching at the screen door and outside was the little boy who was staying with his grandma next door. "I got a toy gun for Christmas and I've lost a bullet," he said.

"Oh," I replied, realising that this was not a time to moralise about war toys. "Where did you lose it?" "I shot it and it went over the fence."

"What were you shooting at?" I asked to determine where it might be. "At the walnut tree. There were birds in it but they all flew over to your place. The bullet is big and yellow." "Well, you know where to look." "But I need you," he said.

By the time I got my shoes he was still upset that he couldn't find it. I walked up and down looked at my feet and saw a 10cm purple and yellow fluoro coloured spongy bullet shape. "Is this it?" I asked. He jumped on it with delight and raced off.

Sometimes things happen. Events occur that cause you to stop and think. As I reflected on the bullet on my garden, it wasn't about children and guns. Like many other provincial places, guns are commonplace where we live.

On our first visit to Waikaremoana we met a hunter on a quadbike with gun slung over his back. We see the bird scarers riding shot guns in the vineyards. Gun shops are on the main street, not hidden in industrial areas. And in April the papers will have full page ads in preparation for duck hunting.

What really struck me was that he

looked and looked but did not see what I saw as obvious. It was a reminder to me that children are not little adults full of adult skills, such as perception and focus.

Much of what they discover comes as mystery. Concepts of time, movement and place are not developed. Children see the world so very differently to adults and I think we as community forget that.

We understand the importance of imagination but forget that imagination has its origin in things seen, heard and experienced. Children's memory banks are not developed.

What a stress we put on them when we expect them to have the perception of an adult with years of experience and memory. It was impossible for the young boy to track the trajectory of his bullet as an adult would do. His really big task had been to come and ask me if I could find it for him.

I wonder how many adults would ask so clearly - 'But I need you to help'.

"Let the little children come to me," said Jesus, "and do not impede them." Adults were bringing the children and the disciples were on crowd control.

Did you appreciate that this incident is placed in Matthew's gospel one chapter after Jesus saying "unless you change and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven,"?

BETSAN MARTIN, PUBLIC ISSUES NETWORK

How should we deal with housing pressures

A February Housing Summit for churches underlined the urgency of housing for the government, local councils and community organisations.

There are three government ministers with housing responsibilities - Paula Bennett for Social Housing, Bill English for Housing NZ, and Nick Smith for Building and Housing, as well as Environment. This cross-over has enabled Nick Smith to present the overhaul of the Resource Management Act as a solution to the housing crisis because it would remove barriers to consents. This suggests that changes are more in the interests of developers rather than a solution to affordable housing.

According to the Salvation Army 2015 State of the Nation report, Auckland has a shortfall of 4000 houses per year. If housing in Auckland was to keep pace with the population growth 11,200 new dwellings would be needed.

Christchurch is the other main pressure point. About 11,500 homes were destroyed by the earthquakes and consents for 10,500 new houses have been granted.

The supply is only part of the housing issue, however. Affordability is the nub for lower income people. An affordable ratio of housing costs-to-wages is considered to be 25 percent, or 1-to-4. But rent for a two bedroom house as a proportion of a service industry workers wage was at 65 percent in 2014.

Another issue is social housing, where social services are provided to support tenants. Social housing is of prime concern to churches, community organizations and social service agencies.

While much of the debate around social housing focuses on state housing, local councils are also in the business of providing social housing. Today some councils want to get out of this role.

In Hamilton churches joined together to try to stop the City Council from selling its pensioner

housing. The churches advocated for the Council to keep its role in social housing but the Council argued that the sale was justified by the cost of upgrades.

This is counter to the efforts of Christchurch City Council, which is improving its social housing. Elsewhere the Whakatane Council is doing the same as Hamilton, and Wellington has a social housing policy review coming up in March.

The National Government says social housing is uneconomic and that the demand for it is not being adequately met by Government agencies. Since last year the management of families and individuals who need social housing are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). MSD will handle income related rents and tenancies along with the management of benefits. MSD plans to support people to be independent of social housing and reduce the pressure on government to provide houses.

The housing reform proposals include the sale of up to 2000 State houses in 2014, and 8000 of the total of 68,000 State houses by 2017. This stock will be offered to the community housing sector and iwi.

Should New Zealand continue with public ownership of housing? Should new housing developers be required to provide social housing?

The churches in Hamilton argued to government should keep the responsibility for social housing. But some church agencies are keen to take up the role, or at least share it, and expand their work in housing provision.

The outcome of the Hamilton story is that the Council decided to sell its social housing, with proviso that pensioner tenants can stay for their life time, and that the purchaser must maintain social housing for 10 years. Rev Dr Susan Thompson's presentation on this case is on the Public Issues website.



President
Rev Tovia Aumua



Vice-President
Dr Arapera Ngaha

This month has been a busy time where we have been engaged in a number of induction services and services of beginnings.

We attended Wesley College's Service of Beginnings on January 30th where we welcomed new principal Steven Hargreaves and inducted Rev Ali'itasi Salesa as superintending chaplain to the Wesley College Parish.

That same evening we inducted Rev Suiva'aia Te'o to the superintendency position of Sinoti Samoa and two days later we inducted Rev Kathryn Walters into the role of superintendent, Central South Island Synod.

On Sunday February 8th we inducted Rev Tevita Finau to be superintendent of Vahefonua Tonga and were honoured to then dine with Her Majesty the Queen of Tonga.

Then, on Saturday February 14th we

A time to mark beginnings and renew covenants

conducted the induction service for the new superintendency team - Ron Malpass, Ian Harris and Rev David Harding - for the Lower North Island Synod, and the next day we led the service of beginnings for Trinity College.

Although a busy month, it has been rewarding to see the people moving into these leadership positions being well supported by their synods and parishes.

Covenants

At this time of the year covenants are uppermost in our minds, not only the covenants for each parish, synod and rohe, but also the covenant known as Te Tiriti or the Treaty.

For us this has included a visit to Ratana Pa for the annual celebrations of the Ratana Church. It is a time when they renew their covenant of faith.

We saw generational growth at Ratana Pa where a large number of family groups attended. We learned that many have attended year after year. Many were brought by their parents and grandparents and now some of them are grandparents bringing their mokopuna. It was indeed a truly whanau-oriented celebration.

Our visit to Waitangi on Waitangi Day

provided another opportunity to see those engaged with Tiriti/Treaty issues on that hallowed ground. We attended the 5:00 a.m. morning service where prayers were shared by the Prime Minister and leaders of the various political parties, church leaders, and members of the police and navy. President Tovia delivered the Old Testament reading.

At the 9:00 a.m. service we joined Tumuaki Rev Diana Tana in the ecumenical service led by the Anglican Bishop for Tai Tokerau, Bishop Kito Pikahu.

The address that day was given by Sir Eddie Durie, who spoke of how the gospel had been carried initially to the Manawatu region by Ngapuhi. He also noted how his research showed that Maori had sought out the CMS missionaries to learn about this new gospel and were not, he believed, colonised by the missionaries.

Having said that, Te Tiriti signed at Waitangi in 1840 was not a totally new idea, nor were Maori oblivious to its intent. But, we must remember that Maori agreed to Te Tiriti, the document they read and understood, not the Treaty which is held up as the founding document of this country.

TR3011

From February 4th to 12th, President Tovia joined staff and students on Trinity College's TR3011 course, which entails field trips to sites of historical importance to the Methodist Church throughout Te Tai Tokerau and further up the North Island.

The sites included were: Mangugu, Oihi Bay, Hokianga, Te Rerenga Wairua (Cape Reinga), St Mary's Church, Motuti, Kororareka (Russell), and Waitangi Treaty Grounds on Waitangi Day.

The trip was successful, productive, and inspirational. It was also challenging and provided new experiences not only for the students and staff who shared their personal reflection after each day's activities but also the presidential team. It was President Tovia's first visit to some of these sites which are significant in the life of Te Hahi Weteriana and other denominations.

It was also a huge privilege and honour for us to represent Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa at celebrations which included the first visit of any Governor General since 1840 to Mangugu Mission station.

Faithfulness - a reflection for Lent

By Laurie Michie

Chewing over a teaching from John's gospel the students mumbled. Then after a silence the lecturer uttered, 'Know the truth by doing the truth'.

Christianity is a way of living and dying, and the truth is the self-giving love. God so loves that God gives and gives again.

To Moses at the time of Israel's slavery in Egypt the Lord declared that he had come down to deliver them. Christians affirm that God entered into our human flesh in Jesus and that by his faithfulness to his Father he is God's true son.

But this was not without his humanity. By the completeness of his humanity the image of God is revealed to us in him. So we follow Jesus the leader and pioneer of our faith.

Lent is our opportunity to exercise the muscles of our faith. By doing this we may receive the gift of faithfulness from our gracious God.

Pondering gospel stories we see the trials of Jesus. Despised by community leaders, he is often misunderstood by his chosen disciples who ultimately desert him. Jesus died on a Roman cross, and only a small group of women remained to watch his crucifixion from afar.

These gospel stories hold the power to lead us to examine ourselves. As we are drawn into them, we enter into the shadows of his suffering and the blackness of his death, yet we may be enriched by the victory of God's love and the light of Easter.

However, God's people are summoned beyond Easter to share God's victory in new ways of living faithfulness.

Faithfulness is about growing on from our response of trusting faith in God to our acceptance of responsibility by sharing God's gracious work.

Should not our greatest desire on earth be that God lives in the flesh of his people here; that living by the Spirit of Jesus in community we each live as interconnected membranes of the body of Christ in the world?

An acid-test of faithfulness is whether we are moving on from the generalities of our faith to specific commitments in our respective communities. The Methodist Church of NZ has entered into a Let the Children Live programme. One place to begin could be by visiting the principal of a low decile school in your area to learn of the needs of that school's families and its staff.

Let's follow secular, democratic Jesus

By Bruce Tasker

In last month's Touchstone Ling Lawrence wrote in response to Ian Harris. I value Ian's explorations, scholarship and integrity.

I also value the life of John. He was, with Peter, a leader in the early church, and he gave his life insisting that his brother Jesus was not a deity. Fellow Christians killed John, preferring to keep the divinity aspect of paganism as their way of competing with other religions and marketing the new religion of Christianity. Jesus was betrayed again.

The changes to the life and teaching of Jesus that they made in hijacking his life and word show they were unwilling to let go of pagan supernaturalism or their culture of dualism. They brought them into Christianity in the first decades as gentiles joined in great numbers.

I've searched the Gospels for authentic and uncontaminated reporting on the behaviour and teaching of Jesus. The search led me to write out the gospels, eliminating parts that seemed to be inauthentic Jesus. These were interpretive add-ons, adjustments, or dualistic views (along the lines of Plato's definition of parallel universes) that followed the customs of pagan and gentile religions.

I was surprised to find that most of the Gospels remained intact without theism. Most telling were the parables. Without add-ons telling the reader what to think I could hear the real Jesus and found the grace that he had discovered that really motivated him.

I am not a theologian and constantly checked myself and my interpretations. I found that the

interactions of Jesus, whether religious or not, were not theistic. His use of 'Father' was not theistic but psychological and sociological.

Had they the scholarship in those days, they may not have made the mistake of interpreting Jesus through pagan eyes, the culture of dualism and defiance of natural law. It has been made theistic since they made 'Father' interchangeable with God, the monotheistic deity.

When that was done to Jesus' father (i.e., his internalised parent), it completely altered Jesus' teaching and took from it its secular emphasis.

Few, if any, of the aphorisms, quotes and teachings used by Jesus were theistic at his initiative. Other people used and introduced God and theistic ideas into the discussions, while Jesus kindly went along with the person's views, gently challenging them.

Check out the text and see if I'm right. Notice that the ring of truth doesn't seem present where a theistic view seems to be being presented by Jesus. It seems inauthentic, reading as though it is an interpretive add on. Or is it just my word against others?

What is significant about Jesus and his secular teaching was that to the Jews he was virtually a prophet of atheism. Realising this, many have concluded that Christianity is a lie and have dropped it. They have thrown out the baby with the bath water.

Jesus would not have gone to his death over that. He had in grace a much bigger motive. Don't give up on Jesus yet. He was a lord, an example of all that we can be - of our potential. He gave us a vision of humanity raised at its best, as he was.

The most important thing in the

world to Jesus was the community of grace which he called the kingdom of God that others in those days may understand him. He also called people to come into the life of 'best humanity' which he called the Son of Man (see the definition in Ezekiel, which is the way Jesus probably used the phrase).

Here is what made me so certain of Jesus' view. In The Temptations, Jesus utterly rejected the defiance of natural law, such as changing rocks to buns (which supernaturalists reinterpreted to suit their pagan personifications). Jesus utterly rejected interventionist superpowers, i.e., angels catching him as he jumped from the temple roof (which supernaturalists from pagan backgrounds wanted their hero to do).

Jesus warned his followers against false teaching and its seduction. While the authentic Jesus warned against these things, tradition has effectively silenced him by making his stories into supernatural events.

The third story in The Temptations had Jesus utterly rejecting political power without representation. He was a democrat who didn't use divinity to give himself power over people, even if it was for their salvation. Teachings otherwise were pagan adjustments, and there is no good reason to keep them going.

I'm inspired by this fellow Jesus and his vision, his grace, his way of 'best humanity' and the vital, loving relationship with our parent within. This is what flows in his spirit through the millennia into this secular age. Let's follow his remarkable non-theistic example.

HONEST TO GOD

The blessings of Easter

By Ian Harris

'Bless you!' we may say when somebody sneezes. 'Bless my soul!' comes across with a more religious flavour.

Prayers for 'the blessing of God almighty' even more so. Dickens's A Christmas Carol ends with Tiny Tim exclaiming 'God bless us, every one', while Americans sing 'God Bless America' with patriotic fervour.

Such a lot of blessing going on! So much benign intent! Scarcely anyone will link it back to the blood of sacrificial animals in ancient Israel, yet that is the context in which the English word was first used.

The origin of the word provides the clue. It comes from the Old English bletsian or bledsian, which in turn derive from blod, meaning blood. It meant to mark or consecrate with blood.

A prime example of the practice is the story in the book of Exodus where Moses ordered young men to sacrifice bulls on an altar he had built. Draining the blood into bowls, he threw half of

the blood on the altar. He then read out the laws God had given him and secured the promise of the people to obey them.

"Then," says Exodus, "Moses took the blood in the bowls and threw it on the people. He said: 'This is the blood that seals the covenant which the Lord made with you when he gave all these commands.'" In a word, he blessed them.

The blood of the covenant came to be a powerful symbol of the bond between God and his people. After Jesus' crucifixion, the early church took it up and gave it a startling new twist. Indeed, the ideas of blood, sacrifice and covenant interweave in traditional Christian interpretations of Easter.

The background is intriguing. In the ancient Jewish



understanding blood was symbolic of life itself. It was the seat of life's power. So to shed blood in ritual sacrifice was to offer the life of the bull, ram, goat or whatever to God in order to establish a right relationship with God the giver of life.

The sacrifices of Jewish ritual were many and varied, and were still being made in Jesus' day, by which time they had long been centred on the temple in Jerusalem.

It is hardly surprising, then, that Jesus' crucifixion resonated in the minds of his early followers with echoes from their religious heritage. As they tried to make sense of the crucifixion, viewing it inevitably through their Jewish lens, they found rich parallels in the old ideas of blood, sacrifice and covenant.

So Jesus became for them the

supreme sacrificial offering, the only one capable of overcoming the power of sin once and for all. The church said that by his death he established a new way of bonding with God - that is, he initiated a new covenant, sealed not with the blood of a sacrificial animal but with his own.

Another word for covenant is "testament", which explains why the Christian Bible is divided into the Jewish scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament centred on Jesus. This underlines again that for Jesus' followers, something new and exciting was happening.

It also illustrates how those early writers let their imaginations run freely and creatively as they drew on the old traditions. Gradually it all came together for them - so much so that they said from that point, no further sacrifice was required. Christ's was sufficient for all people and all time.

To modern sensibilities, images of blood are not uplifting. The idea of a loving God

demanding the sacrifice of countless animals to keep him on side, let alone a human sacrifice, would not pass any ethical or humanitarian test today.

This makes clear that the kind of God we create (or assent to) for ourselves is critical. At the very least, whatever we mean by 'God' should not be considered to be lacking in the best qualities we associate with humanity. New interpretations are not only possible, but necessary.

Perhaps the history of the word 'bless' gives a lead. Very early the focus shifted from the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifice to what was experienced as a result of the sacrifice: the putting right of the relationship between God and his people. In some contexts bless could mean 'praise', in others 'guard from evil'. To ask for a blessing was to seek divine favour and happiness.

So there is more to blessing than blood, and there is more to Easter than sacrifice. How much more will depend on the God we affirm.

Splice pitches in to celebrate Myers Park



Staff from the inner city mission initiative Splice helped organize the 100 year anniversary of Auckland's Myers Park.

In January 1915, Member of Parliament and past mayor of Auckland Arthur Myers donated enough money to the Auckland City Council to purchase a block of land running parallel to Queen Street for a park that would nurture and enhance the lives of children and families.

The area was largely derelict and run down, and thought to be the incubation grounds for the infectious disease that plagued the community. The six acres of land the Council purchased was the back yard of the city which included deposits of refuse from the growing city.

The creek that ran the length of the property was also a threat to the health and wellbeing of

locals, especially vulnerable children.

Within a year of the acquisition of the land, a substantial kindergarten had been built, and Arthur Myers' intention to ensure the wellbeing of children was well underway.

A century on, the residents of Auckland's city center, the Waitemata Local Board and Auckland Council recently gathered to celebrate the gift and the creation of Myers Park. On February the 15th, more than 2500 people flooded the park to celebrate its contribution to inner city life.

The past, present and future promise of the park was celebrated with something for everyone to enjoy.

On hand to help was Splice, a mission movement for change in the city backed by Methodist Mission Northern and the St. James Presbyterian congregation.

Over the 100 years of the park's life, churches and associated organizations of different persuasions have occupied its boundaries.

They include Methodist Church (Pitt Street), the Baptist Tabernacle, the Church of the Latter Day Saints, Methodist Mission Northern, the Salvation Army, YWCA, The Theosophical Society, the Sunday School Association (Union), the Mission of the Holy Shepard, the Mission to the Streets and Lanes and the Synagogue and Kadimah School.

In recent years, the reputation of the park as unsafe and home for undesirables has signaled a turning away from the concern and focused care that once characterized the institutions that bounded the park. The current Waitemata Local Board challenged the reputation of Myers Park and set out to refurbish and promote it as a community asset worthy of celebration and usefulness.

Today Methodist Mission Northern, Lifewise and Airedale Property Trust reside on the boundary of Myers Park. So it was fitting that a significant team of Splicers cooked food, played music and invited people to play chess and worked on 'connecting' people from the surrounding community in a fun day of celebration.

Sir Douglas Myers, grandson of the benefactor, participated in the celebration along with city dignitaries and residents alike.

A movement of people building community in Auckland's City Centre

We're making the city centre a place where community can flourish through relationships between residents, visitors, and anyone with a creative idea for what they want to see happening here for themselves and for others.

If you'd like to be a part of Splice check out what we're up to on [facebook.com/Splice2014](https://www.facebook.com/Splice2014). We're quickly becoming a platform for creative locals to see their dream projects through. If you'd like this to be you get in touch!

Splicers come in all shapes, sizes, orientations, abilities, backgrounds, faiths, and every other identity imaginable!

Sign up for our mailing list by sending your name in an email to info@splice.org.nz

Splice
Courage Compassion Community

Stopping suicide starts with family and friends

A young man was walking home from school with his arms full of books. When he accidentally dropped them, another student picked them up and offered to help him carry them home.

This simple act saved a life. The first student was carrying so much stuff because he had emptied out his locker as part of his intention to take his own life. The act of kindness he received created a friendship that turned his thoughts away from suicide.

Recognising the signs and reaching out through acts of kindness such as this or simply asking someone how they are can create connections that could help people through difficult times, says Opeta Amani.

Opeta presented a workshop on suicide prevention at Methodist Conference 2014. Opeta told Conference that people keep themselves safe when they have plenty of social connections that they can rely on in times of stress.

These connections link people with family, friends, churches and other community groups, and with public institutions such as schools.

Opeta is a practice leader with Child Youth and Family in Rotorua and has worked for more than a decade with at-risk youth. He is part of the Sinoti Samoa Social Issues team that presents anti-violence workshops to congregations throughout the country.

"We have been running

workshops to address family violence for many years. We have now added material on suicide prevention to raise awareness in our congregations about the problem," Opeta says.

"Suicidal behaviour may be the result of family abuse or violence but it can have other causes as well. It is important to recognise the signs and address them by putting connections in place that can give people a safety net."

Opeta says many families are reluctant or ashamed to talk about their problems and this can create obstacles to seeking help. This holds true for Pasifika families as well as for families from other cultures.

The Sinoti Samoa workshops address family violence and suicide prevention according to Samoan cultural perspectives. The workshops are delivered in the Samoan language and the breakout sessions include separate groups for men, women and young people.

The workshops teach people to recognise the signs and behaviour people who are thinking of self-harm display. They also provide information about where to get professional help.

"We try to make the workshops very sensitive and create an environment where people can talk. Some people have had recent experiences where they have lost loved ones or friends. Often they have not spoken about it before and they



Opeta Amani addressed Methodist Conference about building social ties to keep young people safe.

carry feelings of guilt.

"Because our workshops are run through the church, we can put the issue in the context of our Christian beliefs. Churches can play a very important role in building the connections and social relationships that can keep people safe."

Opeta says today social media can aggravate the problem of suicide among young people. Memorials posted on social media sites can give the impression that suicide is somehow legitimate and a way to gain attention.

Tributes must be sympathetic to the victim but not legitimise

the behaviour. Adults can play an important part in getting this message to young people.

In his presentation to Conference Opeta cited 1 John 3:16-18 to put the issue in a biblical context:

"Jesus Christ laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

What to watch out for

The actions of someone who may be suicidal can include:

- Giving away possessions;
- Withdrawal from family/whanau, friends, school, or work;
- Loss of interest in hobbies;
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs;
- Reckless behaviour;
- Deliberate self-harm;
- Problem gambling.

People may express feelings of desperation, anger, guilt, worthlessness, loneliness, sadness, or helplessness.

Physical changes can include:

- A lack of interest in appearance;
- Disturbed or excessive sleep;
- Change or loss of appetite, weight;
- Poor general health; or
- Unexplained injuries.

People may say things such as:

- "I won't be needing these things anymore";
- "No one can understand me";
- "I just can't keep my thoughts straight anymore";
- "I wish I were dead";
- "I am a burden";
- "All of my problems will end soon";
- "I have broken tapu".

(Source: the Lifeline ASIST programme).

For more information visit Lifeline at www.lifeline.org.nz or the National Suicide Prevention Information Service at www.spinz.org.nz.

Life Matters message to prevent suicide

Every week as many as 11 people die from suicide in New Zealand and individuals and congregations are urged to learn the signs that could help them prevent family members, friends or workmates take their own life.

A range of training groups and programmes are available to provide training and to support those who have lost loved ones through suicide.

While the problem is more common among young people in the 18 to 25 year range, it can strike anyone. In fact, the prevalence of suicide increases among males nearing the end of their lives.

Last year Rev Greg Hughson helped set up Life Matters Suicide Prevention Trust in Dunedin. Greg is chaplain at Otago University and he says the trust was set up in part as a response to two student deaths in March, 2013.

"All seven trustees of Life Matters have had experience of losing a friend or family member to suicide. We are all highly motivated to work for suicide prevention in our wider community and world," Greg says.

"More than 500 people take their own lives in New Zealand each year and but many thousands more attempt to do so with consequences so serious that they are hospitalised.

"Often these unfortunate tragedies are preventable and our Trust encourages public training in suicide protection.

Greg says suicide 'post-vention' is also very important.

"After a suicide, those close to the deceased are at increased risk, and strategies are available to support bereaved family and friends. It is very important that the funeral service not glorify the way in which the person has died so as to unintentionally give permission for others present to follow the same path."

There are a number of ways to learn how to recognise the signs of people in trouble and help prevent them hurting themselves. They include half-day workplace training programmes, on-line courses, and more intensive face-to-face workshops.

"Churches should consider organising or hosting a suicide prevention training programme. Congregations could also host a suicide bereavement support group, led by suitably trained people," Greg says.

Lifeline Aotearoa provides a number of educational programmes on suicide prevention, including SafeTALK and ASIST.

SafeTALK is a half-day presentation to make people more alert about suicide and recognise

the signs that someone may be at risk. Most people at risk of suicide signal their distress and invite help but it is often overlooked.

Along with helping people to not dismiss these signs, the SafeTALK course teaches people how to respond and how to get the person in danger in touch with those who can help.

ASIST is an interactive two-day course in which people work in small group with trainers.

The workshop teaches what a person at risk may need to keep safe and get help. The workshop also emphasises working closely with the person to increase their safety.

Greg has taken the ASIST course and says it is both intense and very helpful.

Question Persuade Refer (QPR) is an award winning programme that trains general public, health professionals and organisations how to reduce the risk of suicide. QPR courses are offered on-line or in person.

QPR teaches how to question someone about thoughts of suicide, and then to persuade them to accept a referral for help. Like first aid or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), this training can save lives by training all of us to know what to say and how to act when someone is at risk for



On Suicide Prevention Day (September 10th, 2014) Life Matters Trust led a service at St Paul's Cathedral in Dunedin. The 120 people who attended decorated a tree with memorial messages. The tree was planted in a Dunedin park, along with a plaque declaring that Every Life Matters.

suicide. See www.qpr.org.nz.

Skylight provide a wide range of helpful mental health, suicide prevention and support resources. See www.skylight.org.nz.

All District Health Boards have a suicide prevention officer, or other staff who can provide information and support.

In Dunedin Life Matters organises monthly public meetings. The meetings include a speaker, discussion and the opportunity to connect with people for ongoing support. See the LifeMattersOtago facebook page or www.lifematters.org.nz.

Seen by God, drawn to Jesus

A LENTEN REFLECTION BY
GREG HUGHSON

Sin is not a popular word. It can be defined as any wilful or deliberate violation or avoidance of a religious or moral principal, such as failing to love our neighbours as ourselves.

We are invited during Lent to turn from sin and allow ourselves to be made alive in Christ. To allow this process to happen is a spiritual response to God's great love for us, a love which we can discern in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of man was lifted up, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him," (John 3:14). And the Apostle Paul writes, "Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-it is by grace you have been saved," (Ephesians 2:4-5).

The Christian faith has at its heart a message of liberation from all that tends to hold us back from becoming the people God created us to be. The 10

Commandments continue to provide us with an ethical framework for our lives.

We are challenged first and foremost to honour God, and then to honour our parents. We are instructed not to murder, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness or desire what belongs to other people. These are sensible rules!

Responding only to rules however, is not the Christian way as Christians are participants with God in a new covenant. We are able to actually experience having God's law in our minds and written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33).

This new covenant, and experiential truth, is affirmed each year in our traditional Methodist Covenant service. Each and every day we respond to God's love in Christ, not any list of instructions.

"For God so loved the world that God gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life," (John 3:16).

The remedy to being enslaved to sin is to genuinely believe in and trust in Jesus,

and to allow his influence to mould us into people whom sin can no longer infect and destroy. God has forgiven us and will remember our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34).

The love of Christian people for Jesus enables us to "come into the light" so that it may be seen plainly that what we are doing is being lived out in the sight of God, and under the influence of God (John 3:21).

As Christians we can have a sense of being seen by God and held and nurtured in our faith by God. God's Spirit is at work not only in our individual lives but in the life of the whole Church (and beyond) to ultimately bring healing and restoration to the world God loves, and to the whole of Creation.

This process is agonisingly slow and inevitably involves a great deal of sacrifice and suffering. Jesus, in the context of reflection on his own death, taught that unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains only a single

seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds (John 12:24).

Jesus was certainly no stranger to suffering. During Lent we remember the agony Jesus suffered on the Cross. Retrospectively we can discern that there was some purpose in his suffering and death.

John's gospel describes this purpose as Jesus being able, after his death, to "draw all people to himself", (John 12:32).

May Lent 2015 be a time when we allow ourselves to be drawn closer to Jesus, a time when we allow Jesus to deal with whatever needs attention in our lives.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to do," (Ephesians 2:10).

These "good works" are achieved by intentionally participating in God's ongoing mission to bring love, encouragement, healing, suicide prevention and restoration to others in Jesus' name.

Signs of grace

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



One of my favourite quotes is from John Lennon of Beatles fame: "Life is what happens while you are busy making plans."

Shortly before Christmas I learned that my three adult children planned to visit us in early February. This is never a simple exercise.

My eldest son Peter lives with his family outside of San Francisco. He is a psychiatrist and works for the US Veteran's Administration providing healthcare for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. My daughter Fiona lives in Germany with her family and is a nurse at the Berlin University Hospital. My youngest son Ian lives in Wellington with his family and is a policy analyst at Land

Transport.

You can imagine how wonderful it was to spend time with all three of them and find out what was happening in their lives. But looking back over the last few weeks, there was one special gift that required no planning.

On a sunny but windy Christchurch morning, I was sitting alone at home reflecting on everything that had been happening. All of a sudden the door of our house blew open and in rushed our cat Madi, all in a tither.

At first, I thought she had been chased by a neighbour's dog or cat. But as the wind rustled through the doorway, I heard this fluttering sound and turned to see a small sparrow trying to find a way out of the house.

Maybe the cat brought him in but I like to think he blew in with the wind. The sparrow tried to escape through the kitchen window, which was closed.

Then he headed for the dining room but after anxiously flying from one end of the room to the other he realised there was no way to escape there. Increasingly frantic, he flew to the window next to the open door desperate to get out. The window doesn't open, however, and in exhaustion, the sparrow settled on the windowsill and stared frustrated outside.

I quietly walked to the window where he was and placed my open hand next to him, I wasn't sure what he would do, but to my surprise, he hopped into my palm. Instead of panicking, he seemed to relax.

I looked down and he turned his small head towards me in despair. I gently stroked his feathers and carried him to the open door. He did not fly away immediately but turned his head as if to say thank you.

The he flapped his wings and was off to greet a waiting group of sparrows on our garage roof. It was an extraordinary

moment worth more than a thousand plans.

Sometimes our lives become so busy, weighed down with meetings, daily tasks and responsibilities that we miss such signs of grace. We are so busy living that we don't live.

We construct long to-do lists and feel guilty or a failure because we did not get it all done. Then there comes a day, when you look back over your life and wonder where life has gone.

That happens all too often these days, which is why I believe the wee sparrow came to me as a message from God. In that moment of release, I felt the grace of being loved by God and connected to the whole creation.

When there are so many voices saying we should do more, have more and achieve more, leave space for the signs of grace especially when you are making many plans.

How to look after your volunteers

Peter MacKenzie,
UCANZ executive officer

How does the church look after the volunteers that offer themselves? My first response would be - not very well.

Too many church volunteers feel underappreciated, over worked and burnt out.

So what practical steps should we take? Here are some:

1. Monitor the workload. Each person has a different amount of time that they can volunteer for church activities, so there is no simple answer to how much any one person can take on.

But some struggle to say 'no' and take on too much, and that can lead to burnout. It is equally true that doing too little can also cause people to dropout of church life. Finding small

tasks for busy people can encourage engagement.

Keep an eye on everyone in the church and ensure that they are comfortable with the level of time they volunteer.

2. Give away control. A recipe for disaster is to give people a task to do and then not allow them to do it in their way. As a church we need to provide our volunteers with the resources they need and then allow them to do the task.

Too many people have experienced doing something at church only to have someone come up behind them and "fix it."

3. Ensure there is a reward. People want to see results from their efforts and reward is not about money or praise. Acknowledging effort (not

necessarily every time) and bringing attention to the outcomes are important to motivate volunteers.

A comment on a flower arrangement, a thank you for a reading, appreciation for help - they all affirm the volunteer and encourage them in the task.

4. Be fair. A feeling of injustice eats away at a volunteer and erodes their sense of value in what they offer. Many of us will have worked hard on a project and found the thanks going to others.

A few will have been criticised for what they did when it wasn't their fault. Often we don't realise that we are being unfair but the church is littered with stories of people who have left feeling that they have been

unfairly treated.

5. Build community. A volunteer works best with other volunteers. There is something about giving time together that encourages and uplifts people. Sharing together in a task provides support and encouragement.

Volunteers are the heart of a church community. To keep them beating we need to look after them.

But they are us. We need to look after ourselves as well and make sure that our workload is manageable, that we have the resources for the task and the ability to do it.

We need to see how our efforts make a difference and speak up when we sense injustice. And we need to rejoice in the building of God's community within our church.

Blessings to you in that task.



Trinity Methodist Theological College

T 09 521 2073 • E trinity@tcol.ac.nz

Northland journey expands historical, cultural horizons

A tour of some significant historical and cultural sites in Northland has given a Fijian Methodist minister and theological students the chance to reflect, learn and better understand New Zealand's Christian journey.

Rev Akuila Bale moved to New Zealand from Fiji and came into full Connexion in the Methodist Church of NZ in 2012.

He enrolled in the Trinity College course TR3011 - Theological Reflection in Te Tai Tokerau Context to gain a deeper understanding of Methodism in Aotearoa. The course gives students first-hand exposure to both the Northland communities and their histories.

It includes a nine-day field trip to such sites as Waitangi, Marsden Cross in Oihi Bay, the Mangungu Mission site, and Russell.

Akuila is from the Lau Islands in eastern Fiji and he is the fourth generation of his family to enter the ministry.

He says his first trip to Tai Tokerau and the local marae gave him this chance to reflect on the Christian journey and to gain a better

understanding of Maori culture and the needs of the community.

"Maori identity was visible in people's lives, their artwork and their homes," Akuila says.

"As a minister here in New Zealand it's important to understand Maori people and culture. If you work here, you should also understand the people."

During the field trip he saw a need to focus on developing rural communities, a need he says is similar to what he's witnessed in his homeland, where he worked as a minister for more than 10 years.

Akuila says development is not necessarily about building more buildings but working with people to design strategies that will help communities live off the land and recognise its value.

"There are a lot of empty places up North that could be developed," he says. "It's like at home, where many of the youth have turned their backs on the land."

"They need to recognise the opportunities.



Trinity College students on the course visited Waitangi, Marsden Cross, Mangungu Mission and other significant sites in Northland.

It's good to use these idle lands."

Akuila says it was also evident on the trip that Christianity has had both a positive and negative impact on the lives of the people, with some still protesting about what they've lost in terms of their livelihood and their lands.

"One of my colleagues told us that 'Christians asked us to pray and close our eyes and when we opened them we had the Bible in our hands'."

Akuila says it's important to see both sides of this story in New Zealand in order to move forward.

He hopes that this bi-cultural journey to Northland will help enrich his work as a minister in the Waikato where he works to provide pastoral care for the Fijian congregations as well as the wider Methodist Connexion.

A time of beginnings at Trinity College

Stronger ties with its Anglican counterpart, giving all students an understanding of tikanga Maori, and educating Pasifika students from other denominations are among the goals of Trinity Methodist Theological College's new principal, Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta.



Trinity College principal Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta

Nasili takes on the leadership of Trinity College at a time of change.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority has reduced the number of approved theology qualifications from 78 to five. The change means all theological colleges in NZ will offer qualifications, such as a

Level 6 NZ Diploma in Christian Studies, that have a lot in common.

"Theological colleges can still offer different strands within the diploma so students can specialise. There are six different strands to choose from."

Trinity College will also continue to offer the Licentiate in Ministry Studies (both online and face-to-face), which all students must complete before doing the diploma.

Trinity College will also have to adjust to the NZ Tertiary Education Commission's move to eliminate funding for small theological colleges. The decision means Trinity College will no longer receive a subsidy per student but it also removes the cap on the number of students that the college can enrol.

Nasili says this opens the way to accept more fee paying students.

Trinity College will continue to develop and expand its on-line e-learning programme. Former principal Rev Dr David Bell, who initiated Trinity College's e-learning facility, will continue to develop it during 2015.

In addition to his duties as head of Trinity College, Nasili plans to keep up his busy writing and publishing schedule. He is the author and editor of a number of academic works, some of which are underway.

Meet Kimberley Chiwona

In up-coming issues of Touchstone, Trinity College will profile some of its candidates for Methodist ministry. The first of these is Kimberley Chiwona.

Kimberley was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, one of six siblings. She attended Anglican schools in her childhood and gave her life to Christ in her teens.

Her relationship with Christ grew in her adult years as she realised the need for the Grace of God in her daily life.

Kimberley gained a diploma in marketing and management and worked in management for 11 years before coming to New Zealand. She has since earned a Bachelors degree in marketing from the Manukau Institute of Technology.

"I have been married to Richard Chiwona for 28 years, and we have two adult children," Kimberley says. "My family here in New Zealand is my son Dr Blessing Chiwona, my son-in-law Dugmore Mango and my daughter Catherine Mango plus other extended family members."

"In my culture, when a woman marries she can choose to transfer to the same church as her husband. This is how I became a full member of the United Methodist Church in 1987. I was involved in lots of ministry activities in Zimbabwe including management of finances, property, and fellowship."

"Since childhood I have had passion for Christ and His ministry, and though I would have loved to be a presbyter, I was not sure if that was my calling. My thirst for serving others remained within me and I struggled with where I would start but when God calls you, he makes a way."

Kimberley has been a member of Papakura Methodist Church since 2010. She says Revs Peter and Andrea Williamson and other church



Ministry candidate Kimberley Chiwona and husband Richard.

leaders there have been very supportive.

"I realised that it was never too late to start my theological studies. I was directed to Trinity College, and my journey began."

"Studying theology at Trinity College has been great though at times challenging. It helped me discern my call and has improved my critical thinking skills. Trinity College helps with one's formation without destroying who you are."

"With students from different backgrounds, cultures and theologies, one can surely find their own place at Trinity College. Having tutors who are ministers is a great help to students because they share their experiences, and there is great support from the principal and all staff."

Kimberley currently works as a banker in one of the major banks and is in her final year of study at Trinity College. She has been nominated to be deputy student leader at the Trinity College this year.

"Being an accepted candidate for ministry, I am looking forward to being stationed and putting all my learning and experiences into practice," Kimberley says.

College Snippets

Places are still available in the following papers:

TC302 HISTORY AND PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Block course • 16th - 20th March

Trinity/St John's College, Meadowbank • Cost \$400

MS102 TE AO HURIHURI

Block Course • 13th - 17th April • Cost \$150

GRADUATION

Sunday 15th March, 2pm, Wesley Hall

St John's Trinity College

202 St John's Road, Meadowbank

AGEING WELL - CONCERNS, OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By Cory Miller

No one ever gets any younger and these days we are living longer.

The number of New Zealanders who fall into the 65+ age bracket has jumped by 100,000 in the last seven years according to the latest census released by Statistics NZ. The average life expectancy now sits at more than 80 years.

Most of those who fall into this ageing demographic want to maintain independence for as long as possible, to be supported in areas of need and to maintain a close connection with their communities and their families.

The question then is this - how can we, as a community and as a nation, care for these people in their ageing years?

A good starting point is a discussion that looks at the more

holistic model of care. This raised questions about elder poverty, social and cultural aspects of care, and the access to quality care within retirement villages, rest homes and at home.

A lucrative market

The retirement sector is certainly booming as businesses take up the profitable opportunities created by the increasing need for aged care facilities.

Methodist Mission Northern's Lifewise director Rev John Murray says the sector is facing almost \$1 billion worth of building in the next few years.

"The dilemma is that as the large scale commercial sector tackles this lucrative market, it will only cater for a small part of society leaving others on the



The commercial sector offers a range of attractive options for retirement living

edge," he says.

Wesley Community Action head David Hanna agrees that there is no lack of places for the elderly to choose from as retirement villages crop up all over the country.

But significant assets are needed to get into one. "It's a

nice model but you need to get \$200,000 to \$300,000 to get into it," David says.

John is doubtful many people will have such significant assets when heading into their retirement.

"We have a huge rental generation. Therefore they will

not be able to buy their own unit in a retirement village as they have no house to sell."

Vahefonua Tonga superintendent Rev Tevita Finau says this lack of assets is indeed a key challenge that he's witnessed amongst the elderly Tongan community. "Poverty is a significant hurdle to accessing care," he says.

Tevita says there are supportive services both within the church's social agencies and through Government subsidies but the reality is many slip through the cracks as a result of criteria such as immigration status that disqualify them from receiving government support.

David adds even those who can access care may have insufficient funds to pay the level of care they require.

Continued on Page 11

Tamahere offers retirement in Methodist fold

Tamahere Rest Home and Retirement Village is the Methodist Church's aged care facility in the Waikato. It is administrated by a Methodist trust board made up of 10 Methodist men and women from parishes from the wider Waikato province.

Tamahere is unashamedly a

Christian organisation that operates along the Gospel principles of equal care for all. We employ two chaplains to give pastoral care to the 200 residents, 87 staff and contractors who live and work on the site.

It is a growing community with plans to build a further 34 villas, a 48 bed hospital and 24

apartments to add to the 78 rest home beds, 92 villas and 19 apartments that are in use at present.

The facility is set in 26 acres of rural land just outside of Hamilton on the state highway to Cambridge. The gardeners' main task is to create and maintain a park like atmosphere

amongst the well-spaced villas that are all set at angles for their share of the sun and views.

Our community centre is the hub of the village with an operational café, bowling green, snooker table, library, movie screen and men's shed.

Life as a resident can be as busy or as laid back as you want it to be. Volunteer opportunities vary from joining the Residents Committee to delivering mail and newspapers, creating and tending gardens or our native gully, to driving fellow residents to appointments.

There is little point of Church organisations running businesses unless they have a point of difference to the competition in the marketplace. The retirement village is operated under the Retirement Village Act utilising

an Occupation Rights Agreement in the same way as commercial retirement village.

Tamahere's points of difference are as follows:

Our monthly village fee for the residents in our two bedroom villas is a modest \$360 and is based on actual costs incurred by the Trust. (We don't make a profit on this fee).

Whilst we charge a management fee of 4.0 percent per year for a maximum of five years in a similar way to the commercial market (average 7.0 percent/year), we allow the residents to keep the capital gain on their property. This results in the resident or their estate obtaining a higher value than they would in a standard commercial village.



Tamahere Eventide HOME & RETIREMENT VILLAGE

"Providing quality care in a Christian environment"

AN OUTREACH OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND

- RETIREMENT VILLAGE
- NEW VILLAS
- REST HOME
- DEMENTIA CARE
- RESPITE CARE
- RENTAL APARTMENTS
- DAY PROGRAMME

The low maintenance brick and tile retirement village units are set in a peaceful country setting within 26 acres of landscaped grounds.

Each villa includes a heat pump, carpeted living areas, smoke detectors, light fittings, drapes, venetian blinds, Miele appliances, dishwasher, internal access garage, T.V. satellite system, disability bathroom and emergency call bell system.

On resale you benefit from the capital appreciation of your villa. Occupation is under an Occupational Right Agreement.



"I came here to be free of worry about home maintenance, security and religious stigma. I came to lead my life as I wanted to lead my life."

Being able to contribute (in the wider village community) has made life real and meaningful."

"Don't leave it too late. You need time to enjoy village life," Carole Fleming & Jean Robertson.



AGEING WELL - CONCERNS, OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

From Page 10

“Someone with a poorer background will have more challenges and more complex issues that need a higher level of care. Wesley Community Action doesn't expect assets in its elder care facility, but it's hard to develop or restructure the current facilities with inadequate funding.”

Home care

An increasingly popular option that elderly people can choose is to stay at home in a family-supported environment.

Service manager for Lifewise's home based support services Julie Smith says it's most reassuring to support families and give them the choice of keeping their loved



The second stage of Vahefonua Tonga's Matanikolo Housing Project will offer housing for elderly Tongan people.

one at home, in a place where they are happy.

She says the service offers a restorative model of care to support the elderly community and their families in the home,

including support with housework, shopping, personal care, meal preparation, respite and socialisation.

“It's about creating a closer partnership with clients, their

families and other agencies, and offering flexibility in relation to the client's needs, to enable a more effective response and help them maintain independence,” Julie says.

But while David supports keeping the elderly at home, he says such a model isn't necessarily more cost-effective as a significant amount of funding is still needed to care for someone with complex needs at home.

The church's role

In response to these challenges both Tevita and David believe the church can and must play a role in stepping into fill the cracks the Government either cannot or will not fill in aged care services.

David says it's important to not just offer adequate medical care for the aged, but provide care that addresses the wider psycho-social aspects.

Thus he says the question for the church and its larger middle class group is how to use the communal wealth to support this vision of care?

Tevita adds the church can also move beyond simply providing financial support to being involved with the elderly community.

He says the church can care for the elderly, by “visiting them, offering fellowship, praying and blessing them and offering language and culture appropriate services”.

Ryman Healthcare offers aged first class living



The second stage of Vahefonua Tonga's Matanikolo Housing Project will offer housing for elderly Tongan people.

At Ryman Healthcare we aim to provide elderly New Zealanders with a first class choice in retirement living and care.

Each of Ryman's 30 retirement villages nationwide has its own distinctive personality and friendly, vibrant community. Our Ryman villages include stunning independent living, beautiful serviced apartments and the very best of rest home care.

With resort-style living and superb facilities the hardest part of your day will be deciding what to do. We know your lifestyle preferences are as individual as you are, so depending on the village you choose you could be starting your day with a dip in the sparkling blue indoor heated pool, a stroll around the breathtaking village gardens, take advantage of the excellent and ever popular Ryman Triple A exercise programme, or simply relax and enjoy a chat with friends, a coffee, and some delicious baking. The choice is yours.

Most of our villages also provide hospital and dementia care though often there is no need to move from the village if extra care is required.

At Ryman Healthcare we firmly believe in protecting the interests of our residents and we pride ourselves on offering some of the most resident friendly terms in New Zealand.

Over the past 30 years we have developed the Ryman Peace of Mind Guarantees, which are designed to protect both you and your family.

For more information please phone 0800 588 222 or visit our website www.rymanhealthcare.co.nz



Retirement living and care at its best!

- ✓ Fixed weekly fees for life guaranteed!
- ✓ Resort-style facilities
- ✓ Independent and assisted living
- ✓ Resthome, hospital and dementia care

For more information please phone 0800 588 222

CWS says Middle East refugees need peace not troops



Young men carry much needed bedding to Iraqis sheltering from Islamic State in the hills outside the town of Kani Mase

Sifting through daily reports of atrocities and the looming threat of Islamic State can be daunting. The plight of refugees and displaced people is often overlooked in the scramble to recount the latest gruesome acts.

Behind the headlines are the 5.2 million people the United

Nations says are in need in Iraq and the corresponding 12.2 million Syrians in the region.

ACT Alliance members operating in the region report the need is overwhelming. In Iraq Christian Aid reports that for every person they help, at least another five are in desperate need. Many

families have fled with nothing or had any belongings taken from them. ACT Alliance is distributing food, warm clothing, cooking utensils and bedding. Refugee camps are over capacity and many more are finding shelter scattered in the community.

They have been helped with plastic sheeting, wood frames, nails and tools so they can improve the abandoned buildings or coverings where they have found shelter. ACT has also provided some community-based counselling and psychosocial support.

In Iraq the UN runs 24 under-resourced refugee camps with another 17 under construction. On the ground the situation in Mosul, Nineveh and Sinjal remains volatile.

The camps are now home to more than 160,000 people, and the UN expects the number to soon double. An estimated 40 percent of 2 million displaced people are living in sub-standard conditions,

made worse by the bitter winter.

This month marks the end of the fourth year of conflict in Syria with no sign of respite. Any resources refugees might have had are gone. Humanitarian agencies cannot meet the needs and there has been no progress in peace talks.

Agencies like the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon are providing vital help in countries where one-in-four people have sought refuge.

They are not able to help everyone but they do train refugees to learn new skills and provide relief support.

CWS has made an \$110,000 donation including matching government funding for Syrian relief. Including matching government funding, a further \$147,000 has been made to DSPR's programme for Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

According to Foreign Minister Murray McCully New Zealand government has committed \$14.5

million to help people displaced by the fighting in Iraq and Syria.

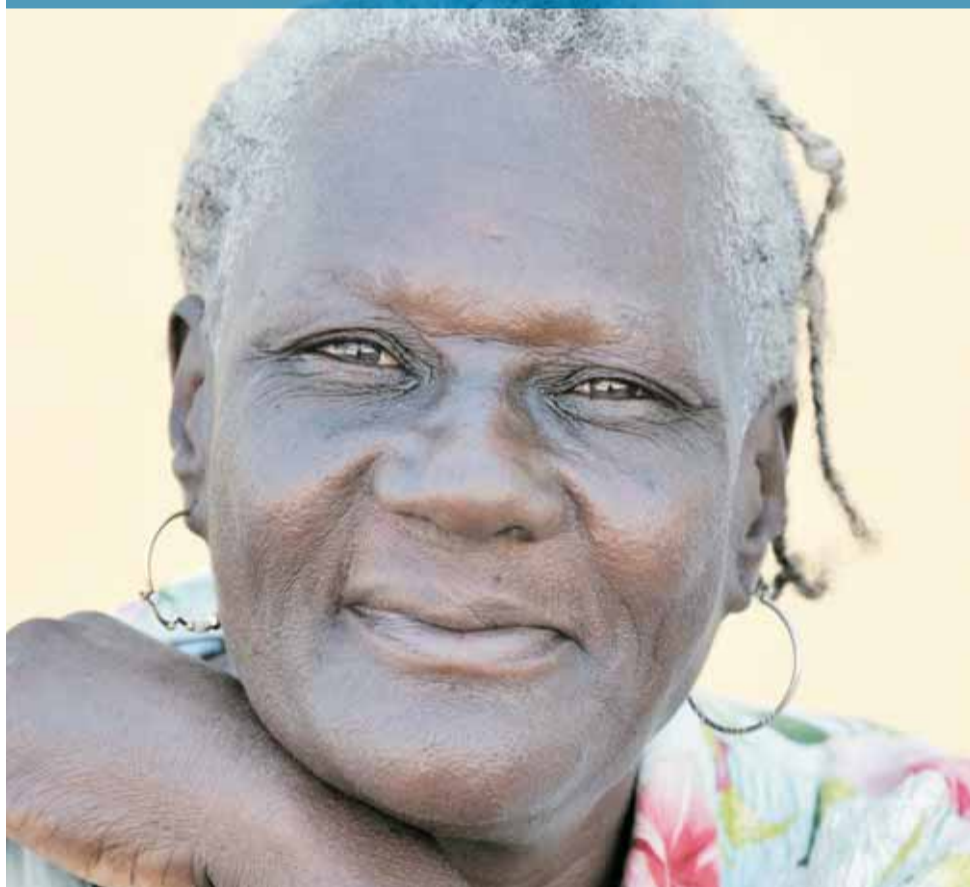
This is hardly enough says CWS national director Pauline McKay. "If you don't take into account administrative costs, this equates to 83 cents for each person in need. As a member of the Security Council, New Zealand must contribute more to the woefully underfunded global effort."

Pauline McKay signed the Open Letter on Deployment to Iraq calling for more humanitarian aid and renewed diplomatic efforts, initiated by Peace Movement Aotearoa.

"New Zealand was elected to the Security Council saying it took 'honest, constructive and balanced positions'. Putting our troops in the firing line is not," she adds.

Donations to the Iraq Crisis Appeal and the Syria Appeal can be made on line at www.cws.org.nz/donate or sent to PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8180 or telephone 0800 74 73 72.

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 PH 0800 74 73 72, cws@cws.org.nz
 For more information visit cws.org.nz



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

Water brings dignity in Uganda

For the second Christmas in a row, water has proved the most popular gift through 'Gifted', CWS's ethical gift programme.

For \$25 donors have brought water to families of HIV and AIDS orphans living in southwest Uganda by contributing to a rainwater harvesting programme.

Writing at Christmas, project coordinator of the Centre for Community Solidarity (CCS) Charles Rwabamari noted that part of their celebrations was made possible because of Christian World Service's help.

"CCS works with the needy people of Isingiro. Our team stays with the people, lives with them, and eats what they eat. When they meet a calamity CCS empathises and when they are joyful CCS jubilates."

The Christmas menu of meat and bananas known as matoke and the millet or sorghum porridge was all made with clean water and served with clean hands.

"We see CWS and all New Zealanders as our compassionate and generous family in New Zealand," Charles says.

CCS helped local communities build a further 45 new rainwater tanks in 2014 and in doing so, helped 136 orphans and their caregivers drink clean water. Not only are the children cleaner and able to attend school but thanks to new home gardens they are also eating better.

By contributing half the cost of the water tank plus labour, the families are keen to maintain their investment and quickly learn the benefits of saving through a community loan scheme.

The CWS grant also funds the salary of two CCS workers who as well as organising the construction of water tanks, provide training to improve subsistence farming techniques. Using a combination of rainwater and conservation measures, they can grow more bananas and other crops.

Last year CCS distributed 240 piglets and trained the families to care for them. Learning to save high yielding seeds and produce their own fertiliser has improved crop yield and helped them adapt to drought conditions.



Sarah (11) shows off fresh fruit, grown with water from her grandmother's new water tank. She lost her parents to AIDS and no longer has to trek 3km each day to get water

"The work of CCS shows what communities can do for themselves with a little help from New Zealanders determined to make a difference for women and children. Their enthusiasm and hard work is a gift back to us," says CWS international programmes coordinator Trish Murray.

The United Nations reports 748 million do not have access to improved drinking water while 2.5 billion do not have adequate sanitation.

World Water Day is celebrated each year on 22 March. The theme set for this year by UN Water is Water and Sustainable Development.

The Ecumenical Water Network invites concerned people and parishes to focus on water justice through the season of Lent. The theme for 2015 is "Towards Water Justice: A Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace". A theological reflection written by different authors will be posted each week at: <http://water.oikoumene.org/en/whatwedo/seven-weeks-for-water/2015/>.

If you would like to hold a special event or collection to support the work of CCS, please contact CWS at cws@cws.org.nz.

Young People

IN MEMORY OF AN IRON MAORI

By Filo Tu

Gone are the days in which the memory of a loved one is written only in an obituary in the back pages of a newspaper.

Technological advancements and the numerous forms of social media have meant that there will always be a picture to remember someone with, a blog to vent out all the love you had for them, and even a page for dedications and birthday reminders.

Taking things to a whole new and more active level, members of Taranaki Te Taha Maori Rangatahi took to the sporting grounds of Hawera for Taranaki Iron Maori 2015 to remember the passing of a well-loved kaumatua.

Iron Maori is a two-day event, and this year it attracted more than 650 contestants. It was the first time it has been held in south Taranaki.

People travelled from around the country to participate in the competition, with a lot of whanau gathering along the side lines to

show their support.

However, for the Methodist rangatahi, the crux of the event was to acknowledge the memory of the late Minita-A-Iwi Pue Barry Whakaruru who passed away suddenly during the same event in 2014.

For the first time, Vienna Pouwhare (14), Hinekohu Eynon (14) and Moesha Katene-Rawiri (18) took to the challenge. They did the 300m swim, 10km cycle and a 2.5km run/walk.

The adrenaline kick from completing Iron Maori has pumped a lot of excitement for these young veterans to get ready for 2016.

From the side-lines the biggest pom-poms were waved by Julie-Anne Barney-Katene. Julie-Anne says she participated in the event last year in an individual short course.

"I still can't believe I did it. I was so proud that this year my two girls Mariah and Moesha completed the team event as they

both were inspired that I completed the course last year. This event isn't about winners or losers it was about giving it a go! Whanaungatanga at its best!"

Next up were the role models of centuries past: Alison Ranui and minata-a-iwi Syd Kershaw and Jim Ngarewa. (We have purposely erased their ages for this article.) Each participant chose to either undertake an individual short course or individual long course, or work within the team short course or team long course.

Alison did the individual short course this year, which involved a 300m swim, 10km bike and a 2.5km run/walk. She completed the challenge in 1 hour 42 minutes and 46 seconds.

Alison laughs out loud and says "Short course, long time."

On a more serious note she says: "I did this challenge because we encourage our rangatahi to participate in many things and so it is only right that we show them



Iron Maori maidens: (from left) Moesha Katene-Rawiri, Hinekohu Eynon and Vienna Pouwhare.

and lead by example.

"We have been encouraging our Te Taha Maori whanau to participate and the response this year has just grown tremendously in such a big way. The representation is not only from Maori but by our Pasifika and Pakeha whanau also. Although they may not be whakapapa they are still very much a part of our extended whanau. I'm so inspired I want to try and do the individual long course".

Iron Maori is about promoting healthy eating and healthy living. People also make connections through participation and having fun amongst peers you would normally pass by on the street.

But it was a special time when balloons were released in memory of Uncle Barry. From Iron Maori to Iron Maori, the legacy lives on through our future generations.

Lest we forget.

Kidz Kornd

WELCOME TO KIPZ KORND MARCH 2015!

Kornd

Fun, food & faith in Putaruru

I can hardly believe that in a few weeks' time we will be celebrating Easter and I'm still eating my Christmas cake!

What wonderful weather we have been having, but we must remember the farmers and other people who need water for animals and crops. It makes their lives very hard.

Thank you to the children from St Pauls Cooperating Parish in Putaruru who have sent

their stories to us this month. They have renamed their Sunday School 'Fun, Food and Faith'

It would be really interesting to hear other names that people have for what was Sunday School.

I'd like to hear what everyone did to celebrate Easter so send your photos and a brief message to me.

Doreen



Kidz who attended the holiday programme at St Paul's Church went to the movies, made pizzas and had lots of fun.



Old Testament Tales (The Unauthorised Version)

For your Bookshelf

By Bob Hartman

Lion Children's Books

Want to get your boys hooked on Bible stories? This book, one of a series by Bob Hartman, is ideal. The stories are fast moving, witty, funny and sometimes just plain silly!

Bob Hartman has an amazing way of making the stories come alive in a way that is almost unbelievable. It is written for boys aged of seven to 10 but older children will enjoy them too. The book is also available on Kindle.



Mark Wordsearch

The following words can all be found in Mark 1: 14 - 20. Can you find them in the wordsearch puzzle?

H	Q	I	F	I	S	H	I	N	G	N	I	R
V	U	Y	Q	R	Z	N	T	U	J	D	B	Y
H	M	L	H	S	T	E	N	E	B	I	M	H
T	W	E	R	D	N	A	I	M	A	S	W	T
R	N	R	V	M	X	S	Q	O	G	C	F	I
S	E	E	L	I	L	A	G	H	P	I	H	B
H	J	E	S	U	S	K	M	M	T	P	Z	O
O	K	X	A	W	O	L	L	O	F	L	L	S
R	A	V	V	G	R	W	Y	W	X	E	W	I
E	R	E	H	T	O	R	B	E	N	S	A	M
Q	X	P	X	L	L	A	C	O	D	B	L	O
H	Z	F	K	E	L	P	O	E	P	U	K	N
B	O	A	T	K	D	L	Q	Q	E	Y	G	U

What are the kids in your church up to?

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

ON SCREEN

A Film Review by Steve Taylor

ONE DREAM CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

SELMA



At the end of 'Selma', no one moved. As the final credits rolled, those present remained seated, motionless and silent. Only as the cinema cleaner entered did people finally collect their belongings and begin to exit.

It was a fitting tribute to a moving story, powerfully told. The movie documents the American Civil Rights movement, in particular the period during 1965 when Dr Martin Luther King, Jr worked in the town of Selma, Alabama, to galvanise protest over the right to enrol to vote.

It depicts the tactics of non-violence, the hostility of Southern White response and the unfolding story, which resulted in the Voting Rights Act and Federal Government enforcing voting fights for all minorities.

What is striking is how these acts of protest were shaped by a faith as political as it was domestic. In prison, pondering his decision to picket around voting rights rather than protesting poverty, King is reminded by his advisers of Scripture (Matthew 6:26-27). Needing courage, King calls

a friend, seeking solace in the singing of an old Negro spiritual. Preaching in Selma at the funeral of a protestor, King asks: Who murdered Jimmie Lee Jackson?

"Every White lawman who abuses the law to terrorise. Every White politician who feeds on prejudice and hatred. Every White preacher who preaches the bible and stays silent before his White congregation."

It is a powerful reminder that in the hands of the church, Bible study has at times magnified injustice, rather than worked to further God's dreams of justice and liberation. 'Selma' is a powerful reminder of how faith is political, both for good and bad.

The movie is well made, including the clever mix of actual black and white footage of protest along with the typewritten telegraph text documenting FBI surveillance. David Oyelowo is superb as Martin Luther King, as is Carmen Ejogo as King's wife, Coretta.

However, they are shaded by the standout performance of Henry Sanders as Cager Lee, mourning in the morgue his murdered grandson, Jimmie Lee Jackson.

It is a predominantly male cast, and King is constantly surrounded by male leaders. It is a visual

reminder that after the civil rights were won would come the struggle for gender equality.

This interweaves with another prominent theme, that faith is domestic as well as political. Time and again, 'Selma' locates us, the viewer, in the ordinary. The movie begins with King worried about his tie and dreaming with Coretta of being a pastor somewhere small, with a house to call their own.

It is these domestic touches - the kitchen scenes of Southern hospitality, putting out the rubbish, tucking children into bed - that drive the humanity of the narrative. They create the empathy against which the violence that was the Civil Rights movement can be projected large.

And this is why no one in the movie theatre moved. Faith, powerfully presented with hope, that the eyes of all peoples in all of life may indeed see the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is principal at the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology, Adelaide. He writes widely in areas of theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

CONSIDER THE MEANING OF LENT

Liturgically speaking Lent is a season for reflection and a time for soul searching and considering the deeper aspects of faith, life, and death. Lenten study groups often address these considerations.

The word 'consider' appears in scripture 89 times (depending on version used). This month's Bible Challenge is restricted to verses that contain the word 'consider'. How well do you know these verses?

Bible Challenge

Now consider, and ___ what answer	___ C ___	2 Sm 24:13
Blessed is the one who considers the	___ O ___	Ps 41:1
c. yourselves dead to ___ and alive to God in Christ	___ N ___	Rom 6:11
c. Jesus apostle and high ___ of our confession	___ S ___	Heb 3:1
Consider the ___ of the field, how they grow	___ I ___	Mt 6:28
I do not consider that I have ___ it on my own	___ D ___	Phil 3:13
Remember the days of old; c. the years of many	___ E ___	Deut 32:7
Consider the ___ they neither sow nor reap	___ R ___	Lk 12:24
The apostles and elders were ___ to c. the matter	___ T ___	Ac 15:6
Consider well the ___ the road by which you went	___ H ___	Jer 31:21
I do not consider that I am in the least ___ to these	___ E ___	2 Cor 11:15
I consider the days of old, the ___ long ago	___ S ___	Ps 77:5
Let the ___ who rule well be considered worthy	___ E ___	1 Tim 5:17
Thus says the Lord of hosts: consider your	___ A ___	Hag 1:7
Go to the ant O sluggard consider her ways and be	___ S ___	Prv 6:6
consider the ___ of their way of life and imitate their faith	___ O ___	Heb 13:7
As he c. these things behold an ___ of the Lord appeared	___ N ___	Mt 1:20
Therefore consider the ___ and understand the vision	___ O ___	Dan 9:23
Behold, we c. those blessed who remain	___ F ___	Jas 5:11
Let us c. how to stir one another up to ___ and good works	___ L ___	Heb 10:24
She considers a ___ and buys it... and plants a vineyard	___ E ___	Prv 31:16
Consider too that this ___ is your people	___ N ___	Ex 32:13
Even a fool who keeps ___ is considered wise	___ T ___	Prv 17:28

Answers: decide, poor, sin, priest, lilies, made, generations, ravens, gathered, highway, inferior, years, elders, ways, wise, outcome, angel, word, steadfast, love, field, nation, silent. © RMS

WEA and WCC explore ways to work together

In the light of global realities, representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) met in January to explore areas of future cooperation.

The meeting featured introductions to the work of the WEA and the WCC, and participants reflected on current developments in society and in the evangelical and ecumenical movements. They shared current plans and discussed possibilities for closer collaboration.

Stressing the significance of being Christian witness, the meeting participants also identified various ways to respond together to the needs of communities around the world.

Together the participants read the Scriptures and reflected on similar and different understandings of mission and evangelism. They prayed together and shared stories of faith.

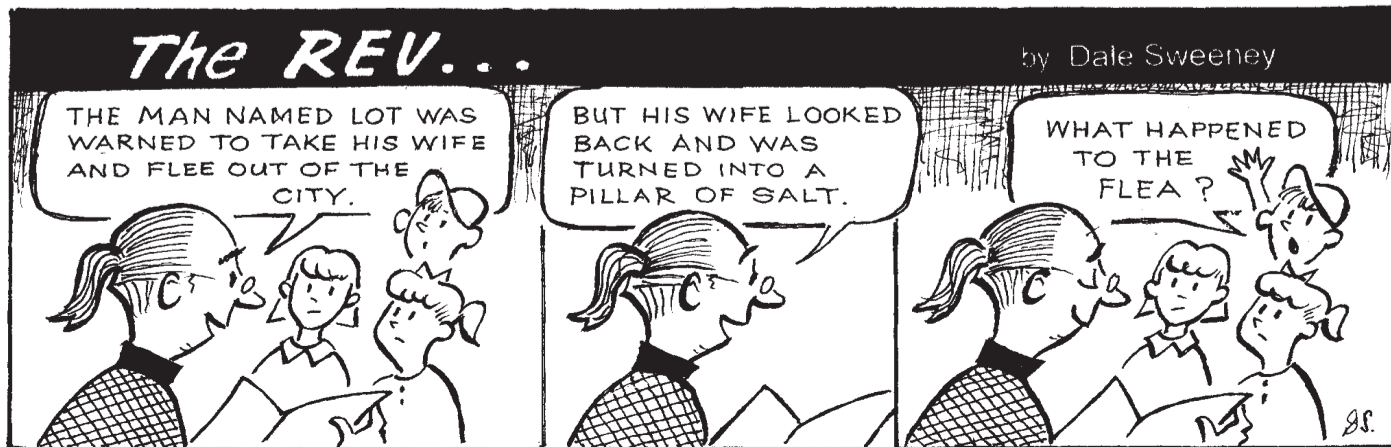
Recognizing the importance of a joint response to a suffering world, the participants agreed to continue to meet in order to identify further areas of possible cooperation.

The WCC emphasises ecumenical perspectives on mission and unity. It invites churches to share reflections, insights and experiences as to how they can best be faithful to their mission and provide a common witness to Jesus Christ in all realms of life - personal, cultural and socio-economic.

It sees the mission challenges for the churches as finding a balance between a clear witness to the gospel, the respect for people's dignity, and solidarity with those who suffer, for example from exclusion, injustice or sickness.

Mission emanates from worshipping churches and includes evangelism, the search for inclusive communities, various forms of healing ministries, as well as covenanting for justice.

In WCC's perspective, mission must be "in Christ's way" and strive for authentic reconciliation and peace, counting on the presence and power of God's healing Spirit, in particular in situations of religious plurality.



Earth, Faith and Mission - The Theology and Practice of Earthcare

By Clive Ayre
2013, Mosaic Press, 206 pages
Reviewer: Mark Gibson

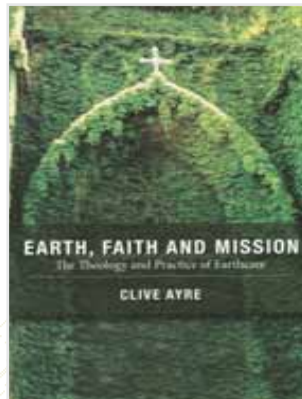
I read this book as part of my preparation for the Green Churches seminar at the Ecumenical Centre, Bossey, Geneva in June last year. It proved more than useful for this end because it successfully integrates caring for creation, theology and mission.

It is also well-written and structured, and successfully blends readability with academic rigour.

The author is a Uniting Church of Australia minister and theologian. Though writing from a different context to our own, he is able to ground his focus in a way that makes it relevant to the mission of the local as well as national church. Many theological forays into eco-theology fail to do this.

Clive starts by sharing a little of his own journey, describes the influence of his son's passion for the environment, and shares his concern for the well-being of his grandchildren.

In his Master's thesis he explored what it means to believe in God the Creator in the face of the emerging eco-crisis, and this led to doctoral research and ultimately this



book. He is spot on in arguing that earthcare must be returned to the mainstream of Christian mission. It should be central, rather than peripheral to church endeavour.

In ministry he was concerned with the narrow understanding of mission held by the church "rather than the light of Jesus' more holistic image of the Kingdom of God".

The book suggests we need constant dialogue between what Clive calls the "twin poles of theory and praxis" and "practical and contextual theology".

Too much of our thinking is done in isolation from our context and is not rooted in practical action.

He is right in arguing that what we think and believe strongly shapes how we relate to the rest of creation.

In Chapter 3 he explores common approaches to environmental issues that are now outdated and unhelpful. These include nature disenchanted, and putting the economy or people at the centre. The discussion then moves on to a

range of more hopeful approaches that open the way for a changed relationship.

It is in Chapters 4-8 where Clive develops the eco-mission that gives the book its greatest value. He provides a 'big picture' focus on inter-faith and international initiatives but gives greater emphasis to what eco-mission might look like for local congregations and parishes.

Some of what he says is drawn from his research with eco-congregations in the UK but he relates this to the Australian context.

Much of this also has relevance to Aotearoa NZ. I found useful his discussion of theological inhibitors and practical issues like inadequate funds, lack of leadership and unhelpful governance.

I would commend this book to anyone in leadership at the local church level who needs resources to help develop eco-mission.

Let's finish with a word of inspiration from the author: "Effective eco-mission is in the first instance not about structures, finance, or governance but commitment to a divine vision for the Earth and all Earth's creatures as God's creation."

Review copy courtesy of Epworth Books.

The Jewish Gospels - The Story of the Jewish Christ

By Daniel Boyarin
2012, The New Press, 200 pages
Reviewer: Alison Molineux

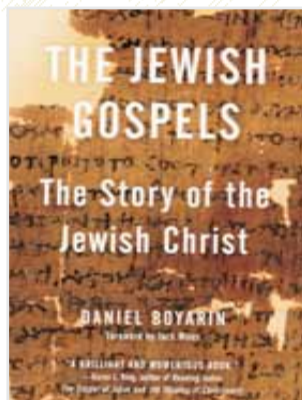
Right from his first sentence Boyarin grabs our attention: "If there is one thing that Christians know about their religion it is that it is not Judaism, if there is one thing Jews know about their religion, it is that it is not Christianity."

Then, just as quickly, he demolishes that position and states his own: "While by now, almost everyone, Christian and non-Christian, is happy enough to refer to Jesus the human as a Jew, I want to go a step beyond that...to see that Christ too - the divine Messiah - is a Jew."

This promised to be an exciting and challenging read but I ended up a little disappointed. That said, his style is engaging, and his arguments are clearly set out, often compelling and definitely challenging.

Chapters 1 and 2 explore Jesus' titles Son of God and Son of Man as they are used in the gospels, the books of Daniel and Enoch and Rabbinic thought. Chapter 3 explores Mark 7 and concludes Jesus kept kosher. The final chapter is entitled 'The Suffering Christ as a Midrash on Daniel'.

I imagine that different readers may be challenged by



different parts of his argument. For me the ideas that Jesus was a Jew, that early Christianity was a 'branch' of Judaism, and that Jesus kept kosher, revered the Torah, and was not diametrically opposed to the Pharisees were all ideas that I was familiar and comfortable with.

But I was very challenged by Boyarin's arguments that Jesus and his disciples believed from their Jewish understandings of the Messiah that Jesus was both Son of God and Son of Man.

After reading this book, I am re-examining my belief that the early church called Jesus 'Son of God' to counter and challenge the Roman Emperor's similar claims. I'm still not sure where I will end up but for this challenge alone this book was well worth reading.

Boyarin often provokes: "It won't be possible any longer to think of some ethical religious teacher who was later promoted to divinity under the influence of alien Greek notions." And: "The ideas of Trinity and incarnation, or certainly the germ of those ideas, were already present among Jewish believers well before Jesus came on the

scene to incarnate in himself, as it were, those theological notions and take up his messianic calling."

But he also offers well researched arguments.

So why was I disappointed? It is Boyarin's argument that Jesus saw himself as Isaiah's suffering servant and a Messiah who would suffer, as opposed to the popular scholarly understanding that it was the early church in its struggles to make sense of Jesus' ghastly death who borrowed heavily from Isaiah's writings as they wrote their accounts of Jesus' life.

Here Boyarin did not appear so rigorous in his scholarship. Firstly, his arguments that a suffering Messiah was part of Jewish expectations come only from later Judaism. And secondly, Boyarin's admirable ability to challenge status quo thinking seems to leave him when he does not question whether Jesus' words in Mark's Gospel "the Son of man must suffer many things" were actually what Jesus said about himself, or are the work of Mark, the theologian.

Nevertheless, this book challenges all of us who are preachers not to fall into the trap of setting Jesus against 'the Jews' but rather to preach him in his context as a Jewish rabbi.

Weaving, Networking & Taking Flight - Engaged Ministry in Avondale Union and Manurewa Methodist Parishes

By 'Alifeleti Vaitu'ulala Ngahe
2014, Philip Garside Publishing, 68 pages
Reviewer: Brian Turner

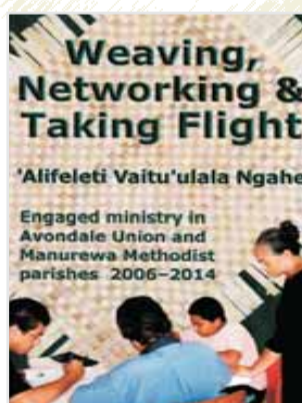
Rev Vai Ngahe has done what many clergy intend but few actually do - that is, to reflect on past ministries in order to traverse better the pathways ahead.

Vai has done this for the first nine years of his Auckland ministries in Avondale and Manurewa and he has shared his reflections with us by publishing them...Brave man!

Vai utilizes compelling images from his Tongan background as well as a presbyter/minister in Aotearoa-NZ. Drawing on his experience in relating to the community in Avondale and Manurewa, he makes a strong case for congregations and parishes to relate more closely to the communities where they are located.

This raises a number of interesting questions.

In what ways should the church relate to the community? Should it offer programmes and initiatives that the wider community can join (for example, rebuilding the Rosebank church building as a community centre or painting a public mural at Manurewa) or should a parish/congregation relate



to the good it sees being done by others in the community and offer its support without seeking to take over or dominate?

And who in the church should initiate community facing or joining activities?

Historically, the NZ Methodist Church has said this is more the responsibility of the laity and diaconate (deacons) rather than presbyters.

However, many presbyters have (like Vai) exercised strong community-facing priorities as well as in-church word and sacrament ministries.

More significantly, is Vai suggesting that the Kingdom of God is in fact the establishment of healthy communities in which the church is an integral contributor rather than a distant outsider?

He seems close to this position when under the heading of a "Theology of Transformation" (page 50) he writes: "We are no longer focussed within the church on the inside/us only. Our focus shifts the position to facing outside, to the

community. The wider community also becomes us."


That left me wondering if the oneness of church and community is more achievable in multi-ethnic communities than predominantly mono-ethnic ones. Vai himself advocates the importance of weaving together a multi-cultural community to support members within the church and people in the community.

This pre-supposes that many multi-ethnic communities, and presumably those in which Vai has worked, are more open to the place of the church than communities elsewhere. In predominantly Pakeha Christchurch, for instance, when a congregation canvassed door to door and asked what people expected of the church, the response was invariably "Nothing...piss off!"

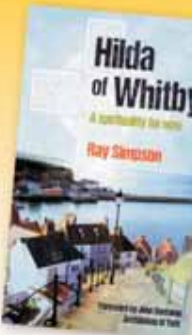
This suggests that in many communities there is a widening gap between church and community.

Vai Ngahe is to be commended for developing ways to help bridge this gap. It remains to be seen whether such methods will work in all communities.


Review copy courtesy of Philip Garside Publishing.




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Unsung Methodists - By Donald Phillipps

Joseph Sullivan - 1890 - 1962

'SWEET IS WAR...'

'War is sweet to them that know it not.' Thus wrote the great Dutch scholar, Desiderius Erasmus, 500 years ago.

There was a new Pope at Rome, and Erasmus was pleading with him to make St Peter's Chair a source of peace after centuries of war. Our own age is little different.

How many localised wars have been fought since 1945! Thirty? Forty? How many times have New Zealanders gone overseas to engage in 'peace-making', as it is sometime euphemistically called? And how many times has a lasting peace been established?

As we remember the horror and the heroism of WWI we would do well to recall the high hopes of those who left these shores and did not return. We also need to honour those who did return shattered in mind and body.

The scars were deep and the memories could never be erased. The idealism that had sustained them at the Front was, for some,



Joseph Richard Sullivan as young soldier and in later life.

a sham. Could the new generation of political and military leaders be trusted.

In his lecture to the Wesley Historical Society at the Methodist Conference 2014, Dr Allan Davidson spoke of the nearly 60 ministers, home missionaries, and theological students who served in WWI. Five of them lost their lives. The majority of them returned to ministry deeply affected both physically and mentally by their experiences.

When, for example, Francis Harris died in 1933, his obituary



said: "In 1915 he commenced three years strenuous war service, during which time he had several periods of severe illness and was dangerously wounded in the head. Since then he did not know what robust health was. An inflexible will, however, kept this from others and drove him to his labours."

This particular story is about another young minister whose war experience led him into a totally different world. Joseph Richard Sullivan was born at Bluff in 1889 of Irish parentage, and the family later moved to Inglewood where

his father died when Joseph was three.

His younger brother, William Sullivan, (or 'Big Bill') was knighted for his services as a National Party cabinet minister. Joseph was, for a time, a schoolteacher in New Plymouth and was very much involved in the St Aubyn church. He was received on probation in 1914 and spent six months at Kensington, Timaru.

He then volunteered for active service with the NZ Expeditionary Force and was at Gallipoli where he was wounded in the throat. He returned to New Zealand late in 1915, but by mid-1916 had returned to England, this time as a chaplain to the forces at Sling Camp, where the NZ troops were preparing for the battle on the Western Front.

He was ordained in 1918 but left without pastoral charge. By then he had married and he remained in England, where he completed a Masters Degree in economics at London. He went to South Africa in 1924 for health

reasons. He was principal of the Commercial High School in Johannesburg, and then vice principal of the technical college in Durban. He was Member of Parliament for Durban from 1943-1953. He died at Durban on February 12th, 1962.

The point of this brief account of Joseph Sullivan's life is not to question or to theorise about his motives. It can be said, however, that the experience of many who served overseas led them to call into question all the old values, and those of the Christian faith as much as any.

What place was there or is there, for the 'Lord of Hosts', the Lord of the armies? How is the world to be made a better, safer, more just, more peaceful place?

Maybe Joseph Sullivan, the economist and the educationalist, had a different vision, from that of Joseph Sullivan the Methodist minister and chaplain.

WW100 project - Hawera Methodist Church's special roll of honour

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Jo Smith, Archivist

Still affixed to a wall in the Hawera Methodist Church, is a wooden hymn number board nearly 100 years old.

It was given to the Church in memory of Karl Justus Strack, who was killed in France on 4 October 1917 aged 23. Karl was a member of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force Wellington Regiment, 3rd Battalion.

Rolls of honour and war memorials can take many different forms. Usually they are lists of names, either written on a special decorative form that could be bought from a stationery shop, or more ornate hand painted wooden boards.

The wooden hymn board in the Hawera Methodist Church is one of the more unusual memorials that the Methodist Archives research project has discovered. We have not found evidence of any other memorial hymn board associated with World War I in any of the Methodist churches.

Of course, the Hawera people knew it was there but now we hope it will become more widely known.

Karl Strack came from a well-known Hawera family. His father, Conrad Strack, was the headmaster of what was then called the Hawera District High School. The whole family were both sporting and musical, and Karl was involved with the Methodist Church as a Bible Class member. When he attended university in Wellington, he played hockey for Wesley Church.

He also played the organ and, while in Europe on service with the

New Zealand Expeditionary Force Wellington Regiment, he wrote to the Hawera Methodist Church in 1916 telling them about a Catholic church he came across, where he played "old Methodist hymns" on the pipe organ. His letter was read at the evening service.

In 1917 he found himself back at the church, and though it was by then in ruins, he found the organ "quite all right" and had "a real good old time, all to myself".

The memorial hymn number board was given by Lily Hulbert, who also played the organ and was a teacher of pianoforte and organ. It was designed and built by Mr C Johnson of polished manganite (ngaio?) wood, mounted with two silver plates.

The upper one is surmounted with an outline of Mt Taranaki (or Mt Egmont as it was known then). The image of the mountain was chosen not only because it meant something to Karl, but because it was the last bit of New Zealand seen by the 7th Reinforcements when they sailed.

Karl wrote in one of his letters about that experience:

The snowy splendour of Mt Egmont is just a white, snow-tipped island peak. There is no mistaking the time-honoured mountain. It stands a silent sentinel in the setting sun. The boys crowded the rail to get a last look. Its hoary head was clearly visible 50 miles distant. The white top stands out against dark clouds, and the other clouds float over it. It grows dimmer, and we watch more



Karl Strack was a soldier, athlete and musician.

eagerly, until finally it slipped away into growing haze, and then was gone.

The inscription on the top plate on the hymn board reads "To the glory of God, and in loving remembrance of Lieut. Karl Justus Strack; killed in action somewhere in France, 4th October 1917 - Lily Hulbert.

The bottom plate is inscribed with a verse of the hymn "The day is dying in the West".

Karl's name also appears on the Tyne Cot memorial in Belgium.

Thank you to Archdeacon Trevor Harrison, South Taranaki regional dean, for the photograph of the memorial hymn number board.

Note: in the February edition of Touchstone, the article on photos of the Chinese Canton Mission was identified as from the Methodist Mission Archives. It was in fact provided by Presbyterian Archives.



The hymn board at Hawera Methodist Church is a unique tribute to a beloved member who fell in World War I.

Candle extinguished but light shines on

The Methodist Church at Broad Bay, Dunedin was overflowing on Sunday November 30th 2014.

The occasion was a sad one, the last service and formal closing of the church. But it was also a chance for people to share their thoughts about what Broad Bay Church meant to them and to remember that the spirit of God remains with us and is not confined to a building.

This reminder came from Methodist vice president Dr Bella Ngaha, who was a special guest at the occasion.

Others who attended the closing ceremony were members of the wider parish, past presbyters, and visitors who had come because Broad Bay Church was a special place for them.

Dunedin Methodist Parish steward Hilda Hughson says Broad Bay Methodists are known for their involvement in wider Methodist gatherings such as synod and Conference, and for speaking up for what

they believed was the way of love.

"This included support of gays and lesbians. Rev David Bromell was one of Broad Bay's presbyters.

"The congregation was also noted for its contemporary theology and hymns and their informal services held at times that suited families on Friday or Sunday evenings.

Broad Bay ran a lively youth group that had wonderful mountain biking camps at Naseby for many years from 2000.

Hilda says the small congregation hosted yearly parish Easter Sunday dawn services on the beach, followed by a fish breakfast. The parish is keen for this tradition to continue.

"Broad Bay was a community-facing congregation and I'm sure this will continue even without regular services," she says.

The large crowd who gathered for the closing ceremony viewed photos, signed a visitors' book and shared lunch in the

community hall.

Past ministers and ministers of other local congregations spoke.

Elsbeth McLean shared some of the congregation's history. Worship services were first held there about 150 years ago with preachers traversing the Otago Harbour by rowboat and later negotiated the Peninsula by bicycle.

The present modern building, which has been in use for almost 50 years, will be sold. However, it is the people who you remember.

Former Broad Bay presbyter Rev Ken Russell says the positive, celebratory tone of the service was well worthy of the generations who have shaped the distinctive and often prophetic witness of those who have made Broad Bay Methodist Church what it was.

"It struck a balance between the natural sadness of closure and the gospel truth that in the providence of God there is always the promise that beyond every closed door



Lydia McLean Extinguishes the candle at the end of the service.

there is another that opens on to new opportunity. It was a superb service."

The closing words of the service were: "Although we extinguish this candle as a sign of the closing of this church building, we will continue to embody this light and promise to reflect the light of Christ in all that we say and do."

Nai Lalakai

NAI LALAKAI MAI NA WASEWASE KO VITI KEI ROTUMA E NIUSILADI

Lotu ni veivakatikori vua nai Talatala Vakatovolei Alipate Livani



Era qarava tiko oqori o Nai Talatala Qase ni Wasewase Peni Tikoinaka, na Lotu ni veivakatikori vua nai Talatala vakatovolei Alipate Livani ka duri toka e yasana o Radini Talatala.



Era tauca tiko oqori o Talatala Alipate Livani na vosa ni vakavinavinaka vei ira na matavuvale/veivewekani kei na Lotu.

Ena Sigatabu nai ka 15 ni Feperueri, era mai vakatikori kina ena valenilotu e St Johns Parish ena Tabacakacaka o Waikato/Waiariki, o nai Talatala Alipate Livani. Oqo ni oti na nodra sa qarava oti na nodra vulitalatala ena Trinity College.

Era yaco yani kina vakalewelevu ko ira na veivewekani kei ira na lewe ni lotu ena Tabacakacaka e rua mai Okaladi, Tabacakacaka o Waikato/Waiariki me ra laki tiko ena Lotu bibi oqo.

Era a laki qarava na Lotu o Nai Talatala Qase ni Wasewase, o Talatala Peni Tikoinaka ka ra veivakananumi tale ena vuku ni veikacivi ni Kalou kei na bolebole e sa tu oqo e matadra.

Era na veiqaravi tiko o Talatala Livani ena loma ni Tabacakacaka o Waikato/Waiariki ena ruku ni nodra veiliutaki o nai Talatala Akuila Bale me yacova na gauna era sa na tabaki me Talatala yaco ni Lotu Wesele e Niu Siladi.



Na vakayakavi ni Turaga ni oti na nona vakatikori o Talatala Alipate Livani kei ira na veitacini vakaitalatala.



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Tomanatuga Fa'amatupusilisili

'Le atali'i o le kamuta ma lona satauro na liua ai le lalolagi'

O finagalo, poo manatu, ma taofi o tagata lautele tuu faatasi, (public opinion), o mafaufauga lava ia o so'o se sosaiete o tagata, ituaiga tagata, o atunuu e fausia ai se fa'aiuga o lo latou iloa o se mea (world view).

O Iesu lava ia i lona tala'aga fa'alotoifale, o le atili o le kamuta. O le atili o le gaosi mea i laupapa ma laau. O le atali'i o le tagata fau fale, fau laulau, fau nofoa, fau meaafale ese'ese.

I le silafia ma le taofi o tagata Eperu o e sa ola fa'atasi ma lenei tagata, pau lea o lo latou iloa e uiga ia Iesu. O le tamaiti'iti sa taumulimuli i le Matua-o-faiva e u'u le samala, e momoli le tele ma toso le manoa, sa fai ma lima taumatau o le Matua, sa fa'alupe fa'atasi i le Aiga o Tupu ma le Falefa o le Aiga Salemalama.

O Iesu i le va'ai fa'a-Eperu ua na o se ataili o se kamuta. O a'oa'oga la a Iesu ia o lo'o atagia ai o Ia o le Alo o le Atua, o ni lafoga ua luluina ai le fa'avae o le va nofo lelei ma tagata Iutaia i lea lava taimi, a nei tagata o tagata mapo Atua. Aua o lea ua lu'iina ai e Iesu lo latou iloa ma lo latou talitonuga i lo latou Atua.

A o tu Iesu i luma o Pilato le Kovana Roma i Iuresalema o le Kolone o le Malo Roma (Roman Colony) i le aso o lona fa'amasinoga, sa ilafia i se manatu o le Kovana e iai se mea mata'utia e tupu mai lenei tagata.

Sa aunoa ma sona 'i'ite o le tagata o le a ia faasatauroina na te lepetia le malosi o le tu'ugamau ma le oti ae toe soifua manumalo mai. Ma e avea lona mea

mata'utia e fulisia atoaina ai le lalolagi i ana a'oa'oga, ma liliu mai tagata e talitonu ma mulimuli ia te ia.

O aoaoga a Iesu Keriso ua fa'atumulia ai le vaega lona lua o le Tusi Paia - le Feagaiga Fou. O tala i le tagata e igoa ia Iesu le atali'i o le kamuta, o lo'o tusia i penitala a le au tusitala e talaoto'oto ai mea nei; o ona uiga, o lona tagata, o ana mea na fai; o le lolofi atu o tagata ma taumulimuli ia te ia i le fia faalogologo i ana fetalaiga; o le fe'au na afio mai ai o ia; o fea e sau ai; o lona tali atu i tuua'iga ma faitioga a le lotu lutaia; o lona faaeacaina o tagata e oo i tama'ita'i; o le taua ia te ia o tamaiti; o lona alofa i tagata ua faasinoinomia ma 'alofia e tagata; o lona faamagaloina o agasala; o ana faamalologa, atoa ma lona faasatauroina ma lona lepetia o le tu'ugamau e ala i lona Toetu ma Ola.

O le Feagaiga Fou e maua ai ma tala i ulua'i toa o le Tala Lelei, lo latou ola to'ilalo a ua toe fuata'ina Saulo le tagata saua na fai ma malosiaga o le Talalelei i Nu'uese. Ua avea i latou ma fetu pupula e molimoli atu a'oa'oga a lo latou Alii ma lana faaolataga mo tagata uma o le lalolagi - e le na o le Iutaia ae mo tagata o nuu ese. Ana le talitonuina e tagata lautele Iesu ma ana a'oa'oga, ma lona maluu ma lona toe tu mai, e le oo atu le Tala Lelei i pa'usisi uma o le lalolagi, e pei o Samoa.

I le talafaasolopito o le lalolagi, sa iai ni ta'ita'i totoa, e pei foi o Iesu, na latou liua mafaufauga o tagata lautele, ma suia ai ni faiga fa'aituau ma le amitonu sa taotaomia ai le soifua o tagata lautele.

E pei o Aperamo Linikone le peresitene o Amerika na taulamua i taumafaiga e faasaoloto tagata uli mai le nofo pologa, poo le faatauina atu e fai ma pologa. O le Matuaofaiva sa ia fausia se amataga lelei mo lona malo.

Ae a le tagata toa o Matini Luteru Tupu lea sa ia lu'iina le amioletonu o tagata papa'e o le Malo Amerika. O le toa o Matini e lu'itauina le mea le moni lele ua seei ai Obama i le nofoa vaevaeloloa i le matuatala o le Fale Pa'epa'e o le Malo Tele. O Matini o le tufuga sa ia mua'i taina se va'a fou e mafai ona folau fa'atasi ai tagata uli ma tagata papa'e.

E le mafai ona galo i le faamoemoe le soifua saili-malo o Tamaaiga ma o tatou tuua sa finau ma lu'itauina le amioletonu a Niu Sila ma isi malo mai fafo sa ola taotaomia ai o tatou tagata. A lele ua e sa'oloto, ua le pule esea lau 'ai ma lau taoto, ua le taotaomia lau aia-tatau. Mai fea? Nai o tatou tuua o le Falefa o le Aiga Salemalama sa punoua'i e fausia so tatou lumana'i.

O le Ekalesia Kerisiano sa amusia ma sauaina ma susunuolaina ona tagata i le ulua'i senituri o le Tala Lelei, na avea mulimuli ane ma faaolataga, faaletino ma faaleagaga, mo tagata o le lalolagi - uliuli pe pa'epa'e, mumu pe 'ena'ena. O se mea fou i tagata uiga o a'oa'oga a Iesu na latou maua ai le saolotoga ma le faailoga tagata.

O se mea fou i tagata le faamagalo atu i e ita mai ia te i latou, le alofa i lou tuaoi tusa lava pe inoino mai ia te oe. O ni uiga fou, na faatuupuina ai le fealofani ma le ola fetausia'i, e pei o oe lava ia te oe.

O le Tala Lelei ia Keriso ua na faasa'olotoina le tagata e fai lana lava filifiliga sa'oloto i le mea e mana'o ma talitonu iai. E le faamalosiaga le tagata. E tuu lava i lana filifiliga saoloto. Ma o le mea lona ua silia ai i le 2,000 tausaga o malosi pea le Ekalesia Kerisiano i le lalolagi. A manatua pea e le Sinoti Samoa lana misiona o le faaolaina o tagata ma faaleleia o latou soifua e pei ona a'oa'o mai Iesu, tatou te le popole i le lumana'i o le Sinoti Samoa.

Le paia e o le Sinoti, e moni fa'amaoni le molimau a tagata Eperu, o Iesu a ia o le atili o le kamuta. Pau le vaega ua sasi ai ma nenefu ai le va'ai a tagata Iutaia o Iesu e le o se atili o Iosefa le kamuta, a o se alo e fa'asino i le Aiga o Tupu le Matua o Faiva le Atua le Tufugasili o le lagi ma le lalolagi.

O le feagaiga a le Atua ma Noa e le toe lofia le lalolagi i le suava'ai e pei o le lolovai na lofia ai le lalolagi. Peita'i o le maluu o le alo o le aiga Salemalama ua lofia ai le lalolagi i lona toto, ma ua avea fo'i lona soifua-manumalo i le tu'ugamau ma malosiagasili e lepetia ai le agasala ma liua ai le lalolagi e avea ma tagata o lona malo.

E le o se tufuga po o se kamuta fau laulau, fau nofoa, fau fale, a o le tufuga ma le kamuta fau agaga na liua ai le pogisa o le lalolagi.

Sinoti e, a alu alu folauga o lenei tausaga ae soua ma felafoaina i le vasa, manatua upu a le atunu'u "lepa ia i le foe ae mapu i le to'o". To'o ia Keriso lou fa'amoemoe.

Manuia le faitau - Tusia: Paulo Ieli.



Fofoga o le Mafutaga a le Aufaigaluega Rev Faleatua o lo'o ta'imua i le solo.



Fofoga o le Sinoti Mataiva Robertson ma le Siapilini Rev Ali'itasi Salesa.



Koke Leleisi'uao commissioned as new head of department in Faith Studies at Wesley College.



Afioga i le Sea o le Sinoti Rev Suiva'aia Te'o ma nisi o le aufaigaluega i le Mafutaga a le Aufaigaluega sa faia i Aukilani.



E au le inailau a Tama'ita'i. Koke ma Ali'itasi le Siapilini a Wesley College.

FAKANOFO 'O E FAIFEKAU SEA 'O E VAHEFONUVA, REV TEVITA FINAU

Ko e Sapate 'aho 8 'o Fepueli na'e fakahoko ai 'a e Fakanofu 'o e Faifekau Sea 'a e Vahefonua, Faifekau Tevita Finau. Na'e fakahoko 'eni ki he Vāhenga Ngāue Lotofale'ia.

Na'e fakakoloa ki he Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa 'a e hā'ele mai 'a Kuini Nanasipau'u Tuku'aho ki he Malanga Fakanofu 'o e Faifekau Sea, Faifekau Tevita Finau. Ko e 'aho lahi he na'e me'a mai 'a e 'Eiki Palesitani 'o e Siasi Uesiliana 'o Tonga, Rev Dr 'Ahio, Na'e 'iai foki mo e ongo Palesitani mo e Tokoni Palesitani 'a e

siasi Metotisi, Rev Tovia Aumua pea mo Dr Arapera Ngaha, Palesitani Malolo, Rev Rex Nathan mo e Tumuaki Maori, Faifekau Sea Sinoti Samoa pea mo e faifekau Pule SUTT, Faifekau Lopini Felise mo e kau taki lotu tokolahi.

Na'e fakafongfa mai 'ehe Palesitani Malōlō Rev Dr 'Alifaleti M Mone 'a e famili ki hono foaki mai 'o e Faifekau Sea ke fai hono fakanofu.

Na'e tokolahi 'aupito 'a e Malanga, na'e hiva 'a e Vāhenga Ngāue Tokaima'ananga pea Vāhenga Ngāue

Lotofale'ia, na'e fakafongfa 'ehe Vahe Kolo 'a e Vāhenga Ngāue 'Aokalani mo Manukau.

Ko e Malanga faka'eiki 'o e 'aho na'e fakahoko ia 'ehe 'Eiki Palesitani mei Tonga, Rev Dr 'Ahio. Na'e fakakakato 'ehe ongo Palesitani Metotisi NZ 'a e ngaahi ouau fakanofu ki he Faifekau Sea pea lava ai pe mo e fakanofu 'o e Sekelitali, 'Etuini Talakai pea mo e Sekelitali Pa'anga, Paula Taumoepeau ki he ngāue 'a e Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa ki

he ta'u 'e 4 ka hoko mai.

Na'e fiefia 'a e famili 'o e Faifekau Sea



Ko e 'imisi tā 'a e Kuini Nanasipau'u Tuku'aho pea mo Valeti mo e Faifekau Sea, Rev Tevita Finau.



Mei to'o hema 'i mu'a: Ko e Palesitani Rev Tovia Aumua, Tokoni Palesitani Dr Arapera Ngaha, Kuini Nanasipau'u Tuku'aho, Tumuaki Maori Diana Tana, Palesitani Malōlō Rex Nathan, 'Otu mei mui, to'ohema, Faifekau Sea Rev Tevita Finau, Valeti Finau, Rev Dr 'Ahio, Mrs Aumua, Rev Setaita K Veikune, Rev Dr 'Alifaleti M Mone, Rev Hiueni Nuku.

YOUR FUTURE IS NOW

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Na'e fakahoko 'i he 'aho Falaite 13 mo e Tokonaki 14 'o Fepueli 2015 'a e Expo ki Lotofale'ia, Mangere.

Ko e 'Eiki Minisitā Peseta Sam Lotu-liga na'e fakaafe fakalangilangi.

Na'e kau mai kiai mo Anton Carter (Principal Advisor, Pasifika, Tertiary Education Commission) 'o kau he lea 'o e 'aho mo e fakalotolahi.

Na'e 'iai foki mo Jennifer Latu Salesa MP pea ne faingamālie kene fakahoko mo e lea ki he tauhi fanau mo e fanau.

Ko e ngaahi stall na'e lahi 'i he teniti Expo.

MIT 2. UNITEC 3. NZMA 4. Future Skills 5. NZ School of Education 6. National College of Security 7 & 8. Pikinima Music Trust 9. Langimalie 10. South Seas 11. Procure 12. MITO 13. AUT 14. Aviation 15. AIS 16. Skills Update 17. Digicel 18 & 19. Massey 20. Gambling Foundation 21. AIL 22 & 23. SIAOLA 24. CYF 25. MOE 26. Leva 27. Target 28 & 30. To'utupu 31. Auck University 32. Best Training 33. NZIS 34. CITIO 35. IRD 36. Army 37. Police 38. The Project 39. Toko Collab 40. Waikato University.

Ko e tapuaki 'eni ki he fanau na'e lava ange ki he Expo ko e a'u tonu mo talanoa mo e ngaahi stall ki he ngaahi taumu'a 'e malava ke nau ma'u faingamālie ai.

Na'e 'iai e talanoa mo taha e ngaahi fa'e na'a nau lava ange ki he Expo mei he siasi katolika.

"Na'e faingamālie ke mau talanoa tonu mo e Navy pea ko hoku foha 'oku lolotonga faka'osi'osi 'ene ako Toketā, na'e pehe ai 'ehe fakamatala mei he Navy, 'e malava ke hū ki he navy pea 'e hoko atu 'ene ako ka e fua 'ehe Navy 'ene taumu'a toketā, 'E lava ke ngāue ai ha ngaahi ta'u hili 'a e ma'u 'ene toketā. Lahi mo e

faingamālie ngāue 'o 'ikai ke 'i heni pe ka e toe kapa atu ki he ngaahi fonua muli."

Na'e fakahoko foki moe ngaahi hiva mo e faiva mei he ngaahi to'utupu.

Na'e 'iai foki mo e ta'ahine hiva fo'ou kuo tukuatu 'ene ngaahi hiva he letiō ko Lady Fatz ke ne fakafiefia 'i 'a e kakai.

Ko e ngaahi fasi fakame'ite na'e fakahoko ia 'e Hopoi Vou pea mo Kalino Pongi.

Faifekau Sea Tevita Finau, Faifekau Kalolo Fihaki pea mo e fakafongfa Falealea Jennifer Latu Salesa pea mo e kau ngāue.



Ko e faifekau Sea, Rev Tevita Finau pea mo e Fakaafe Fakalangilangi 'o e 'aho, Ko e 'Eiki Minisitā, Peseta Sam Lotu-liga ko e Minister of Corrections, Minister for Ethnic Communities and Minister for Pacific Peoples (formally Minister of Pacific Island Affairs), pea toe Associate Minister of Health.



Ko e 'Eiki Minisitā pea mo e Faifekau Sea mo e fanau to'utupu na'a nau tokoni mai ki he fakalele mo e fakanofonofu pea mo e ngaahi foomu Iesitisa pea mo e evaluation 'i he stall 'a e Vahefonua youth, Tapuaki Games.



Anton Carter (Principal Advisor, Pasifika, Tertiary Education Commission)

Fakanofu ki he Vāhenga Ngāue 'Aokalani mo Manukau

Fakanofu 'o Faifekau Vaikoloa Kilikiti mo Faifekau 'ahi'ahi Siutaisa Tukutau pea mo e Tikoni 'ahi'ahi Falanisesi Hafoka.

Ko e hili 'o e Fakanofu, 'i Vaine mo'onia. (To'ohema ki to'omata'u).

Rev Setaita K Veikune, Rev Dr 'Epeli Taungāpeau, Rev Tevita Finau, Falanisesi Hafoka, Rev Vaikoloa Kilikiti, Rev Siutaisa Tukutau, Rev Falematapule Lomu, Rev Dr Nāsili Vaka'uta.

Na'e fakahoko 'a e Fakanofu 'o e ongo Faifekau pea mo e Tikoni 'ahi'ahi ki he Vāhenga Ngāue 'Aokalani mo Manukau 'i

he efiapi Pulelulu 11 Fepueli 2015.

Ko e fakanofu 'o Faifekau Vaikoloa Kilikiti ki he siasi Moia mei he 'Eiki, Ellerslie pea ko Faifekau 'ahi'ahi Siutaisa Tukutau ki Vaine Mo'onia, Ponsonby Ko e Tokoni 'ahi'ahi ki Taka he Montū, Glen Innes.

Na'e tapuaki ki he Malanga Fakanofu he na'e faingamālie ki he Talekita 'Evangeliō 'a e Siasi Uesiliana Tau'ataina 'O Tonga, Faifekau Falematapule Lomu ke ne fakahoko 'a e Malanga faka'eiki mo tapuaki ki he kau fakanofu pea pehē ki he Vāhenga Ngāue.



Fakalotofale'ia Ma'asi 2015

Fakafeta'i 'etau a'usia 'a e mahina fo'ou ko'eni mo 'etau fononga'ia 'a e Fa'ahita'u Leniti, neongo ne 'osi kamata ia 'i he Pulelulu 'o e Fakae-fuefu he mahina kuo 'osi. Ko e Fa'ahita'u Leniti ko e 'aho mo e po ia 'e 40 meihe Pulelulu Fakae-fuefu 'o ngata meihe Sapate Paame.

Ko e taimi 'o e fononga

mamahi mo e kātaki lahi, kumi 'o e ivi mo e tātaki kelesi, faka'utumauku 'i he lotu lilo mo e fa'a fakalaululoto 'o hangē pe ko e taimi na'e 'i he toafa ai 'a Sisū hili hono papitaiso. To e vakai ki he ngaahi makatu'unga 'e 7 na'a ku fokotu'u atu he Fakalotofale'ia 'o Fepueli.

Ke tau fa'a lotu mo 'aukai. Vakai ki he lau 'ia 'Aisea 58:6-9

“Ikai ko eni pe 'a e 'aukai te u manako ki ai? Ko e veteange 'a e ngaahi ha'i 'oku hala hono 'ai, ke tatala 'a e ngaahi ha'i 'o e 'ioke, mo tukuange tau'ataina 'a e kakai ta'omia, 'io ke fesi'i 'a e fa'ahinga 'ioke kotoa pe?

'Ikai ko eni foki ke paki ua ho'o ma mo e fiekaia, pea ke fakahū ki ho fale si'i masiva kuo li'aki? Ko ho'o sio leva ki ha

taha ta'ekofu pea ke fakakofu: pea 'oua na'a ke fekalofaki mei ha taha 'a ia ko ho kakano tonu? Te ke toki ui pea 'e tali 'e Sihova; te ke tautapa pea te ne pehē, Ko au eni.....”

Fakataunge ke hoko 'a e Fa'ahita'u Leniti ko eni' ko ha Fa'ahita'u 'oku tau lava 'o fakafaingamālie'i kitautolu mo ha vaa'itaimi lahi ke tau nofo'i

lahi ki he lotu mo e 'aukai mo matu'uaki 'a e matelie' kae lava ke tau fononga he Uike Tapu 'i he kelesi mo e fakaiivia kitautolu 'e Laumālie Mā'oni'oni. Ka pehē pea 'e ho'ata 'i he'etau mo'ui' mo e ngaahi polokalama 'a e Siasi 'a e fakatau'ataina, vetekina 'o e ha'isia' pea tokonia 'a e li'ekina' mo e fiekaia 'i lotu mo tu'a siasi.

Rev Tevita Finau

TAPUAKI GAMES 2015 - SIX YEARS AND RUNNING!



“Friends, don't get me wrong. By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward-to Jesus. I'm off and running and I'm not turning back.” *Philippians 3:13-14 (MSG)*

By Sela Pole

On the 31st of January 2015, 14 churches from Vahefonua Tonga O 'Aotearoa made their way to the Laurie Gibbons Memorial Park and Weymouth Rugby club for a day of sports and fellowship.

The day started off early with light showers throughout the morning. The weather forecast had predicted a day of rain however it did not hinder the spirit of the young people.

Standing in their line formation, youth groups were ready to march around the sport ground, an activity that was sure to stimulate hype and excitement for parents and children.

Each youth group had banners displaying their team name and mottos as well as memorised bible verses ready to be read aloud in front of the Faifekau and leader's tent.

Although the rain had cut a part of the opening ceremony short, the positive atmosphere was set. Blessings and acknowledgments

were made, and the sports day began at 9:00 am. The games were organised into three different divisions for netball and touch games with only one open division with male and female teams for volleyball.

The sports draw ensured that every minute of the day was accounted for the thousands of young people. Breaks during the day were set aside for the teams and especially the referees who had given up their time willingly to assist in umpiring for the day.

The sports day had its own set of challenges but this did not waver from the vision of 'letting the children live'.

The winners for netball were: under 14: Ellerslie (Moia mei he 'Eiki), under 18: Mangere (Lotofale'ia) open: Otara Parish (Tokaima'ananga). Our winners for touch rugby were: under 14: Onehunga (Fakafeangai Ma'oni'oni), under 18: New Lynn (Pulela'a), open: Ellerslie (Moia mei he 'Eiki). For women's volleyball: Dominion and men's volleyball: Otara Parish (Tokaima'ananga).

The main award for the day for best sportsmanship was awarded to Otahuhu youth (Fuakava ta'engata 'o Kenani).

The competitiveness of the day

tested many of the young people's patience and faith. However His grace was a constant reminder through the happy sounds cheered from the side-lines and the jokes that were made on and off the courts.

Relationships were strengthened and formed that day. We the VAM youth are grateful for the opportunities that are offered to us (the young people of the church). It is because of activities like these that we feel we are verified and appreciated.

Thank you to our VAM youth Faifekau Rev Lute Tu'uhoko and Rev 'Ilaisaane Langi for the blessings and leadership. It is your passion for young people we are given opportunities to fellowship with others in our walk. The day was sure chance at faith building, establishing relationships and channelling new avenues of communication between church members and our leaders.

Thank you to the VAM sports committee and youth leaders for your patience, love and endurance. It is your desires to serve others that we are blessed, let us uphold God's desires for his people and continue to be living testimonies to His word and plans for us.

James 2:17 “Faith without works is dead”.



Fakataha Vahefonua

'Aho 10 'Epeleli - 12 'Epeleli

'Oku fakamanatu atu 'a e fakataha lahi 'a e Vahefonua Tonga 'oku 'amanaki fakahoko ia meihe Falaite 10 ki he Sapate 12 'o 'Epeleli ki Lotofale'ia, Mangere. Mou kataki 'o lotua 'a e ngaahi fatongia kotoa ki he fakataha.

Retreat - School of Theology

Feohi 'a e kau Faifekau mo honau ngaahi hoa 'a e Vahefonua ki Camp Morley he efiafi Falaite 20 'o Fepueli ki he 'aho Sapate 22 'o Fepueli 2015.

Fakataha Komiti Pule Vahefonua

'E fakahoko 'a e fakataha 'a e komiti pule ki Camp Morley he efiafi Falaite 20 Fepueli he taimi 8.00 efiafi.