

TOUCHSTONE

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

Nau mai, Kia ora, Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Bula Vinaka and Welcome!

Famili Vā Lelei a winning initiative on every front



Eleven families participated in a retreat held in early November, the eighth since May 2017.

Famili Vā Lelei, an initiative developed by Vahefonua Tonga Methodist Mission (SIAOLA) to help the Tongan community to strengthen their families and improve resilience, has been recognised and awarded at the Evidence Based Problem Orientated Policing (EbPOP) awards held recently in Wellington.

Counties Manukau District nominated the programme for the national EbPOP awards that involve 12 police districts throughout New Zealand presenting a police initiative that contributes to the Police Strategy of New Zealand.

This is not the first time the innovative Famili Vā Lelei programme has been recognised for its effectiveness and appropriateness. The

programme was awarded two District Commanders Awards in September 2017. Executive Director Kathleen Tuai-Ta'ufo'ou says, "This family programme is designed by Tongans for Tongans and is evaluated within a Tongan framework.

"After two years of working with police and building relationships with the Tongan Police internal support network and being members of the Counties Manukau and National Board Advisory Boards, I can say that our police - in particular the Tongan Police - has, and continues to build, trust and confidence with our Tongan community."

The SIAOLA Famili Vā Lelei initiative operates under the umbrella of Vahefonua Tonga Methodist Mission Charitable Trust under the auspices of the MCNZ. In response to the vision of the Church 'Let the Children Live', SIAOLA initiated the programme, involving the church and key agencies, when

approached by police in August 2016. Police wanted help to combat the high statistics of Pacific families in New Zealand represented in low level violence against children.

Drawing on the values, expertise, wisdom and resources of the Vahefonua Tongan Church Synod and community, Famili Vā Lelei was conceived. In January 2017, Tongan police visited 20 churches during Uike Lotu - a week of prayer at the beginning of the year - connecting with parish congregations and communities to ask the community for help and to build a partnership to reduce these statistics.

Kathleen says, "That was the beginning of our journey. We all recognised that mainstream services were not working for our people. We knew how to engage with our people in a way that would strengthen and empower families, not stigmatise them.

"We come from a positive parenting stance, offering skills

and education to build and strengthen families and relationships. Our programme invites families to strengthen the family bond so everyone is able to prosper and thrive."

Getting away from it all

Families spend a weekend at Camp Morley, a rural, residential retreat outside Manukau, owned by the MCNZ. Over the course of three days, a large team of professionals (Tongan Methodists from Vahefonua Tonga Synod, vetted, accredited and certified) work individually and collectively with children, youth and adults. Modules and workshops cover healthy relationships, financial planning, quality family time, roles and responsibilities. The aim is to empower, strengthen and support families to live happy, successful and thriving lives.

A brief session with police covers legislation and builds positive relationships with children and young people. Facilitators focus on pastoral

care and strengthening tools for families, and the teachers and children's social worker run programmes with the children and young people.

Kathleen says, "By the time the families return home on Sunday afternoon, each family has a clear vision of what a happy, successful family looks like and how to plan for the future." Beyond the weekend, advisors are available to provide ongoing wrap-around services, support, advice and assistance.

The team are volunteers and include a clinical psychologist, counsellors, a financial specialist and other experts across fields that contribute to the general welfare and wellbeing of those involved.

Rating it

Success is measured and reported in a variety of ways by evaluation tools that involve cultural models developed by Dr Seini Taufa and Dr Daniel Du Plessis.

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Inside

Christmas celebrations



NZMWF Convention 2018



General Secretary visits Israel & Jordan



Certificate presented 25 years on

Garth Cant

In 1991, Dr Michael Len came from Hawaii to serve in Christchurch Methodist Mission and Durham Street as an Order of St Stephen volunteer.

In early February 1993, he was accredited as a lay preacher. This year he returned to Christchurch where he was finally presented with his Lay Preacher's Certificate.

The Wesley Care Chapel service provided the occasion. Durham Street Parish and Methodist Lay Preachers joined forces for the presentation.

Rev Don Pilgrim led the worship and Rev Jill van de Geer, Superintendent of Durham Street Parish, welcomed Michael and explained the background. In the early 1990s, Michael was counsellor, encourager and pastoral support for residents and staff at Fairhaven and Wesley eventide

homes and for Lifeline counsellors. While he was here, Geoff and Doreen Hill mentored and encouraged him to become a Methodist lay preacher.

In February 1993, Judy Allison, Secretary of the New Zealand Methodist Lay Preachers, wrote to



Dr Michael Len returned to visit friends in September.

welcome him as a fully accredited Methodist lay preacher. He had already returned to Hawaii when the correspondence was dispatched. "When you are back in New Zealand, we will present your certificate," Judy wrote.

"Michael completed the study courses, took services in city and rural congregations, and had a successful trial service. But he left New Zealand before his certificate was presented," says Garth Cant.

Twenty-five years later, Michael has come out of his retirement home in Seattle, and winged his way across the Pacific to re-establish links with his New Zealand friends and receive his certificate.

Hugh Williams, Registrar for Lay Preachers, located Michael's certificate (number 663, dated February 1993) and Garth Cant, President of the NZ Methodist LPA in 1993, presented it to Michael at a service in September 2018.

Famili Vā Lelei

Continued from page 1

Aside from the positive results that come with families building healthy relationships by drawing on the resources of culturally sensitive support networks, an additional benefit has been improved connections between family members and church communities.

"We have seen an increase in family connectedness from the participants. And the SIAOLA team is a tribute to the enormous resources within our Church who want to give back to the church," says Kathleen.

The most recent retreat held in early November - the eighth since May 2017 - involved 11 families. To date, more than 60 families have participated in the programme. Most families are referred by their church leaders; others are drawn by the high praise shared by families that have attended past retreats.

Faith and values based

Being Methodist is not a prerequisite for participating, but identifying as Tongan is.



The EbPOP award acknowledges the dedication, commitment passion and love the Famili Vā Lelei team has contributed to the programme.

"Our Tongan cultural value is that God and country is my inheritance - Ko e 'Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi'a. Our programme is faith based. Our families join the programme because they identify as Tongan and are active in their hearts to strengthen their family connection in a positive and healthy way," Kathleen says.

As for the future of the programme, Kathleen is confident it will continue, with or without government funding. "We know it works so we're not going to stop. Our hope is

that it will become sustainable. We are innovators. This is different and it's successful. But it does not fit the standards for government funding which requires we fit a mainstream model translated into our language.

"Our dream is that government agencies and funders realise the solutions to social, health and education issues need to come from our communities - to trust our Tongan people to be responsible for finding solutions for our own people."

Royal Commission extends terms of reference

General Secretary David Bush

We welcome an extension of the terms of reference to include faith-based institutions in the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse.

In March, submissions were made asking for the terms of reference to be expanded to include Churches.

Since that time, the Methodist Church has

been working on an independent process to receive and investigate historical claims. The inclusion in the Royal Commission means that the scope of what the Church has planned will be adjusted. An independent process will still be necessary to respond to claims already received and claims that will be notified during the inquiry.

The process is also being shared with the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches who may choose to use or adapt it.

Editor's note

I love Christmas and all the joy and festivity that the season brings. As I prepare this, the last edition of Touchstone for 2018, my concentration is torn between preparing for imminent holidays, the return of family, social celebrations and planning for next year.

There is a lot to juggle over coming weeks and I am fortunate that I have the resources, company and support in place to deal with the stress and demands that accompany the festive frenzy.

At no other time is the division between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' more obvious; those that have friends and family in close proximity to celebrate Christmas versus those that are lonely, isolated, bereaved or embroiled in ongoing family conflict. Those that have places to go, events to attend and people to be with, as opposed to those who have no imminent



Ady Shannon

highlights on their schedule, and those that live secure in the knowledge there is food and treasure to share, however humble, versus those who struggle to find the means to embrace the demands of the

season.

I applaud the efforts of our Connexional family in making a positive and significant difference to the lives of so many disadvantaged and struggling people, here and further afield. Sometimes those efforts are recognised and rewarded, as with the Famili Vā Lelei programme. Often that generosity of spirit and kindness that brings change and benefits to individuals and communities is performed by unsung heroes who are driven by faith and a desire to make the world a better place. We share some of those stories this month.

I wish you all a happy, safe and blessed Christmas and look forward to delivering news, opinions and updates in February 2019 when we issue the first edition of *Touchstone* for the New Year.

Touchstone database update

Each month we print and dispatch approximately 10,000 copies of Touchstone. The printed copies offer an alternative option to the online version of each edition that is live on the MCNZ website a week before the printed copies are dispatched.

We regularly receive a number of wrapped copies 'returned to sender', mostly as a result of addresses being no longer valid or incorrect. We are keen to reduce this wastage. From an economic and environmental perspective it makes sense to encourage online readership of the publication.

If you are receiving *Touchstone* and would prefer to read the publication via the online link, we welcome a message from you confirming your postal address can be taken from the database. Alternatively if you are receiving more copies than you / your parish require, please let us know so we can adjust our records to reflect a reduction in the number of copies sent out.

We can readily include your email address on our database so that a link to the publication is sent immediately when the publication is available online.

Please advise our distribution manager Karen Isaacs of any changes and include the name and full postal address we are currently using as this enables us to find and amend our records; j.isaacs@xtra.co.nz



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Wainoni Methodist Church closes



Wainoni Parish Steward Mrs Bessie Coffey (far right) presented church keys and archival records to District Superintendent Kathryn Walters, General Secretary David Bush and MCNZ Insurance and Property Manager Wendy Anderson.

Over 150 people crowded into Wainoni Methodist Church on October 28 for the congregation's closing service.

District Superintendent Kathryn Walters and Interim Parish Superintendent Brian Turner led a service in which rich memories were shared and a transition to a planned East Christchurch local ecumenical partnership involving three other parishes was outlined.

After previously turning down two government buy-out offers, the congregation voted to sell Wainoni Church. Planning for the area has no provision for replacement housing on red zoned land adjacent to the church, thereby reducing the possibility of re-establishing a sustainable congregation.

Wainoni Methodist Church opened

in July 1963, replacing an earlier East Christchurch congregation that commenced in 1937. Janice Moss, a foundation member, told of how her father negotiated with the Presbyterian Church who owned the land on which the Wainoni Methodist Church was built.

A significant development occurred in 2001-2002 when the parish established the Wainoni Avonside Community Services Trust (WACST) which, with external funding, employed a coordinator for the project. WACST now becomes an independent community organisation and is hoping to remain on site short term whilst exploring future options.

During the service, the transitioning to new possibilities for the congregation, WACST and the wider Church was marked by the presentation of appropriate symbols.

West Papuan appeals for support

Wensislaus (Wensi) Fatubun, a West Papuan film maker, environmentalist and human rights advocate, recently toured New Zealand, appealing for support for his fellow country men and women who are being systematically dispossessed of their land, language and livelihood.

As part of a national tour, Wensi addressed the congregation at Dunedin's Mornington Methodist Church reporting on the abuses that are being meted out to West Papuans. Those that protest are arrested, tortured and imprisoned. Many are killed or disappear. Thousands of hectares of rain forest on which West Papuans are dependent for foraging, hunting and habitation are being lost to palm oil plantations established by multi-nationals. As a result, West Papuans are forced into urban areas where disease is rampant.

New migrants from Java and other parts of Indonesia are quickly outnumbering West Papuans and taking over the country.

Wensi is calling on New Zealanders to pressure politicians to protest at the gross



The West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag was raised and dedicated at Mornington Methodist Church on October 14. Flying the banned flag is punishable with 15 years in jail in West Papua. From left: Bruce and Marjorie Spittle, Wensislaus Fatubun, Rev Rod Mitchell.

human rights abuses and appeal to the United Nations to have West Papua re-instated to the Decolonisation Committee of the UN. He is also appealing to New Zealand dairy farmers and their leaders not to import or use palm oil kernel from West Papua as a supplementary feed.

Individuals can assist by boycotting Nestlé products which use palm oil from West Papua, and by avoiding buying kwila hardwood decking timber or outdoor furniture. Virtually all kwila is illegally logged from West Papuan and Papua New Guinea rain forests.

Dunedin's Mornington Methodist Church declared their support for West Papua along with many other community groups that were addressed by the activist and campaigner during his tour of the country.

Methodism in Aotearoa: Origins and Impact

Explore the legacy of Samuel Leigh's 1819 visit to Aotearoa

Three strands of the New Zealand/Aotearoa Wesleyan/Methodist tradition - the Methodist Church of New Zealand, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of New Zealand and the Church of the Nazarene - will join together to present a two-day symposium at St Johns Trinity College, Auckland on 24 and 25 May 2019.

The symposium marks the bicentenary of the arrival of Rev Samuel Leigh to Aotearoa New Zealand for a short stay from 5 May to 17 June 1819. At that time, Rev Leigh accompanied CMS missionary Rev Samuel Marsden to Rangihoua, Bay of Islands, Northland. This brief visit preceded his return in

January 1822 with his wife Catherine to establish a mission station at Kaeo, near the Whangaroa Harbour in Northland.



Rev Samuel Leigh

The programme featuring international and national presenters and commentators will engage with Wesleyan/Methodist origins in our country to better understand the work of early missionaries and the response of Māori. It is hoped that this engagement will help the churches to an awareness of their part in the contemporary expression of God's mission in the light of our past.

On Friday 24 May (Wesley Day), papers will focus on many themes including: the British Context - a background to

Samuel Leigh presented by Roshan Allpress; the Māori Context by Te Aroha Rountree; Leigh in Australia and New Zealand presented by Glen O'Brien; and Indigenous Evangelism

by Gary Clover. Sessions go on to include a paper on Pākehā (European) missionaries and their wives, presented by Susan Thompson; Early Methodist beginnings in the Pacific by Lindsay Cameron; and finally, Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian reflections on Methodist influence on their people and culture by Setaita Veikune, Tovia Aumua and Ilaitia Tuwere.

Presentations continue the following day and include: Treaty to Tribulation (the Land Wars) by Geoffrey Troughton; Māori and Methodism in the

19th century by Arapera Ngaha and Rowan Tautari; and the concluding reflection/challenge What Now? What Next? presented by Peter Lineham.

For further information and registration details contact the secretary of the planning group, Rev Ian Faulkner: ian.faulkner2017@gmail.com



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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE PRESIDENT

New ways for the future

President
Setaita Taumoepeau K VeikuneVice President
Nicola Teague Grundy

“E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi ki te raranga i te whāriki

kia mōhio tātou ki ā tātou.

Mā te mahi tahi ō ngā whenu,

mā te mahi tahi ō ngā kairaranga,

ka oti tēnei whāriki.”

The mat of understanding cannot be woven by one strand alone. Only by the working together of the strands and the working together of the weavers will such a mat be completed.

In the last week, President Setaita has been at the Pacific Aotearoa Summit in Auckland. Over the past year, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples has engaged with more than 2500 Pacific People representing community organisations, youth, people with disabilities, businesses, NGOs and churches, on its journey to refresh the Pacific Vision set in 1999.

The theme of the summit, Lalanga Fou, has both Tongan and Samoan origins. It means weaving anew. The vision is that Pacific values are the anchor, each generation weaves the foundations for the next, with Pacific communities innovating within Aotearoa, the Pacific region and the world.

As we enter the season of Advent, perhaps we as Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa should begin to reflect on how we begin to weave anew. As we think about the birth of a child, we are aware that, for us, the anticipation of birth brings hope and possibilities. Of course, it also brings fear and worry.

While Advent is certainly a time of celebration and anticipation of Christ's birth, it is more than that. It is only in the shadow of Advent that the miracle of Christmas can be fully understood and appreciated, and it is only in the light of Christmas that the Christian life makes any sense. It is about the fulfilled promise of Christ's first coming and the yet-to-be fulfilled promise of his second coming that Karl Barth wrote these words: “Unfulfilled and fulfilled promise are related to each other, as are dawn and sunrise. Both promise, and are, in fact, the same promise.

If anywhere at all then, it is precisely in the light of the coming of Christ that faith has become Advent faith, the expectation of future revelation. But faith knows for whom and for what it is waiting. It is fulfilled faith because it lays hold on the fulfilled promise.” The promise for Israel and the promise for Aotearoa and for the Methodist Church is Jesus Christ. He has come, and he will come again. This is the essence of Advent.

As we prepare for this Christmas season, and anticipate and reflect on the birth of Christ, let us remember not to get caught up in all the busyness and concerns that are not important. Let us open our hearts to the possibilities and think about our future, but not only our future, the future for those who we continue to wait for.

As parents, we try to do whatever we can to ensure our children have the opportunities that we would like for them. We think about their future and try to ensure that we can provide as best we can for them now to ensure success for the future. We build support networks around us. We seek to be the best we can, with help, because it is impossible to do so on our own.

What is our vision not only now, but for the next generation? What are the values that anchor us and the foundations that we hold on to? As we continue to explore what it means to weave us together to proclaim life, let us be willing to be committed to seeking new ways to be Methodist in Aotearoa, to be willing to act justly, to speak out against injustices and challenge injustice when we see it happening.

Let's challenge ourselves to think of weaving anew and to seek to do this like the Ministry of Pacific People's did - by engaging with people across the Church, at every place in the Church, with our children, rangatahi, parishes, ecumenical partners, and our older people.

Have a Happy Blessed Advent family!

Vahanoa: A Space of Opportunities

Siosifa Pole

Vahanoa, meaning unknown or uncertain space, is made out of two words: vaha, 'space' and noa, 'empty or zero'. The notion of noa in this context is not about void but is about unknown. When we speak of vahanoa, we refer to the deep ocean, a space of uncertainty, but at the same time a space that can provide new opportunities.

When I am in Dunedin, I usually go to St Clair beach for a walk on my day off. One day, during rough seas, big waves rolled in, crashing on the seawall of the esplanade. I looked to the ocean with fear and wonder. I was reminded of the Lampedusa Cross (a cross in Dunedin Methodist Parish made from wrecked boats) and what it represents - the danger of crossing the ocean and the unknown obstacles that voyagers face as they navigate their way. I was reminded of the courage my ancestors had as they travelled through rough seas, powerful currents and strong winds searching for lands of opportunities.

Vahanoa can also refer to unknown land and territories where people migrate to and settle. Because they have moved from the familiar to the unfamiliar, they are regarded as people who are settled on the vahanoa, an unfamiliar space. Every migrant who settles in a new land



Siosifa Pole at St Clair beach with daughters Naomi Jr and Kakala

will face the reality of the unknown and unfamiliar challenges. These challenges can pose a threat to any migrant's integrity and cultural identity. Yet, settling in a new land can offer new opportunities for the betterment of life. I believe this to be the experience of most of the refugees who settle in our cities. Their new destinations offer them hope and a better future for their children.

Although vahanoa can pose a threat to those who travel across it, we cannot deny the opportunities it provides for those who have courage and vision of a better future. It is that kind of hope which gives travellers the mindset to stay positive during hardship. We are all travellers in one way or the other and we are always in the middle of vahanoa experience. Sometimes, when we are in that sphere of life, we give up hope and

optimism rather than tracking on with courage and expectation of opportunities. John O'Donohue in his book *To Bless the Space Between Us*, writes: “Consequently, when we stand before crucial thresholds in our lives, we have no rituals to protect, encourage, and guide us as we cross over into the unknown. For such crossings we need to find new words.” Finding new words is not good enough without finding new actions and new meanings.

I am always impressed with the calling story of the first disciples as the author of Luke's gospel wrote in Luke 5:1-11. Jesus said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” As a result, they caught so many fish their nets were almost destroyed.

This story portrays the picture of those who are in the vahanoa experience. They are frustrated and stressed. It is understandable that they were inclined to give up hope altogether. Yet, the words of Jesus stirred them to maintain their hope and helped them to realise that there were still opportunities to discover in the midst of their chaos. Furthermore, it was his failure that gave Simon another opportunity to embrace a new action and to find a new meaning for his life and career.

Relatively, it feels to me that our Church, in some ways, is going through a vahanoa experience. Like Simon Peter, we are all frustrated and stressed because we have worked so hard with little result. To add to our frustration, our membership is declining and congregations aging. We are obviously in the middle of the crossroad. Can we still have hope in the midst of our uncertainty? Can we still find opportunities for growth in the unknown?

Our Methodist tradition reminds us that we must look beyond the four walls of our church buildings for opportunities for action and mission. This tradition reconnects us with the well-known saying of John Wesley: “The world is my parish.” Vahanoa reminds us of the challenges we face in our journey in the unknown space. It also reminds us of the hope we have yet to discover in our exploration. Let's ask God, and each other, where best to 'cast our nets' in the midst of all our uncertainties.



God is good

To the editor,

'God is good' ... 'All the time!' 'All the time' ... 'God is good!'

Really? Why then does God allow devastating earthquakes, fires, floods and personal tragedy such as a child dying from cancer or a youth by suicide? I share Bill Peddie's concern (November Touchstone) at the way our youth leaders are encouraging young people to use this responsive call.

In the eyes of the general public there is very little difference in shouting 'God is good' to shouting 'Allah is great'. Young people are intrinsically idealistic, they want to do good, they want to make a better world than their parents achieved. Recall our youthful delight in doing things together. Songs and chants have a unifying 'feel good' effect. But without critiquing, a religious 'feel good' effect can lead to dreadful consequences such as terrorism in the name of Allah and psychological damage in the name of God.

I believe Allah/God is/are great and good. I am also glad Christians have opted for 'good' over 'great'. The Bible certainly

Human rights

To the editor,

The cosy front page headline of Touchstone (November) looked promising: "Conference 2018 Weaving us together to proclaim life".

However, inside, two letter writers revealed an offensive reality of Conference - the description, on the meeting floor, of same sex relationships as "bestiality". Shame on the speaker and shame on the Church, an organisation that proclaims the love of Christ for all, to all.

God's books open

To the editor,

There is a report that the NZ Government is to force petrol companies to 'open their books' in relation to fuel prices (RNZ Checkpoint 8 October 2018).

On a completely different matter, I reflected that God's 'books are open'. A simple description of everything was available in the Bible from that early time. In the beginning God created a heaven and an earth. Fundamentally, the creation is perceivable because of its transparency and light. The content and largeness of the creation is describable and comprehensible from simple observation.

describes God as great but Jesus modelled goodness.

That God is good is a given; as Christians we base our faith on this. But is it wise to chorus these words without thought? God is not perceived as good by millions of people. There are many who feel if there is a God who is in control of the world this God does terrible things. To mindlessly shout 'God is good!' is likely to evoke a gut response for some that inwardly responds, 'God is not good. I hate God! God let ... happen to my family!'

We are unable to fully comprehend God but like all understandings knowledge is continually evolving. That bad things happen is a fact of life. Our faith leads us to understand God does not cause bad things but God is ever with us, feeling our hurt, offering comfort and inner strength. God is with us in our joys, rejoicing with us, and encouraging us in our vision for a better world. Youth leaders and youth, for a reflective responsive call please consider this:

'God is with us' ... 'All the time!' 'All the time' ... 'God is with us!'

Rosalie Sugrue, Kapiti

What next as we walk backwards into the future? Racial discrimination? Dawn raids on minorities? Outlawing of women wearing trousers and men wearing skirts?

It's time for the Methodist Church of NZ to voluntarily align itself with the NZ Human Rights Act of 1993.

Janice Gill, Stoke, Nelson

Editor's note: The views expressed were of an individual, not the Conference. The Church has aligned itself with the Human Rights Act since 1993.

This I see as an example of a capability from God's 'books being open'. God's open books policy makes the creation graspable and definable to observers, despite the time era and their state of knowledge. If the open books policy did not exist, perhaps life would not exist. The policy abets science and 'leads life on' to know more about what is in the books. Curiosity has expanded human comprehension of the cosmos and the atom alike since transparency and light pervades both the largest and smallest scales of the creation.

C M Bartle, Featherston, Wellington

HONEST TO GOD

Ian Harris

Secular Christmas

What on earth are we New Zealanders doing, celebrating Christmas? The country is increasingly secular, especially in public life. Jesus has been dropped from the parliamentary prayer. The proportion of those who identify as Christian in the population decreases every census.

Yet Christmas keeps coming around in a whirl of sending cards, buying presents, putting up decorations, mounting Nativity tableaux, playing Santa, dramatising the tales of Mary and manger, cooking, partying, singing carols, getting together with the wider family, going on holiday - and people of all religions and of none find themselves caught up in it.

We shouldn't be too disapproving if some of those seasonal activities don't focus single-mindedly on stories of Jesus' birth. Taken together, the celebrations have a value quite apart from the Christian motif that for centuries was the heart and soul of Christmas.

There were mid-winter celebrations long before Jesus came on the scene. The Romans made merry in the festivities of Saturnalia, and in Scandinavia the Yuletide feast coincided with the northern winter solstice. The Church gradually supplanted those pagan celebrations with one of its own, centred on the birth of Jesus. For Christians it is a time to celebrate the conviction that Jesus is the human face of God. And the human makes him secular, because the secular is all about the world of time and space of which humanity is a part.

Properly understood, therefore, the Christian Christmas does not drift away from secular reality in a metaphysical haze about a very special baby. Just the opposite: it locates religious experience firmly within that reality. It adds value to the secular, by bringing God down to earth. One way of looking at Christmas is as God emptying him/herself into humanity through Jesus and all that he became. That is one very powerful reason to keep celebrating Christmas in a secular age.

There are other reasons, which those who do not hold that faith can share. On the most mundane level, the Christmas buying spree gives the economy a predictable annual fillip. There would be long faces among retailers, advertisers and tax-

gatherers if the season did not nudge shoppers to open their purses and buy, buy, buy.

A more worthy reason is that every society needs occasions when people can step back from the daily grind and relax with family and friends. When everyone is doing this at the same time, it enhances the sense of sharing in a wider social experience.

Christmas, traditionally, provides such a high point.

It also prompts people to think of others in a way they don't always do through the year. They send cards and exchange news with friends and family whom they may not

have contacted since the previous Christmas, and won't for another year. Anything that draws people together and strengthens relationships has to be good, and Christmas has evolved as the natural time to put the time and effort into doing that.

Gifts are another way to show thoughtfulness, and gift-giving is deeply embedded in Christmas. Christians sometimes trace that back to the gifts which the Wise Men brought to the infant Jesus, but the practice goes back even further - Saturnalia was a prime time for exchanging gift-boxes. Again, however, the Church was able to give the custom a new twist. It brought the boxes into the churches and invited worshippers to put money and gifts in them, which were then distributed among the needy. There are modern parallels in appeals to give toys, food and gifts for people who would otherwise have a very lean Christmas. Fund-raisers also tap the spirit of giving, as witness the flurry of mailings from charities in the lead-up to Christmas.

One more reason why Christmas maintains its place in a secular age is perhaps the most important of all. Marking as it does the birth of a child, it remains pre-eminently the festival centred on children. Parents sharing Christmas with their young children experience it in a different, deeper way than before they had children, both as bearers of life and bearers of tradition. They wish fervently for a world fit for their children - for all children - to grow up in.

That is a secular hope as much as a Christian one. The difference is that Christians believe the child they honour at Christmas, grown to manhood, holds the key to that hope. But Christmas is a reminder that everyone can share the dream - and, better, do their bit towards making it come true.



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Public Issues Network

Pacific reset brings NGOs back to the aid landscape

Betsan Martin,
Public Issues Coordinator

The Pacific Reset agenda begins with positioning Aotearoa New Zealand as a Pacific Nation which reaches from Papua New Guinea to Hawai'i.

Spanning this geography reaches to more ancient and deeper Pacific genealogies than the current alignments of nation states - and shifts away from the developing and developed divides, while recognizing the particular responsibility of the New Zealand realm - Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau and Nauru.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also brings back a common agenda which enables us to support Pacific peoples to achieve their aspirations, and also look at our own sustainability and address social and environmental harms within Aotearoa New Zealand: inequality, poverty, ethnic divisions, polluted water, unfair freshwater allocations and more. There is more solidarity in the shared work of the SDGs which is rather well summarized as five Ps - People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace - with a more dynamic imagery of interacting parts of a circle.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters brought the oceanic scope of commitment in the Pacific to his new announcements for the Pacific

Reset programme when he spoke to the Council of International Development conference at the end of October.

Pacific Reset means moving beyond providing aid with Pacific nations as beneficiaries, to working with Pacific nations in control of their own resources and determining their own futures. On that front, Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama has just been re-elected by a thin majority, and New Caledonia has voted 'non' to independence from France. Despite Kanak activism for independence, economic 'gloom' following prosperity from mining may have tipped the scales away from independence.

A feature of Winston Peters' speech was bringing NGOs back into focus for the NZ overseas aid programme. For the past nine years, NGO community-based partnerships took a back seat to business models for economic development. Now, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will negotiate partnerships with NGOs with capacity to deliver in areas of strategic focus - including working on priority areas of non-communicable diseases, barriers to trade, youth

unemployment, sustainability and climate change.

The New Strategic International Development Fund is intended to be responsive to communities, and NGOs are recognized for their ability to reach the most vulnerable people and bring economic and social benefits in remote regions.

NGOs have particular strength in being able to achieve constructive and inclusive dialogue in Pacific communities - and this does not only mean NGOs bringing aid and humanitarian programmes. Winston Peters signaled support for the growth of Pacific NGOs.

Minister Peters noted Red Cross and Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) as significant partners, certainly in terms of financial support, singling out VSA with \$45 million and Red Cross receiving \$10.5 million over five years.

While NGOs have been brought back into the centre of the aid landscape, this does not discount the significance of development collaborations with the private sector and research institutes.

Pacific Reset will bring more diplomatic posts in Pacific countries - this in a setting of immense great power interests moving to the Pacific region, and increasingly contested interests

in trade, security and strategic political influence, including access to trade and marine resources. The aid budget has increased to .28% GDP (up from 23% in 2017) - but far off the mark of .7% as the UN target for aid. Out of the New Zealand aid budget, 60% is spent in the Pacific.

Recently, \$12 million in humanitarian aid has been given to the International Committee of the Red Cross for Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Papua New Guinea. A \$5 million package was provided to Indonesia for the earthquake and tsunami recovery.



Creating communities of resistance and hope

Lesieli Samiu

“Without resistance there is no hope. Without each other there is no community. Without community, there is no church. We are the Prophetic voice of today and we need to both speak up, step out in faith and act.” From an essay by Lesieli Samiu.

It was a delight and an honour to participate in this year's contextual theological refresher course for clergy and laity organized by the Asian Theological Academy in Negombo, Sri Lanka. The two-week course involved 26 delegates from nine countries across Asia. The Bible studies, lecturers' presentations and group discussions, based on the theme of resistance and hope, were invigorating, challenging and insightful.

As part of the course, we went on exposure visits to communities including the Ingriya Tea plantation, Chilaw fishing community and Port City in Colombo. This was important for us to gain a deeper understanding of what



Delegates at a theological refresher course in Sri Lanka.

is happening in Sri Lanka and in third world countries. Engaging in 'resistance' is a difficult task and many are unmotivated or withdraw. But without resistance there is no hope, which makes it more important for us to have a good critical understanding of our reality and social context because every theology and theological work starts with the context of people's realities.

Many of us were challenged and encouraged to re-read the Bible from our own contexts and, in doing so, we realised the colonial mind-set that we occupy due to the events and historical trauma that have occurred in our histories. Practising the art of 're-reading' was almost like a reformation of the mind, body and spirit, to be able to 'see' and 'hear' again with clarity and

understanding, and knowing that it is not so much about what is in front of us but what one thinks of 'what' they see and 'how' they see it. Invisibility has become the mark of many communities around the world and the number is increasing. Invisibility is like death, and with it there is a feeling of injustice; people cannot respond to this because of the power that is oppressing and dominating them.

Our theology is an act of love, solidarity, compassion and care. Our theology is done by our feet. Religion is made by movement. It is not a building but it is getting out of our comfort zone to be disturbed by what is going on around us and the world. As Christians, it is part of our identity to be in community; to walk with others, not alone. The church is not a club; instead, the church is diverse. We are called to be sent. Jesus called us to be with him, not physically, but to be sent out because mission belongs to God, not us.

I have learnt and gained so much from this experience. It has made a profound impact in my life, my work and my faith as a Pasifika and as a Christian.

The Ageing Experience

Jan Fogg

'Am I part of the Christmas celebration too?'

The lead up to Christmas is often a very busy time for young families: end of year functions at school, leaving celebrations, work parties, shopping for presents, planning for holidays, planning for Christmas itself.

Older people may sometimes feel a bit 'left out' amongst all this busyness, even if we are included in some of the invitations.

It's good to remind ourselves of two things: the passages in the gospels which detail important roles for older people around the birth of Jesus, such as Simeon and Anna as the tiny baby Jesus was presented in the Temple, according to the Jewish law; and the important task for older people of 'being' rather than 'doing' at this stage of life - being able to offer wisdom.

I think on a word in the scripture which keeps popping up in all kinds of situations. It's a very important word in scripture - remember. And, of course, as we 'remember' Christmases past, we cannot help but think of those very busy times when we were younger, and

of how it felt like that busyness gave us our place within the family. Is there some gentle wisdom we can offer at this busy time?

Now, for those older ones reading this, we may find ourselves in many different situations: whether living alone or with a spouse, in a care-home, in a different part of the country than our children, some without children, some in a cultural environment different from our heart culture, or maybe you are in a shared living space with a child. We can still feel quite marginalized in the family grouping. Almost certainly we will feel marginalized by society's attitude towards us - we tend not to be the age group which will make large totals ring up on the cash register, so society says, "Forget them".

Who remembers us, we might ask? If we are fortunate, we will find ourselves part of a church community which is thankful to have a large group of older people in its midst, and appropriate activities are being organized. Where I am, a community-organized 'Place at the table' extends a free welcome to any who feel isolated on Christmas Day to come to dinner; the church hall is filled with decorated tables, and they provide a special home-cooked Christmas dinner and fellowship.

It's about belonging, being able to participate in a community in the place and time of Christmas. Could you invite a friend to a special activity or church service? We think so much

of Christmas as a time for family celebration and inclusion, yet social isolation is an increasing concern for many, and certainly for older people.

In our Methodist communities many will be hearing about the poverty and isolation of individuals in communities overseas; we will have an opportunity to contribute, so making a practical difference to some of these people. That's a significant way for any of us to feel, yes, we are giving and making a difference. Yes, we do belong. May Christmas be blessed and peace-filled in the world.



Parish Websites

Websites are fundamentally a collection of documents on a server running a programme to use a set of defined technology protocols to make the documents available for display on a remote but network connected computer.



Peter Lane.

- Reduced need to code from scratch.
- Easy to create a unified and consistent look and feel.
- Version control.
- Edit permission management (control of who can edit / delete specific content).
- Preloaded content can

be automatically published and /or taken down to a schedule.

It's not all roses though. The key disadvantages of CMS are:

- Limited or no ability to create functionality not envisioned in the CMS (e.g. layouts, web apps). Basically translated, this means that imagination is always better than computers.
- Increased need for special expertise and training for content authors.

Choosing which CMS to use (or which web service to use) can make a huge difference to how easy it is to maintain your website. Things to be considered include:

- Features - does the system let you do the things that are important to your site? An important feature to look for is whether there is separation between how your website looks (style) and the content that delivers your message. Usually, you want content providers to concentrate on content, and the look is determined by a template or specific

The motivation behind the original technology was to create an easier way to share academic research within the academic community and focused on text documents. Over time, the technologies have expanded and evolved so that, now, website technologies drive everything from online banking and online shopping to social media to remote control of your house air-conditioning and lighting.

Today, a 'standard' website would use server-based software called a Content Management System (CMS) and build the site from a collection of components that contain content and display that content in different ways.

CMS have a broader context than just websites but for this column we will focus on Web CMS. Web content includes text and embedded graphics, photos, video, audio, maps, other media and programme code (e.g. for applications) that displays content or interacts with the user. The primary advantages CMS provide for websites are:



brand or style.

- Flexibility - supports features like templates and add-ins that make it easy to change a whole website or add a new feature. Having said this, too much flexibility actually adds complexity and potentially makes things harder.
- Support - how easy is it to get technical assistance, trained and experienced contractors and templates and add-ins?
- Price - yes, money matters, however, there are many free and/or cheap products available.

There are hundreds of CMS to choose from and I will comment on a few important ones.

WordPress is the most popular web CMS globally, reported as being used by about 30% of active websites worldwide. In the past, I hated WordPress with a passion. I thought it was hard to use and it had an abysmal user interface.

However, the releases over the last

*Peter Lane Principal Consultant
System Design and Communication Services*

decade have made major improvements and I'm quite happy with it now. Being popular means that there is a wealth of resources available to support WordPress use, though this adds some complexity. Try and minimise the number of add-ins you require.

Methodist.org.nz is powered by Acclipse. There are few good things to say about Acclipse. Another Methodist website, kiwiconnexion.nz is powered by Mahara. Mahara extends the concept of a CMS by adding specific features relevant to education providers and is actually a class of software known as Learning Management Systems (LMS).

Ultimately, it is not usually the technical bits of a website that make it good or bad. What matters is the impact the site's content has on the community it is intended for. That is a column for another issue.

Peter welcomes questions, suggestions and ideas for articles. Email dct@dct.org.nz. He also operates a website for people interested in improving the way we can use technology www.dct.org.nz

Looking back, moving forward

Following the November meeting of UCANZ Standing Committee, and closing in on Advent and Christmas, we bring all our readers God's blessing for the Advent and Christmas season and the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

This continues to be one of the central annual festivals of the Christian Church, and one that as followers of Jesus we share in common. May it be a happy and holy time in all our parishes.

Cooperative Ventures (CVs) have already received the issue of uNETy that reports on the latest meeting of Standing Committee. It was an interesting

meeting for me, because we farewelled Paul Burton who has represented the Christian Churches for several years and, in his absence, Ron Malpass of the Methodist Church. I always enjoy the wide-ranging knowledge and commitment to CVs and the ecumenical movement of representatives such as these. We know that others will be appointed to fill the gaps, and so we look forward to the new energy and enthusiasm they will bring. We are delighted that another current member is Rev Fakaofa Kaio who, we believe, is the first moderator of the Presbyterian Church to be a member of Standing Committee.

Adrian Skelton (Executive Officer) and Robyn Daniels

(Administrative Assistant) are well-established on the top floor of the Anglican Centre in Wellington, and Standing Committee is grateful to them for their work on our behalf. Adrian has already completed two years with us as Executive Officer. In response to a motion at the 2015 Forum, he quickly saw the issues around the Partner Support Fund and became involved with the 'Option C' proposal. He has shown real commitment to it, advocating for it in parishes around the country. Co-chair David Hall has put many hours into this as well. Stuart Sinclair is the other Co-chair.

Standing Committee includes representatives of the five partner denominations. I always

find the reports from the denominational representatives interesting, outlining the current key issues. With the recent Methodist Conference, and Presbyterian General Assembly and Anglican Diocesan Synod season also, in recent weeks there was plenty to share. I personally have been interested to hear updates on the high level conversations currently taking place between the Methodist and Anglican Churches in New Zealand.

Also on Standing Committee are representatives of the CVs, elected at the UCANZ Biennial Forum. These and members of the local Joint Regional Council/Regional Forums/UPOG/Churches Together in Northland bring a

distinctively local flavour to the meetings. Issues in the parishes, appointment of ministers and new initiatives all bring life to our understanding.

There are many signs of life in the CVs as they seek to remain faithful to the Act of Commitment, to partnership and new ways of relating to each other. There are also changes in the 'Appointing Partner' and 'Convening Partner'. We do understand, although of course we have regrets, that there are difficulties in some CVs, often around future viability; issues that also reflect those in the wider parent churches and in the community at large.

The UCANZ Standing Committee thanks all who have served in CVs this past year and continued faithful to Jesus Christ.

Rev John McCaul

Anglican Representative on the UCANZ Standing Committee and Associate Priest in Wellington Cathedral of St Paul.

Why is the birth of Jesus good news?

Rev Greg Hughson

During Advent we have the opportunity to reflect on the significance of the birth of Jesus for our lives today. Over 2,000 years ago an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, a Palestinian Jew and a descendant of David, in a dream saying (perhaps in the Aramaic language so that Joseph could understand): "Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."

She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1: 20-21). Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means the Lord saves.

From the start of his gospel, Matthew makes it clear that the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus will have huge significance for 'his people'. Christians all around the planet now fall into this category. 'His people' are all people who choose to respond to the call to follow Jesus, regardless of age, culture or gender identity. As 'His people', we now have a way to receive 'salvation from sin', a spiritual way into the process of being liberated to become the people God created us to be, in relationship with Jesus. To be 'saved from our sins' (i.e. to overcome and eliminate all that gets in the way of our relationship with God and with each other) requires a willingness to change, an openness to repentance, and an openness to ongoing healing and sanctification (growth in holiness) in our lives.

John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Jesus, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. This is he who was spoken of

through the prophet Isaiah" (Matthew 3: 1-3).

John's task was to set the scene for the one who would come after him, one who would have a far more powerful and significant ministry than his own. John declared: "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11).

In Luke's story of Jesus' birth, we read that there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. Yet another angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2: 8-11).

The birth of Jesus is good news indeed. Leading up to Christmas this year, and on Christmas Day, as we gather with our families and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus, may we experience something of the same joy referred to by the angels. It is a joy which derives from being recipients of the greatest gift we could ever be offered, the gift of forgiveness and salvation through faith in Jesus of Nazareth who was born, lived, died and rose again for us.

Last Christmas a close friend and colleague gave me a card with these words, by Roy Lessin: "If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer. But our greatest need was (and still is) forgiveness, so God sent us a Saviour."

What is God doing?

Andrew Doubleday

It's becoming clear that a new era for the people of planet Earth has begun. Underpinning this are increasingly sophisticated technologies which are enhancing our lives and on which we have become dependent.

These technologies are not the exclusive domain of the west, of the 'first' world, but increasingly depend on the creativity and work of people from every part of the planet, irrespective of race, culture, social or economic position.

This implies a great deal of interdependence. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any one of us to

realistically imagine that we can survive without the efforts of others. A great many others. This applies from individuals to nations. At the most basic level I am dependant on others for food - food that is grown elsewhere, processed and packaged somewhere else, transported to distribution centres, and sent on to my local supermarkets. This process depends on resources from other countries, processing machinery, transportation equipment, information systems and fuel. This is all part of a globally interdependent system where there is a great deal of specialisation. Each specialist contributes what they do best and, often, what only they can do. This for the benefit of all.

On the one hand this can be argued as a very good thing, because it reminds us that continued peace and prosperity are dependent on our getting along and ensuring that all get a fair go. And more people than ever are getting a fairer go. International health scientist Dr Hans Rosling in his book Factfulness opens with a simple test of 13 multiple choice questions about the state of the world. I

answered two correctly. Apparently that was about average. Rosling shows that the world is, in fact, in a much better state than most of us think it is. Our tendency is to believe that the world is in a much worse condition than we imagine - that a greater proportion of the planet's people live in desperate poverty, with high levels of illiteracy and economic deprivation, than is actually the case. This is not to suggest that we do not face significant challenges and threats. We do. It has long seemed to me that our



Andrew Doubleday

future as a species might hang by a thread; that civilisation is, in the end, fragile and thin. Given the level of specialisation and interdependence that is required for 'life as we know it' to continue to exist, the future demands cooperation rather than fragmentation.

On the other hand, with every step forward down this path there will always be forces wishing to drag us back - often to either a misremembered past that never existed, or one that benefited only a privileged few. We see these forces in the world at the moment with fear-filled calls to increasing nationalism in repudiation of dreaded globalism. Stoking the fear of the 'other' drives this process.

We see these forces at work in the Church also, as fear of the uncertainties of the future and changes it might require of us, tugs us back to that which is known. That which we are called back to may be unjust, and may not have actually worked for us at all well, but it has one plus - it is known.

We will undoubtedly face challenges as a Church in the years ahead, as we are confronted with a society which is changing at a head-spinning rate, and are invited to discern that which may be strange and unfamiliar to us and yet is life giving, against that which is known and diminishing.

I pray we make the best choices.

NZMWF Convention 2018. Faka'apa'apa 'atu

Seini Taufa, Mission and Media Lead

In late October, the New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship (NZMWF) hosted its National Convention in Christchurch with the theme Chosen People, Called to Proclaim.

There were 100 participants from all over New Zealand, who came together under the leadership of Dianne Claughton (President 2016-2018) and her executive team of Ofa Giblin, Valmai Horton, Moe Petaia, Philomena Petaia, Lynne Scott, Unaisi Tikoinaki and Roz Wilkie.

As women, we celebrated the Methodist Suffrage trail, 125 years since women gained the vote - a reminder of how far we've come as sisters in Aotearoa New Zealand. We paid tribute to members of the NZMWF who were called home to our maker. It was great to see familiar faces of the past, and it was also a blessing to see more young women take part in the 2018 convention.

During their term, Dianne and her executive team were tasked with choosing worthy causes for the combined MWF/PWA projects, and these were



Attendees at the NZMWF Convention 2018.

announced during the convention. For 2018-2019, the two projects chosen were the Social Empowering Education Programme (SEEP) in Fiji - an initiative that aims to improve rural agricultural livelihoods - and the Bellyful Project in New Zealand. Bellyful provides free meals for families with new-born babies, and families with young children who are struggling with illness, particularly those without a support network.

A highlight echoed by all in attendance were the Bible studies sessions run by Rev Merryl Blair from Stirling Theological

College in Melbourne. Over the course of two days, Merryl shared her wisdom and gave us a front row seat to the lives of Sarah and Naomi. It was a reminder of the blessings that follow a life of servanthood lived by those who came before us. As a first-time delegate, the messages were truly empowering.

On the final day of the convention, delegates and observers alike took part in a communion service which saw the commissioning of the new NZMWF President (Siniva Vaitohi) and Committee. For 2019-2020, the executive team will

be accompanied by a support person (advisor) or buddy for each of the roles. As members of the incoming executive team, we would like to thank Dianne and her executive team for hosting a wonderful convention and for carrying the torch over the past two years. On behalf of our NZMWF President Siniva Vaitohi, we ask that you keep the work of NZMWF and the 18 districts represented in your prayers as we continue to move forward with the grace of God.

Two Lakes Healing; a journey of transformation

Mark Gibson

I often think that we have retreated into our motorcars so we no longer need to hear. In this space we distance ourselves from the voices of our land and waters, so we no longer hear their stories. We silence them. We marginalise them. We no longer listen.

Two Lakes Healing was all about removing these barriers and beginning to listen again to the silenced land and waters, the silenced wairua (spirit) of two iconic Canterbury waterways - Wairewa (Lake Forthsyth) and Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere).

By starting and ending our 70km one-day cycle ride on Wairewa and NgAAti Moki marae, we immersed ourselves in both the landscape and culture of lake hapū. It was a powerful, life-giving and life-changing space to journey in.

Through the warm hospitality extended on the marae, we experienced the hospitality of the land and waterways. Through the stories shared we heard the suffering and destruction wrought by colonisation on people and

landscape, as well as the stories of hope, transformation and healing.

The River of Life, an eco-ministry of the Central South Island Synod, was once again the catalyst for this incredible journey. As with Seven Rivers, Seven Weeks in 2017, we provided the vision for Two Lakes Healing and then 25 others joined us to create a multi-layered and rich event in which a variety of people participated. By journey's end, many warm new connections had formed and existing ones had deepened. As well as being a journey through a landscape, this was a journey into community.

Along the way, people met us to share stories of how hapū, rūnanga, community organisations, farmers, scientists and statutory bodies are working to restore biodiversity and the health of the lakes and their tributaries. Both lakes are highly degraded, yet there is a growing number of people creating new possibilities for healing.

Too often efforts for restoration are fragmented and have a single focus. As we seek a healthier and more just future for all peoples and for God's community of life in which we live, it is vital that



Participants taking a break outside Ngāti Moki Marae.

our kaupapa is holistic. We need to weave all the strands together. The journey we made - both physical and metaphoric - intentionally wove together the strands of building community, cycling, ecological restoration, bi-cultural partnership, science, creativity and spirituality.

We had four workshops to express our experiences and learning through creative writing, drawing and photography. At the end of each

session, we shared something that we had created. One of the short poems that emerged from my experience was:

Karakia
Karakia at dawn,
Karakia before we eat,
Karakia before we leave,
Karakia for the lake,
Karakia to say goodbye,
all of life,
interwoven,
sacred.

Beyond the weekend, the journey, the deep and rich experiences and inspiration we shared, we are now creating a book we hope to publish and launch in February 2019. It will tell through poetry, drawing and photography some of our story.

Already it is looking likely that there will be a Two Lakes Healing 2019. We have had many expressions of interest from people who have heard about it and want to participate.



“Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.” Phil. 4:5

Join the lifeline for change

This year's Christmas Appeal uses the Sustainable Development Goals as a lens to look at how we can contribute to a world where 'no one is left behind'.

Supporting local partners who are on the frontline of climate change or stopping violence against women and children are ways to contribute to this powerful global agenda. Business cannot be left to run as usual. Working together, we can join the lifeline so people have food, water and justice.

At the global level, CWS recognises the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as one opportunity to address some of the factors that drive poverty and injustice.

In September 2015, at the United Nations General Assembly, world leaders signed up to 17 ambitious goals that, if achieved, would transform the world as we know it. From the first goal, to 'end poverty in all its forms everywhere', to the 17th, requiring a strong commitment to partnership and cooperation, nations agreed to a vision 'to leave no one behind'.

Alongside the goals are 169 targets - for example, free and equitable primary and secondary school education for all - and the expectation

that nations will report on their achievements. Governments are collecting the relevant statistics and dates are set for reporting.

Built on the successful eight Millennium Development Goals that halved the number of people living in poverty and gave 2.6 billion people access to improved drinking water, these new goals are intended to benefit everyone. In 2000, when the MDGs came into effect, climate change and the state of the environment were not seen as strongly linked to development. By 2015, they were unavoidable. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to be led and owned by individual nations. The interconnected goals were adopted by and for all countries, including Aotearoa New Zealand.

Estimates vary markedly, but one UN agency suggests they will cost US\$5-7 trillion to implement but could open up US\$12 trillion of market opportunities, substantially improve health and wellbeing, and create 380 million jobs.

Far from being a nice wish list aimed at poor people, these goals are highly political. We need to find ways to forge new agreements for a shared and sustainable future rather than fight over shrinking resources. To meet the aspirations of people needing food, decent work and

protection will require deliberate action. This new agenda offers a mechanism for rebalancing the global economy in the interests of the majority.

Our partners can reach communities where governments cannot go. They know that change happens when people work together, sharing knowledge and skills. Donations to the Christmas Appeal will give them the resources to help more people.

- 1. For the third year in a row, the number of hungry people increased. In 2017, 821 million people did not get enough to eat.**
- 2. Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40 per cent of today's global population.**
- 3. 68.5 million people have been forcibly displaced. 85 per cent of displaced people are in developing countries.**
- 4. Approximately 28.5 million primary school age children who are out of school live in conflict-affected areas.**
- 5. One in five women and girls have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within the last 12 months. Yet, 49 countries have no laws that specifically protect women from such violence.**
- 6. Corruption, bribery, theft and tax evasion cost some US\$1.26 trillion for developing countries per year.**
- 7. Global emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) have increased by almost 50% since 1990. Emissions grew more quickly between 2000 and 2010 than in each of the three previous decades.**

Be the lifeline

Thank you for your support for Christian World Service. It is a vote of confidence in the work we do together to put an end to poverty.

Your generosity, coupled with the passion and dedication of our partners, has accomplished much over the past year. In the words of our partner the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees, you have been a lifeline.

Your support has given families the hope and resources they need to survive and in some cases adapt or rebuild. Small farmers in Nicaragua have learned how to manage scarce water supplies or obtained new seeds to replant during drought. Children and young people from Syria have gone to school in Jordan and Lebanon. Families have replanted gardens and repaired rainwater systems in Tonga. With your donations our partners are able to achieve real gains for some of the people who are hardest to reach. Your care and concern for



Pauline McKay

people in need has made a real difference.

When I have met with our supporters this year, I have been impressed by people's interest in the United Nations' Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs fit closely with our vision for a world free of poverty and offer a positive way forward that draws upon the

strengths of the work how partners are doing. Working on this agenda, we can talk about what it will take to meet some of the pressing challenges of our times and help those who have been left the furthest behind.

Methodist Conference encouraged support for the Christmas Appeal as part of our efforts to achieve the SDGs.

The Christian faith was born with a vision that the world can be different. Your gift to the Christmas Appeal will contribute to the vision of a world where everyone has a place: hungry people will have food despite climate change, and families will be able to address violence in the home, workplace and on the streets.

Working together, we can make sure no one is left behind. Please give generously to the 2018 Christmas Appeal.

Pauline McKay, National Director

Gifts for change

The task of finding gifts can be challenging so Christian World Service has developed a range of gifts that have meaning and value.

By choosing something that doubles as a present and provides seeds for a new garden or the opportunity for a mother and baby to get medical care, your gift will meet two needs.

“The gifts are fun and practical. E-gifts cost nothing to post and can be purchased at any time. Christmas is a great time to give gifts that help others,” says Pauline McKay, CWS National Director.

New gifts this year are herbs and honey to help extremely vulnerable Palestinian families earn income from herbal tea and honey production. Choosing #Me Too will enable a young South Indian to attend a gender justice workshop and take part in a campaign to make homes and communities safer.

For the second year in a row, fruit trees are proving the most popular gift. Purchases are helping to fund a highly successful replanting programme in the Philippines. Coastal farmers have replaced the trees and root crops they lost

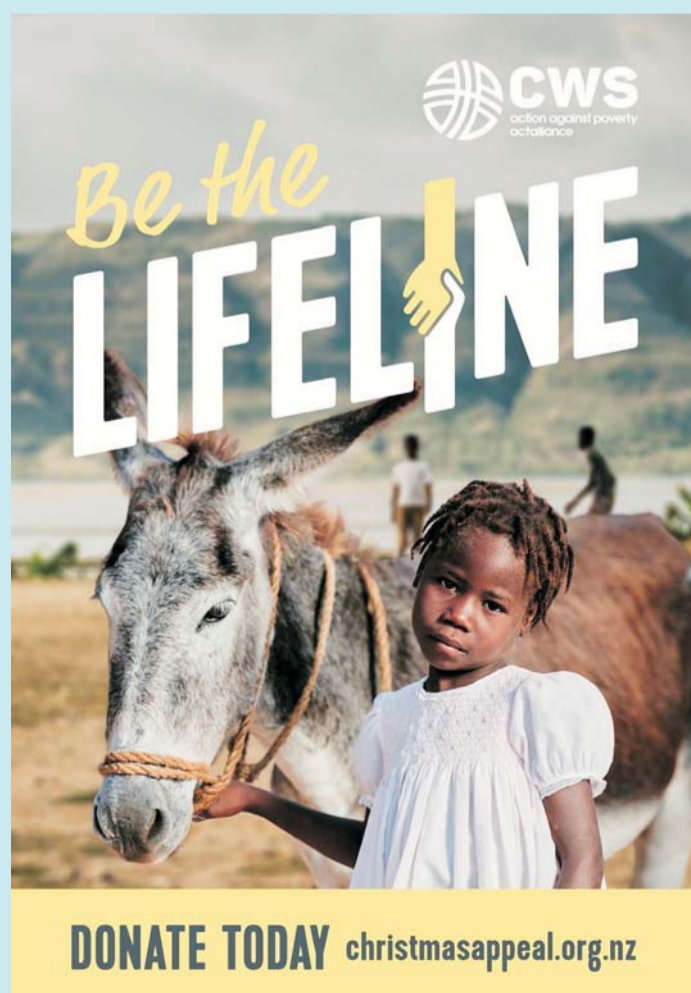


during a super typhoon in 2013. Over the last two years, they have planted an amazing 109,102 plants, earning NZ\$15,790 income from products they have made. Determined to improve their livelihoods rather than simply replace what they lost, the rural communities are exploring making banana chips, pickles and other products.

There are 25 different gifts available on line, starting at \$15. CWS sends an attractive printed or e-card of your gift in which you can write your own message. The gift becomes a donation to the programme of a local partner. CWS sends a tax-deductible receipt for all donations. A no-card option is available.

Pick up a brochure at church or check out the website: <http://gift.org.nz/>

www.christmasappeal.org.nz



Hope in action

Meeting together for its third Assembly in Sweden, ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) members sought to strengthen their combined efforts to create 'Hope in Action'.

Representatives from many of its 150 member churches and agencies, including Christian World Service, gathered to address some of the pressing issues of our time and agree on a new global strategy with greater emphasis in the regions.

Uppsala is significant as the place where Sweden made the decision to join the Reformation and become Lutheran.

The Assembly's opening service was held in its 13th century cathedral, the seat of the Archbishop. Fifty years ago, the World Council of Churches held its fourth Assembly in Uppsala. The Cathedral is home to a monument to Rev Dr Martin Luther King who was assassinated shortly before he was to address the global gathering. One of the many decisions of the Assembly was to set up the Programme to Combat Racism which is widely known for the support it gave to South Africans determined to end apartheid and other struggles.

Pauline McKay, CWS National Director, attended the four yearly meeting. "In Uppsala, we met representatives of our partners

from Palestine, Nicaragua and Pakistan as well as colleagues from large agencies like Christian Aid, DanChurchAid. We sit at the same table as equals. Under the Alliance umbrella, we work together in the shared task of shaping our world for justice and peace," says Pauline.

International Programmes Coordinator Trish Murray attended the Assembly before heading to the Middle East for meetings with the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees.

Every four years, ACT Alliance brings together churches and faith-based agencies working in over 125 countries. The Assembly adopted an eight-year strategy addressing five priority themes:

climate justice, gender justice, peace and human security, migration and displacement, and emergency preparedness and humanitarian response. The Assembly agreed to work with the United Nations' Agenda for Sustainable Development. As part of the ecumenical family, the Alliance is working with UN agencies and others for justice, peace and the human rights of all people. The statements are available at:

<https://actalliance.org/>

This year delegates spent the final day with the World Council of Churches' Executive Committee exploring ecumenical *diakonia*, loving service for the world, from a faith and human rights base.



"Your efforts have earned you the trust of the communities you serve, and you are often directly engaged with those who are left furthest behind," said Her Excellency Ms Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN to ACT members at the General Assembly.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



A lifeline to Joyce

Every morning Joyce goes down to the market. Like any salesperson, she knows the importance of loyal customers to her business.

Each day she has a regular clientele of women like her coming to buy food in small quantities - a cup of groundnuts, some beans, or an onion. Like her, they have been displaced because of South Sudan's bitter conflict.

Five years of civil war have almost stripped the world's newest country of hope. Already one of the poorest, the situation for its people worsened as conflict between political leaders spread

quickly. Many now live on the edge of hunger - 6.1 million people - more than half the population. Guns can be easier to find than food. 1.84 million people have been forced from their homes often from violent attacks or because their homes and crops have been burnt from the ground. The people have proved resilient and courageous.

Through everything, South Sudan's churches have pressed for peace and unity at every level. A tentative peace process is in place, but conflict can break out at any time.

Three years ago, Joyce watched an unknown gunman kill her father and husband James on the same day. She was left traumatised, and responsible for their three children; the youngest was still being breastfed.

"That was the end of life for me and my children, I almost ran mad," she said.



"Since then, I have struggled to feed and raise school fees for my children."

For two years, she would buy a basin of food at a time. With the proceeds from her stall, she had enough to buy another basinful. When the day ended, she could feed her family a little - but it was never enough.

Last year she took part in a livelihood project for single mothers run by CWS

partner, Maridi Service Agency. She attended a one-week intensive course on running a small business and received a small amount of start-up capital.

"After receiving the money, I bought the items in big quantities - two sacks of groundnuts (peanuts) and five basins of simsim (sesame seeds). I bought enough to store. I plan to sell it during the time of scarcity so as to get more profit," said Joyce.

Her market stall has doubled in size; she has a table on which to display her wares. Now able to feed her family, she can pay school fees and medical expenses.

South Sudanese have had little opportunity to attend school. Poverty and decades of conflict have left many in danger of being left behind.

Supporting the Christmas Appeal will give women new opportunities to support their families.

A cause for celebrations

Palmerston North Methodist Social Services

It has been a year of stepping forward for Palmerston North Methodist Social Services Trust. We have celebrated our 55th birthday and an improvement in our financial position that enabled us to extend our opening hours to four days a week in February 2018 (from the three days a week started in September 2016). Throughout this year, we have continued to focus on providing quality services to clients and meeting the real needs of the Palmerston North community. We continued to run one of the city's two major foodbanks, provide low-cost counselling services, free education programmes and free social work support, and take intern placements for social work and counselling students.

Foodbank

The foodbank remains an essential part of the Palmerston North community. We work

closely with other food distribution services including the Salvation Army, Just Zilch, St Vincent de Paul, the Ashhurst foodbank and Highbury's Te Whare Koha, to ensure our services are complementary.

The demand for food-parcels was up in the last 24 months from 1326 parcels in 2015-16 (reaching 3602 people), 1564 in 2016-17 (reaching 4723 people), and 1627 in 2017-18 (reaching 5006 people). Meeting this demand has only been possible through the annual food-drive organised by Lions, significant support from Foodstuffs and Pak-n-Save, and the ongoing support from local churches, schools, individuals, groups, and businesses.

At the same time, brief social worker support was provided to 307 people who came through the foodbank, helping to build client resilience.

Counselling

A contract with the Ministry of

Social Development for group and family counselling for children and adults underpins the counselling service. Of the 90 new clients we worked with each year, roughly two thirds are parents using counselling to help them sort through issues that impact on their parenting.

We are the only service in the city that offers low-cost professional counselling to individuals, families, couples, and parents and children.

Education Programmes

A contract with the Ministry of Social Development supports the development of life skills through social work support and life skills development programmes. This year our two key family education programmes - Skills for Managing Anger (SMA) and Change Loss and Grief (CLG) - were given reviews with a bi-cultural focus, with training being given to all tutors in June 2018. We have also invested in training for the WAVES adults suicide bereavement programme from the Skylight Foundation, and we are developing our own adult personal development programme to be called 'Destination Me'.



A celebration cake is cut by trustee (and former chairperson) Jill White, with long-time supporters June and Loyal Gibson.

We continue to run the Ministry of Justice Parenting Through Separation programme twice every month.

Social Work

Through the foodbank, our programmes, and people arriving at our office, there are many brief interactions between our social workers and the public. On occasion, as our resources allow, we will take on clients with a higher need for social work support. As we have a range of services, we are able to offer these clients holistic support; from immediate needs of food and advocacy at other agencies, to longer term needs of counselling and education.

As well as all the background work that goes into providing such a service, we had a wonderful birthday party at Hancock Community House in October to celebrate our latest milestone - 55 years of essential community services. To a packed crowd, the 2018 AGM was completed in record time, and then Trustee Phil McConkey showed a 1980s video of the services being provided at that time. It was clear to us all that while the floral patterns and flares of the 1980s may have passed, the heart of the organisation has remained, with a focus on quietly meeting the needs of Palmerston North citizens in their vulnerable moments.

BIBLE CHALLENGE

Rosalie Sugrue

Goodwill towards all people

Advent is the liturgical season of preparation for the birth of Christ. Tradition allocates each of the four Sundays its own candle of anticipation calling us to reflect on what the coming of Christ means for the world. This Spiritual exercise encourages us to fulfil the message of the angelic host that proclaimed goodwill towards all people. Each phase in this Challenge contains an 'Advent Candle' word (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love) and leaves out a well known word for you to complete.

The hope of the righteous ends in	G _____	RSV
We have been ___ anew to a living hope	___ O ___	Prv 10:28
...a sure and steadfast ___ of the soul, a hope	_____ O _____	1 Pt 1:3
By the power of God you may ___ in hope	_____ D _____	Heb 6:19
The ___ should plough in hope	_____ W _____	Rm 15:13
And for a helmet put on the hope of	_____ I _____	1 Cor 9:10
And let the peace of Christ ___ in your hearts	___ L ___	1 Thes 5:8
For God has ___ us to peace	_____ L _____	Col 3:15
		1 Cor 7:15
Be at peace with one	_____ T _____	Mk 9:50
...preaching ___ news of peace by Jesus	___ O ___	Ac 10:36
Go in peace, be ___ and filled	_____ W _____	Jas 2:16
Lord, now lettest thou thy ___ depart in peace	_____ A _____	Lk 2:29
For behold, I bring you good tidings of ___ joy	___ R _____	Lk 2:10
Be ___ in the Lord, and rejoice	_____ D _____	Ps 32:11
But the fruit of the ___ is love, joy, peace ...	_____ S _____	Gal 5:22
When they saw the ___, they rejoiced exceedingly	___ A ___	Mtt 2:10
And you will have joy and	___ L _____	Lk 1:4
The babe in my womb ___ for joy	___ L _____	Lk 1:44
Put on the ___ of faith and love,	_____ P _____	1Thes 5:8
Love the Lord your God with all your ___ and...	___ E _____	Mtt 22:37
... you shall love your ___ as	_____ O _____	Mtt 22:39
So faith, ___ and love abide...	___ P ___	1 Cor 13:13
...but the greatest of these is	___ L _____	1 Cor 13:13
As I have loved you; ___ in my love.	_____ E _____	Jn 15:9

A welfare system accessible and fair for all

The Methodist Alliance recently provided feedback to the Welfare Expert Advisory Group about the welfare system in New Zealand Aotearoa.

The Government's vision is a welfare system that is accessible and fair for all New Zealanders and one that ensures people have an adequate income, standard of living, are treated with dignity, and are able to participate meaningfully in their community. This vision aligns with the Methodist Alliance's vision for a just society in which all people flourish.

The Government asked for feedback about what was working well, what was not working well, what could be done better, what level of support should be available and what values should underpin the welfare system.

Our answers to the questions

provided examples that focussed on the welfare of children and their whanau.

We asked for a welfare system that ensures people have an income to sustain an adequate standard of living, allows them to live with dignity, meets their basic human needs and provides the opportunity to flourish.

We suggested that benefit rates were indexed to the CPI and average wage; Te Tiriti o Waitangi be at the heart of the welfare system; and the welfare of children should be a paramount consideration in all changes to the welfare system.

Support should be sufficient to address inequalities and inequity. We promoted a culture change in Work & Income where people are treated with respect, compassion and dignity.

The full submission is on our website:

http://www.methodist.org.nz/methodist_alliance/submissions

Aldersgate Youth Camp 2018 | SYNERGY

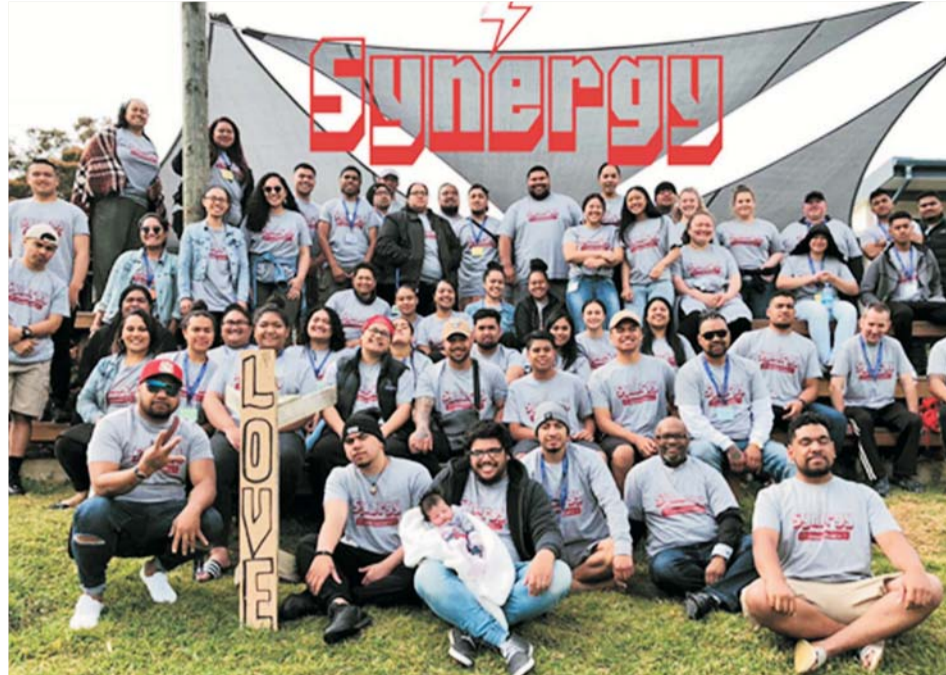
Michael Lemanu

Over Labour Weekend, young people from the Auckland, Manukau, Waikato-Wairiki, Lower North Island and Central South Island gathered for the first ever geographical synods youth camp.

The Peter Snell Youth Village in Whangaparaoa played host for an epic weekend of energy, fun, fellowship and worship.

Aldersgate was chosen as the name for the camp, in reference to Wesley's iconic Aldersgate experience. The camp sought to warm the hearts of our youth in the same way Wesley's was on that fateful May evening in 1738. The theme of our camp was 'Synergy' - with emphasis on the value of working together and empowering one another on the Christian walk.

Throughout the weekend there were a number of engaging, creative and insightful workshops and devotions. We were lucky enough to have the awesome duo of Rev Simon and Evangeline Williams serve as our camp chaplains. They led opening devotions on Saturday



Synergy attracted youth from Auckland, Manukau, Waikato-Wairiki, Lower North Island and Central South Island synods.

morning and also a sunrise communion service, as well as offering pastoral support to youth throughout the weekend. We had the wise Richard Misilei assist in running a workshop as part of the gender specific sessions. We were blessed to have Vice President Nicola Grundy and Te Aroha Rountree of Trinity

College lead devotional workshops.

Along with these guests, various members of the organising committee led different devotional elements and workshops throughout the weekend. There were theme sessions which were aptly named 'Synergy Science Experiments'. There was also a

pilgrimage prayer walk which culminated with a dip in the ocean, and, of course, typical camp activities including sporting events, waterslides and other team-based activities.

We held a special screening of the MMT vs Australia contest, with the young Tongans in attendance painting the campsite red, and a sprinkling of Aussie supporters lurking in the shadows. There was a silent disco, and late-night movies and board game sessions that topped off each day's events.

Throughout the weekend, the sense of community, inclusiveness and fellowship continued to grow and go from strength to strength. We were excited to see that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, 'Synergy' was well and truly lived out - in a way that transcended age, culture, gender and geography. Our hope is that this first Aldersgate camp will continue to serve as an opportunity to bring youth together from geographical synods across the Connexion.

We thank all the organisers, guests, prayer warriors, supporters and attendees who made Aldersgate 1 'Synergy' a camp to remember. Onwards now to Aldersgate 2.

Kidz Korna

Welcome to December's Kidz Korna!

This is the last Kidz Korna for 2018.

It seems no time at all since I was asking you to let me know how you celebrated Christmas!

Kidz Korna has a whole page for February so please send photos and a little information about what you did in your parish or Sunday School.

It never seems to amaze me some of the things children do. This month we hear from two parishes, Christchurch West and Lindisfarne in Invercargill. Their children have been doing very different activities - helping people and having fun.

Passing it on

When June and Charles Fuller moved in to rest-home care earlier this year, the family gave some valuable resources to be used by the Kids Club at the Christchurch West Methodist Church. June had been a deaconess in the Methodist Church since the 1950s, and her work in the parish included leading the Sunday School and doing pastoral care work with disadvantaged families and older members of the congregation.

Our Kids Club children, parents and helpers visited June to thank her personally for the resources with a hand-made card. June thoroughly enjoyed joining a singalong and greeting each of the children. The card and this photo are proudly displayed in June's room at the rest-home.



June Fuller, surrounded by members of the Christchurch West Methodist Church.

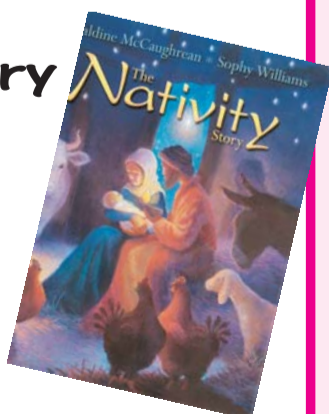


For your bookshelf

The Nativity Story

Author: Geraldine McCaughrean
Illustrator: Sophy Williams
Publisher: Lion Hudson

This colourfully illustrated book brings to life the familiar Christmas story. From the story of Zechariah in Luke to that of the angels in Matthew, it follows the events leading up to the birth of Jesus, the story of the shepherds at the stable, the Wise Men with their gifts and the angels warning them about Herod. This is a really beautiful book, ideal for older children to read for themselves or to share by reading aloud to young ones, reminding us of the miracle of Christmas.



Climbing the walls

The children at Lindisfarne's Kids Klub had a great time at Clip 'n Climb at the Stadium Southland, Invercargill. It was part of a recent Fun Sunday activity. They really challenged and enjoyed themselves.



Genevieve Hare on the climbing wall.

What are the kids in your church up to?

Kidz Korna wants to hear from you so we can share your stories. Send stories and photos of your activities to Doreen Lennox at dlennox02@gmail.com

Thomas Merton - Pastor to the Peace Movement

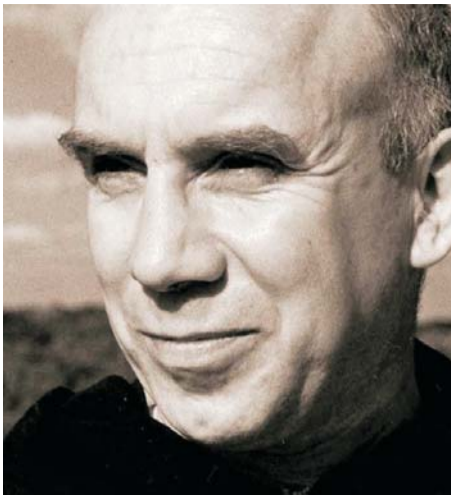
Terry Wall

In December 1968 Thomas Merton attended a conference in Bangkok. On the morning of the 10th December he gave a paper comparing Marxism and monasticism. In the afternoon, he was found dead in his room, after receiving an electric shock from a standing fan.

It is 50 years since the untimely death of Thomas Merton. Many are celebrating his contribution to the life of the church. His influence has spread widely.

Thomas was born in 1915 in France to an American mother and a New Zealand father. His father, Owen Merton became a well-known painter. His mother Ruth died when he was six. For some years, the young Thomas lived with his father in the south of France.

In May, 1928 his father took Thomas back



Thomas Merton

to England where the young lad attended Oakham School and then went on to Cambridge. From there he crossed the Atlantic and completed his master's degree in English literature at Columbia University, New York with a thesis on William Blake.

Gradually Merton was drawn to Catholicism. In 1941 he entered the Trappist monastery of Gethsemani in Kentucky. There he could pray and pursue his search for God. Throughout his life he was torn between different vocations: praying and writing; living in community and life as a hermit.

His first book was an autobiography in which he wrote of his conversion and life in the monastery. *The Seven Storey Mountain* was an immediate success and sold millions of copies. He was convinced

that, "Our real journey in life is interior; it is a matter of growth, deepening and an ever growing surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our hearts."

In his evolving theology, experience and questions assumed a central place. He turned away from a highly rational theology which presented answers. A significant turning point was a spiritual encounter which he records: "In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the centre of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realisation that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another, even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, a spurious self-isolation in a special world, the world of renunciation and supposed holiness. The whole illusion of a separate holy existence is a dream."

Thomas Merton sought the renewal of monasticism. At its heart, would be an openness to the world. He rejected the spirituality of evasion in favour of a spirituality of engagement. He opened up dialogues with Marxists, with other Christians, Jewish leaders and ultimately with mystics from the East.

In the turbulent 1960s his vocation developed to offer reflections on the great issues convulsing America. In his *Letters to a White Liberal* he criticised the limited commitment of liberals to the civil rights movement who, he claimed, would abandon their solidarity with black

people when the going got tough. He commented on the trial of Eichmann: "The sanity of Eichmann is disturbing ... And now it begins to dawn on us that it is precisely the sane ones who are the most dangerous."

Merton embraced the teaching of Gandhi on non-violence. He had challenging words for the peace movement where he uncovered "hidden aggressions." In a letter that has become famous, Merton wrote to the peace activist Jim Forest, "Do not depend on the hope of results. When you are doing an apostolic work, you may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no results at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect... concentrate not on the results but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself... If you get free from the domination of causes and just serve Christ's truth, you will be able to do more and will be less crushed by the inevitable disappointments." Some saw Merton as a troubling pastor to the peace movement.

He saw the monk as one who "at once loves the world, yet stands apart from it with a critical objectivity which refuses to become involved in its transient fashions and its more manifest absurdities." As monk and mystic, poet and theologian, photographer and calligrapher Merton called us to a life of interdependence. He wanted the contemplative life to be enjoyed by all who walk the way of Christ.

We refuse to be enemies

General Secretary David Bush recently travelled to Jordan and Israel where he visited the Tent of Nations to award the 2017 World Methodist Peace Award.

Inscribed on a block of limestone in three languages, the Nassar family declares its faith and conviction, "We refuse to be enemies".

The Nassar family have owned and lived on their land near Bethlehem since 1916. Their dream from the beginning was that the farm would be used to build bridges of hope, understanding and reconciliation to achieve peace.

They declare: We want to build a bridge between land and people and between people and people. The crucial question is: "How can I turn the perspective of someone who believes that I am his enemy?"

The travelling seminar, arranged by the World Methodist Council Inter-religious Committee and resourced by Rabbi Frank Dabba-Smith and EcoPeace, an organisation with Directors in Jordan, Israel and Palestine (West Bank), commenced in Amman, Jordan.

In visits, meetings and conversations we heard stories of how water allocation, building and travel restrictions severely impact the lives of Palestinians. Both water and peace are at times in short supply in this region.

In Amman, water is available one day a week. Houses have storage tanks to ensure supply for seven days. In Bethlehem, it averages one day in 20 with no set day of availability. In Israel, giant desalination plants mean there is no water scarcity.

Access to water and building permits are symptomatic of the deeper issues. In Amman we met with Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders, who challenged us by asking, "Do you 'memorise' or 'live' your religion?"

We were reminded that the Jordan River is the holiest river for the three religions - but the followers have made it unholy.

This sense of religious exclusivity or the idea of 'chosen-ness' resides in each of the traditions. How do we address it? At the Tent of Nations, Daoud Nassar was driving his tractor when he found his way blocked by a young man with an M16 rifle over his shoulder. "What are you doing on our land?" the young man asked. "It's not your land," Daoud replied, "It is ours and I have the papers to prove it." "You may have the papers," the young man said, "but God gave us this land, that is why it is ours and not yours."

One evening after a meal at Shepherds Fields, the hillside where long ago shepherds were astounded by the announcement of the birth of Jesus, we walked back to our accommodation in Jerusalem. This meant navigating checkpoint 300 - a place where

thousands of Palestinian day labourers are subject to humiliating immigration processes to get work. The Separation Wall near here has been turned into a gallery - art, protest, banners and graffiti. This section of the wall which towers 8 to 10 metres in height is famous for its Banksy painting and the nearby 'Walled Off' Hotel.

Two messages on the wall summed up Jordan, West Bank and Israel for me.

Next to an image of Alice in Wonderland:

"Destiny failed us through this hole called the West Bank. Just like Alice in a rabbit-hole - we are trapped in dark prison and separation walls. Just like Alice found the door - we look out of check points and give up our dignity and we are humiliated to fit through."

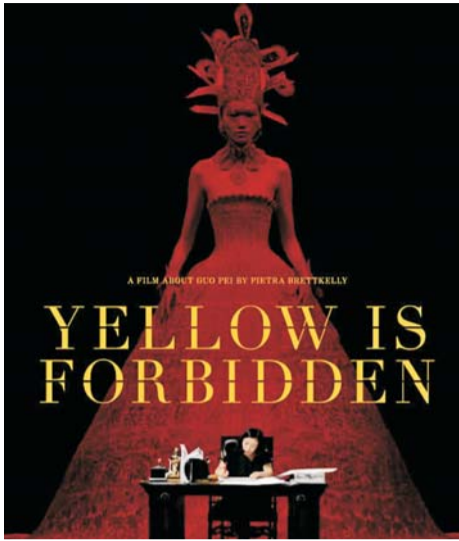
Just like Alice ate the candy to reduce her size to fit through the door - we have to get an entry permit to visit our land and our families separated from us by this wall. Indeed, we are Palestinians in Wonderland."

And alongside, boldly painted, these words:

"We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians" Nelson Mandela.



ON SCREEN



Documentary is a unique genre. There is no script writer, paid actors or shooting of multiple scenes. Instead, there is the promise of true-to-life insights. But exclusivity comes with a price.

ON PAPER

Go Girl. A storybook of epic NZ women

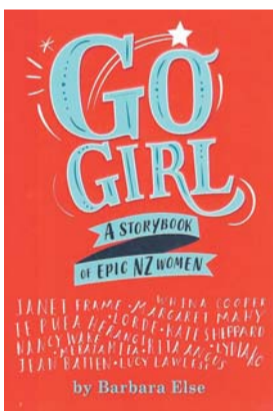
*Author: Barbara Else
Puffin 2018, 207 pages
Reviewer: John Meredith*

It is always interesting reading stories about people who have achieved worthwhile goals, often against considerable odds. Go Girl tells the inspirational stories of 48 New Zealand women who have become successful in their chosen field.

Arranged in alphabetical order of first names, each individual is introduced with a page containing brief biographical details and a relevant quotation from her own words or words written about her. Then follows two pages of text. The fourth page carries an imaginative portrait drawn by one of nine illustrators. As the 'go girls' range across more than 170 years, towards the end there is a chart in which the name of each individual appears in historical order. Lydia Ko and Lorde are the youngest.

From an original short list of about 200, the author says it was difficult deciding who to include. Among those she has chosen there are a number of female firsts and founders:

- Beatrice Tinsley, first female professor of astronomy at Yale University.
- Catherine Tizard, first female Governor-General.
- Elizabeth McCombs, first female Member of Parliament.
- Georgina Beyer, first openly transsexual person in the world



The veil onto an authentic self is being lifted, but the gaze of the camera and interviewer should be adoring. An overly prying eye or a critical interview could well result in the end of access, a film canned rather than in the can.

Yellow is Forbidden is a documentary. Kiwi director Pietra Brettkelly follows Chinese fashion designer Guo Pei off the catwalk and into the dressing rooms and digital design studios of the global fashion industry. Several stories are cleverly embroidered together. First the career of China's most famous designer, including a close up of the 'Magnificent Gold' dress, stunningly worn by Rihanna on the Met Gala red carpet. Made from gold, taking two years to make and weighing 25 kilograms with a five-metre hand-embroidered train, it placed Guo Pei on the global fashion map. Second, the complexity of a Chinese designer organising a fashion show in Paris, an outsider crossing boundaries of culture and taste. Finally, Guo Pei's personal life, including the backstitched story of her childhood in the midst of the Cultural

Revolution, in which golds are the colour of the court and Guo Pei is forbidden to dress in yellow.

Yellow as colour is thus a central metaphor. The movie begins in darkness. A voice calls for an iPhone to be turned on and the materials of a dress absorb the stark glare of spotlight. With the iPhone then turned off, the dress shimmers with a ghostly radiance. It is a stunning visual reminder of the beauty of fashion and the way technology can be twinned with imagination. As a beginning, it has echoes of John 1. A light shines in the darkness in order that all of humanity might absorb, then shimmer, in response to the Divine Light in Christ.

Historically, religion has lived in an uneasy relationship with fashion. Pietism celebrates the unadorned and naturally human. Yet a rich set of images emerge if humans can shimmer with beauty in response to technology and imagination.

In Christian scripture, God is a fashion designer. In Job 10:11-2, God is a dressmaker. In Ezekiel 16:9-1, God is a maker of designer clothes, a crafter of

perfumes and accessories to adorn the nation of Israel. In Psalm 12:6, God is a jeweler crafting silver. One way to watch *Yellow is Forbidden* is thus as an extended meditation on God the maker. The cinematic depictions of fabric being dyed, sequins being painstakingly sown and patterns woven in golden thread, are a window into the way God intends humans to participate in the creative fashioning of life together.

Drawing on the image of God the maker, theologian Paul Fiddes argues that being made in God's image means humans are made to craft in delight, be open mouthed in wonder and practise perseverance. Such are the possibilities suggested by a theological conversation with the fashion in *Yellow is Forbidden*.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is Principal of Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Dunedin. He is the author of Built for change (MEDIACOM: 2016) and The Out of Bounds Church? (Zondervan: 2005). He writes widely in areas of theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

By Bible, Hammer & Compass: Pacific Adventures of James and William Puckey, 1796-1827, carpenters, missionaries, mariners

*Author: Adrienne Puckey
Sean Millar Publishing, 2018, 234 pages
Reviewer: Gary Clover*

By Bible, Hammer & Compass, in quoting heavily from William's journal, narrates the missionary adventures of two London Missionary Society (LMS) brothers, James and William Puckey, in Cornwall, Tahiti, Parramatta and the Bay of Islands.

The author is a history graduate and Treaty claims researcher, and a direct descendent of the Puckey brothers who were born in Fowey (pronounced "Foy") on Cornwall's Channel coast in 1771 and 1776 respectively.

Experienced shipwrights, carpenters and mariners, they sailed on the Duff with the original party which began the LMS mission in Tahiti on 5 March 1797. Within a year, fearing for their lives, they fled to Sydney. The brothers' skills found them quick employment in the convict colony. But both were determined to return to England, possibly to escape censure for their increasing alcoholism arising from their Tahitian privations. During a perilous journey on a leaky ship, which included six months stranded up the Waihou (Thames) River in New Zealand, and incarceration in Spanish Guam and Manila, James died at the Cape of Good Hope in 1803, aged 32.

Meanwhile, about 1802, William safely reached England and married Margery Gilbert. In 1815 he returned to Sydney. In November 1819, William and Margery and their son, William Gilbert Puckey (later a long serving Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionary at Kaitaia), and his sister, Elizabeth (later to marry Gilbert Mair, captain of the CMS's schooner, the Herald), sailed to

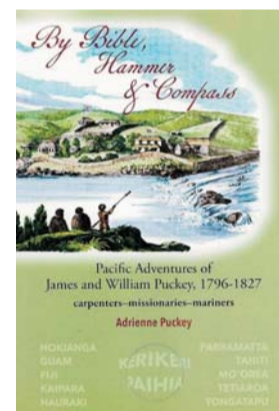
Kerikeri with Samuel Marsden. There, William was employed as a lay 'mechanic' carpenter and shipwright. He oversaw the building of the Kemps' Georgian-style wooden mission house at Kerikeri and the construction of the Herald at Paihia. By

March 1826, William, now 50 years old, and Margery were back in Sydney. In late 1827, both died within a month of each other, as dissolute alcoholics.

This book is essentially a family history. One has to pick between the lines to find very much explanation, or comparison of culture change and conversion between Tahiti and New Zealand. But it gives tantalising glimpses of the

pioneer LMS mission in Tahiti, of convict Parramatta and Sydney, and of the CMS's Bay of Islands mission from 1819 to 1826. However, its early chapters' detailed backgrounding of the medieval origins and economic development of Cornwall's southern channel ports I thought unnecessary, and hindered one from getting into the Puckeys' story proper. Though Dr Puckey gives useful lists of the Tahitian, Māori and missionary personalities mentioned in the text, and a plethora of interesting illustrations, it is puzzling that neither James nor William have entries in her index. And the one map showing Tahiti's place names and districts I found insufficiently detailed to help me follow William's exploratory journey around the island.

These reservations aside, Dr Puckey has written a useful introduction to the early years of the Tahitian and Bay of Islands missions. It stands well alongside other recent mission publications, such as the Rev Dr Allan Davidson's Te Rongopai 1814 and Russell Smith's Mission to the Ends of the Earth on the earliest of the CMS's 'mechanic' missionaries in the Bay of Islands 1814-1824.



LOOKING BACK

Lynne McDonald

Christmas correspondence from the Solomon Islands

Sister Lucy Money was a missionary in the Solomon Islands from 1947- 2002; the latter part of her service was unofficial. She was a prolific letter writer.

Her letters were always colourful, descriptive and she held nothing back. They are a treasure trove of information about what life was like for her and the other missionaries on the Methodist Mission Station at Sasamuqa. Here are some extracts from letters written in January 1968, December 1968 and January 1969, describing what happened at Christmas.

14 January 1968

"Our Xmas programme started on Saturday before Christmas when the crowds began to arrive. There were the inevitable football matches and at night we had a concert which consisted of a competition of acted Bible stories."

Sister Lucy noted that the concert items went "on and on" so the point was frequently missed. The winners were the men from Boe (down the coast

from Sasamuqa) and boys with "Naboth's Vineyard".

The Christmas Day Lotu had a number of choirs, dancing and entertainment. In the evening they had a 'Tra-la-la-la' dance. Sister Lucy set one rule; that the dance was not to go on all night as was customary. Apparently the rule was obeyed.

Sister Lucy noted, "It was a very successful Christmas do, and everyone enjoyed themselves." 22 December 1968.

"Christmas is nearly here. The usual round of practices for concert, Christmas play etc., as well as making Christmas dresses for the kids and our ex-house babies, some of them grown pretty big now. I've done all the cutting out. I've been busy on Mavis's wedding dress."

It was Sister Lucy's custom to make new dresses for the girls at Christmas. She appealed to friends and supporters in New Zealand to send her fabric and thread. Sister Lucy received a Christmas parcel from her sister Olive in New Zealand. Not

being inclined to wait until Christmas Day, she opened it early because "it felt like material".

"I was so taken with the material that I went right ahead and cut it out, and I hope I'll get it sewn for Christmas, so you can imagine me wearing it to Christmas Lotu."

The sewing machine she used was a Singer brand which was a combination of treadle, for when the electricity was turned off, and motorised, for when the electricity was on.

Sister Lucy enjoyed reading.

"Then today we got a bit more mail, no NZ letter mail, but there was a book parcel from Reeds, so I decided I may as well open that too and see who was sending what. It was the book of NZ photography and I think it's super ... so my two Xmas parcels so far have been most successful."

Later in the same letter, Sister Lucy mentions a record catalogue that accompanied the book.

"Reed sent out a Kiwi record with the book ... and a number



Sister Lucy Money and two assistants from the Mission, Pose and Marths.

of them sound very good. I think I may order three or four. I think I'm about due for some new records."

She planned to use money that the Methodist Women's Fellowship had banked for her in New Zealand to pay for the records. Her next request is about the types of books she would like.

"And if you see any books, who-done-its or other interesting fiction which you don't think I've read ... I've read everything in this house and am always looking for more. The books which cover most of one wall in my office are a real treasure trove to visitors ... I'm quite well-known for my stock."

In Sister Lucy's next letter, Christmas was reported to have gone well. "We had quite a good Christmas here, good for weather, plenty of people, and the programme went off quite well. Muriel (Davy, another missionary) and I had pork chops for dinner on Christmas Day and roast lamb on Boxing Day when there was more time."

Sister Lucy always seemed to be writing her letters right up until the moment the mail boat left. She often ended her letters something like this.

"Well, I intended to add some more to this, but someone has come to say the Vatakadu (boat) is going now."

Unsung Methodists

Donald Phillipps

The danger of labels

It is exactly 100 years ago since CH Garland died. Few New Zealand Methodist ministers have so influenced the theological direction of his Church as did this man.

What is called 'liberal theology' had been emerging since the late 18th century, but Garland's contribution to the debate on biblical criticism in the 1890s helped introduce a non-literalist, undogmatic, questioning approach to religious thinking among his fellow churchgoers. As Eric Hames said, "It would be hard to find a more suitable teacher to lead the younger generation into the 20th century." Garland's early death (aged 61) after only six years as Principal of the Methodist Theological Institution, deprived Methodism of a man of exceptional talent - leader, scholar, teacher, administrator and pastor.

David Bell has written extensively and authoritatively on Garland's life and work, and I will do no more than summarise his notable career.



Charles Hughlings Garland

But the issues Garland addressed, and the continuing tension that exists within world Christianity along the conservative/liberal axis, underlines the need to be sensitive to issues that are still seen as divisive.

Garland was a Londoner, from Limehouse. His father was an agent of the Wesleyan Seamen's Mission, and he himself worked with the Mission during his earlier teen years. He was a teacher at Poplar, part of the London dockland region with which his father would have been familiar.

Garland was received for theological education in 1879,

and spent two years at Headingly and then at Handsworth Colleges. During his second year there occurred the Tararua disaster, when a passenger ship was wrecked on the southern coast and two Methodist ministers lost their lives. A plea for help was made to the English Conference and Garland was sent to this country in 1882.

probation in the Auckland and Canterbury Districts, and then itinerated from Ponsonby to Cambridge to Wanganui and New Plymouth. After two years of special ministry promoting the Century Commemoration Fund, he spent a 'long' five years at Pitt Street (1901-1906) then to Nelson and Durham Street, before being appointed College Principal in 1912. The sequence of appointments clearly underlines his reputation as a preacher - all his later appointments were to central churches with significant congregations.

It was while he was at Wanganui that he delivered his notable ('notorious' for some) Conference Lecture The Bearing of Higher Criticism on Leading Evangelical Doctrines. It is to be

noted that Garland was elected Conference President in 1901, after less than 20 years of ministry - an almost unheard of recognition at that time. His whole ministry was, in fact, evidence of his exceptional ministerial gifts.

Two important issues arise when we consider the content and, more particularly, the context of CH Garland's lecture, delivered at the Dunedin Conference in 1893. Simply put, Garland rejected the traditional view that the first five books of the Old Testament Bible were to be taken literally, having been 'dictated verbatim to Moses by God or by an angel'.

That this was controversial has been made perfectly clear by David Bell's scholarship. Garland based his argument on the methods of 'advanced physical sciences, modern philosophy, and higher criticism'.

In the place of the orthodox doctrine of Biblical inspiration, Garland argued that the authority of the Bible rested not on its literal content but on the 'gospel within a Gospel'. These were disturbing claims for the traditional Methodist church-goer.

Is the content of Garland's lecture now an accepted fact? Certainly not to the two Jehovah's Witness visitors who knocked at my door recently. They, along with a positive host of contemporary Christians (Methodists), provide today's context for the ongoing debate.

The ministers who were trained by Garland, and his successors, would, in my opinion, have generally followed in his theological footsteps - and the descriptive adjective 'liberal' might justifiably be applied to their way of thinking. But the context of the presentation of the Gospel within Methodism in the early 21st Century is not so easily categorized.

Labels are misleading, and it would be an over-simplification to suggest that there is a return to 'conservatism' in our Church. But it is clearly happening in the United States, where the emergence of 'nationalism' is a reflection of that trend.

Methodism must keep its doors open. We need leaders and thinkers like Charles Hughlings Garland to remind us that scripture is not a catalogue of answers, but a way to question the future as it emerges.

TONIGA AUFAlPESE MATAGALUEGA METOTISI SAMOA PAPATOETOE I MANUKAU

Papatoetoe Samoan Parish Choir New Uniform



Rev Tovia Aumua

I le aga'i mai ua tau fa'ai'ui'u le ulua'i tolu masina o lenei tausaga e 2018, na fonoa ai le Aufaipese a le Matagaluega Metotisi i Papatoetoe o le Sinoti Samoa, se'i soalaupuleina se moemitiga a'o se fa'alepō a Ta'ita'i ma le ofisa o le Aufaipese, i le fia lalagina lea o se la'ei e ala i se Toniga aua le fa'amatagofieina atili o le galuega, e pei ona iai taulaga o pesega ma vi'iga i le Atua, o le ute lea o lo latou vala'auina i lenei lalolagi.

O se tofa sausau mamao na opogiina e le aufaipese, fa'atasi ai se lagolago ma se fa'amanuia a le Matagaluega i Papatoetoe, aua lava le la'ala'a pea i luma o lenei itutino o le galuega e ala fo'i i lenei fa'amoemoe taua.

Ina ua autasi le finagalo o le aufaipese, ona amata loa lea ona fa'atulaga ni nai sailiga seleni fa'apitoa, e fa'aopoopo ia latou lafolafoga i taimi o a latou a'oga pese i lea vaiaso ma lea vaiaso, aua le fa'atupeina o lenei taumafaiga.

O le fa'ai'uga o le masina o Aukuso aga'i atu i le vaiaso muamua o le masina o Setema na se'i mavae atu o lenei lava tausaga, na mae'a ai ona tapenaina ma su'iina lenei toniga. Ua taunuu ai upu a le atunuu: Ua muā! muā! le asō e pei o le fetalaiga ia Tualemoso. Ua atoa tino o le Tama e pei o le fetalaiga ia Va'atausili. O lea ua tago i ula, ua tepa i ula, ua futufuti manu'ula, talu le Atua ma lona

tamaoiga fa'asoa mai i lana fanau galulue.

I le Aso Sa, 18 Novema na se'i mavae atu nei, na faia ai le Sauniga fa'apitoa ua le gata o le fa'afu'o'i lea o le Fa'afetai i le Atua ona o tiute ma galuega fai a le au-faipese, ae fa'apea fo'i ona fa'apa'iaina ai le toniga, ma toe fa'afou ta'utinoga a'i latou ua ofoina o latou soifua mo le atiina'eina o lenei itutino o le ekalesia ma o nisi nei o vaega o upu o le fa'apa'iaina o le toniga:

So'o se fa'alapotopotoga pe so'o se vaega lava o tagata latou te la'eina se toniga, o lo'o atagia mai ai ni fe'au taua lava ma le loloto mai lona toniga. O le toniga, o le fa'aailoga lea o le Tasi ma le gatasitasi lea o le Loto. O le toniga o lo'o atagia mai ai le Tasi o le Fa'atuatuaga, Tasi le Fa'amoemoe o se fa'alapotopotoga po'o se mafutaga. Mo se fa'ata'ita'iga:

O le Matagaluega a Leoleo i so'o se Malo lava, e fai a latou tautoga

pe a mae'a a latou training po'o a'oa'oga, ma e uma loa tautoga fa'aofu loa le toniga. O le Toniga o atagia mai ai le fa'amoemoe autasi aua le puipuia o tagata nu'u ma tagata lautele ia ola saogalemu ma ola tagata uma i se si'osi'omaga e aunoa ma se lamatia o le ola o so'o se tagata soifua.

Ua le gata la i le matagaluega o leoleo ae fa'apea fo'i isi matagaluega e pei o le Soifua maloloina, o A'oa'oga, ma le tele lava o isi matagaluega, ua tofua ma o latou fa'amoemoe mo le manuia lautele o tagata nu'u o se malo.

Le pa'ia i le Aufaipese, ua fa'apena fo'i le toe fa'amanatu o lenei lava aso. O lenei aso, ua le gata e fa'apa'iaina ai la tatou toniga, ae o le a toe fa'afuina ai fo'i lo tatou ofoina atu o tatou tagata atoatoa, o tatou taimi, o le malosi, o tatou leo mo le Atua e ala i lenei galuega taua o tatou o faia. Ia tatou toe manatua:

O le toniga ua la'eiina, e le ua na ona fa'amatagofieina ai le va'aiga i fafo mai o le tagata, a'o le fa'aailoga lea o le gatasitasi po'o le Tasi o le Loto i le Galuega e ala i le faia o mea uma i le fa'amaoni. O le toniga o le fa'aailoga o le tasi o le Fa'atuatuaga i le Atua. Ua le gat ai lea, ae o le tasi lea o le fa'amoemoe ina ia vi'ia le Atua e ala i pesega ma vi'iga tatou te tapenaina tatou te ositaulaga ia ia te ia e le aunoa. Ia vi'ia la le Tama, le Alo ma le Agaga Pa'ia i galuega tauaia'e o lona malo e pei ona tatou galulue ai.

Tau ia la, ina ia liligi fa'a'ua mai pea fa'amanuiaa a le Atua i le galuega fa'ale-aufaipese ua le gata i Papatoetoe, a'o aufaipese uma a le Sinoti Samoa, ae fa'apea fo'i so'o se aufaipese i so'o se Ekalesia ma se Tapua'iga o fita-i-tuga, aua le atiina'eina o lenei itu-tino o lana fe'au ma lana galuega.

O le Taemane sa pupula mai i totonugalemu o le mea pogisa

Tusia Rev Paulo Ieli

Sa galulue atalii e to'a sefulu o lakopo i le fanua i le leoleoina o a latou mamoe, ae latou iloa atu lo latou uso laitiiti o Iosefa o savali mai i le mea o latou iai. Fai mai le 'a'uso, "Poo fea a alu iai le fai miti.?" O Iosefa o le atalii lea e aupito sili ona alofa iai lo latou tama. O le tama fai miti, o le ui'i tautalaititi ua ia foua i tatou e matutua.

O le taunu'uga o le fai miti, ua pu'e e le auuso ma lafo i le lua. Ua latou le fasiofia o ia, a ua latou filifili e fa'atauina atu o ia i tagata faatau'oa o lo'o lavasai ia latou galuega.

O le aso lava lea na amata ai ona feagaia Iosefa ma le anoanoa'i o lu'itau. Ua fa'atauina atu e fai ma pologa, o'o ina tautua i le maota o se tasi ali'i sili o le malo o Farao. Sa togi i le falepuipui ina ua tuua'iina sēsēina e aunoa ma se sala. O le noatia i le toese, ua fai ma faitoto'a uiga ese auā ua avea le mafutaga pumo'omo'o a Iosefa ma isi pagota e to'alua sa iai, ua fai ma auala o Iosefa i le

maota o le Tupu. Ua o'o ina tofia e Farao le fai miti e pule lua, ae pule sili Farao. Mai le lua pogisa, i le falepuipui i le avea ma alii sili o le malo.

Ua avea le oge o Aikupito ma auala na toe feiloa'i ai Iosefa ma ona uso ma lo latou tamā o lakopo. O fa'afitauli i lea piliota pogisa e le'i maluelue ai le fa'amoemoe o Iosefa. Sa mau le to'ovae mau le to'olima, taula i le Atua lona fa'amoemoe. Fa'auta i le tali e feiloai ai ma ona uso sa agaleaga ia te ia. "A o outou, na fai togafiti e outou ia leaga ai a'u, a o le Atua, na finagalo o ia ia i'u i le lelei, ina ia oo ina faaolaina

o le nuu e toatele, pei ona taunuu ai i ona po nei. O lenei, aua ne'i matata'u outou, o a'u nei ou te tautua lava ia te outou ma a outou fanau. Ona faamatala loto mai lea o ia ia te i latou, ma tautala lelei mai ia te i latou." Kenese 50:20-21.

Ua fiu le pogisa e taumafai e sosofa le pupula felatilati o lenei taemane, a ua matuā le mafai lava. Na i'u na avea lenei taemane ma ma'a-taua o le malo o Aukipito. Na pupula atu lona malamalama uiga ese i so'o se tafa o le kelope.

O Poluleuligaga o le taemane sa

pupula i totonu o le nu'u pogisa. Lona malamalama lea na liua ai le tofa liliu gatā, ma tafa ai le finagalo o le Malietoa ae ola Samoa.

Ua tatou iai i le vaitau o le Kirisimasi, fa'amanatu ai le fanau mai o Iesu Keriso lo tatou Fa'a'ola, le Taemane na pupula mai lona Malamalama i le lalolagi sa taotaomia i le pogisa. Ma ua avea le pupula mai o lea Taemane ua fai ma Togiola o le tagata sa ola i le lalolagi pogisa o le agasala.

O le taemane sa pupula mai i totonugalemu o le mea pogisa.

Sa Tadu Mai Na I Vakabula Ko Jisu

(Vakarautaka Talatala Akuila Bale Whanganui Tabacakacaka Peceli.)



Wedding ceremony of Osea Tarogi and Teila Baleisuva.

Lesoni Maciu 2:1-6

Sa vakabula ki nai Wasewase Ko Viti kina kena Veiliutaki, Talatala Qase kei na Vuvale, Veiyatu Tabacakacaka ena Loma ni Wasewase kei na vei Vuvale, Vakabula kei na Vakaniuini vinaka ni Siga ni Suca kei na Tawase.

Sa voleka ni Cava Tale E Dua Na Yabaki!

Eda sa donuya tale na Vula I Nuqa Lailai ena vula vaka Viti. (via veidonui kei na Diseba)

E vanua, bulabula tiko na were, keli na uvi taumada, vakabibi na vurai. Tei na vurai. Matua na uto. Dreu na maqo, kavika, dawa, vainaviu. Se na nuqanuqa, sinukakala, sekoula - senikau ni

siganisucu. Dreu na misimisi. Mai baravi, se na sinu, sucu na bulubulu (luveniçio), kata na qio. Kata tale ga na namu. Sa ya na lairo me lai dere neke, vakabibi na lairo vula.

Vakasucu na gogo (tokō), laukana na kena yaloka. Mai wai, toni na wea, koko ena ba na ki, nuqa, cucu, tanabe, cebe (kaikai). Vakaluvani na keteleka, saqa, walu, ika lelevu. E so na vanua sa ta tale kina na balolo.

Sa Vulaikatakata (Diseba-Feperueri vakacaca)

Katakata tu na draki, gauna covulaca kei na cagilaba. E dau yacana tale ga na vulaiivilaca se vulaisolelaca se vulaitabulaca, ni dau sega kina na veisokoyaki; se na vulaimatuanivuata. Mati

lelevu ena bogi, gauna ni salu. Vakasucu e levu na manumanu ni vanua - na kakabace e qaravatu, na todi e veikau, na sese e burenikadivuka - kei na vonu. Gauna ni ya ni lairo, marau ni siganisucu kei na vakatawase.

“Ia ni sa sucu ko Jisu mai Pecileema e Jutia e na gauna sa tui kina ko Eroti, raica, eso na tamata vuku mai na tu i cake era sa lako mai ki Jerusalem, a ra sa kaya, Evei ko koya sa sucu me nodra tui na kai Jutia? ni keitou a raica na nona kalokalo mai na tu i cake, ka keitou sa lako mai me cuva vua.

ia ni sa vakasoqoni ira vata kecega na bete levu kei ira na vunivola ni tamata, sa tarogi ira ko koya se na sucu beka evei na Karisito. Era sa kaya vua, Mai Pecileema e Jutia: ni sa vola vakaoqo na parofita, ia ko iko Pecileema, e na vanua ko Juta, Ko sa sega ni lailai sara vei ira na veiyasana e Juta: Ni na tubu maivei iko e dua na Turaga, Ko koya ena lewai ira na noqu tamata na Isireli.”

Nai Matai, ni sa yalataki mai vei ira na Parofita ka vakadinati vei ira na vuku mai na veivanua tani ni sa sucu dina na Dauniveiliutaki. Me vaka nai Vakatawa dau veimaroro (That shall rule my people Israel - (Greek word Οστις ποιμανει, Ostis

Poimanei) Who shall Feed my people. That is as a shepherd feeds his flock. Jsa maroro keda na tamata mai na ca.

Na Dauni lewa oqo me Vakatawani kina na bula, vuvale, lotu, matanitu, vanua, cakacaka kei na veivekani se na Isireli vakayalo ena gauna vou oqo. Nai Vakatawa ni sipi e dua na cakacaka dauveiqaravi. E solia na nona bula, yau, taledi, gauna ki na vanua e qarava ka tu kina na nona kaukauwa ena veisiga. Na yalayala oqo e basika vei Jisu ko koya nai Vakatawa dau veiqaravi vinaka (Joni 10:10)

Nai karua, sa donu mai lagi ka donu na kena draki ia e sega sara ga ni a namaki na nona tadu mai. Ena vale ni Tui era kidroa kei Jerusalem vata kaya, ena I lakolako mai Natuicake. Sa kidava na Tui ko Eroti ni sa dua tale na Tui sa sucu, ia sa sega ni kila ni sai koya oqo na Tui dina me baleti Isireli. Oqo talega nai tekivu ni nona sagai me vakadrakai ko Jisu ena nona cakacaka vaka Vakavakatawa levu ni qele ni sipi e Isireli. Me bukiveretaki me vakamatei, ena loma ni vale oqo.

Ena 21 nai tukutuku ni nona sagai me vakamatei, oqo na kenai sevu. E kacivi ira lo na nona daunikilakila me vakataki ira na bete kei na vunivola ka taroga na vanua ena sucu kina ko Jisu. Era sa kila tiko ia era sega ni vakarautaka na nona yaco mai na Karisito.

Nai katolu, era lako mai vakayawa nai Vuku mera mai cuva vua. Na lako ka laki cuva e taura e dua na gauna, draki

veisau, oca, mosi kei na dredre e sotavi. E sega ni rawarawa na cuva vei Jisu. E taura na tamata qaqa me qaravi Jisu.

Eratou yavalata nai tikotiko vakaturaga na vuku mai Natuicake, e dina ni ratou muria tikoga na veikalokalo cila ka dusi tiko ki Jerusalem, sa curumi e vuqa na sala duidui me ra basika vei Jisu, ka laki cuva sara vua. Eliu e dau vakatakarakarataki na lotu Wesele me lotu cuva. Me da cuva ga vei Jisu ka rokova tikoga. Siga ni sucu oqo me da qarauna na veika eda vakanamata ka cuva kina. Me da rawata na bula dau vakarokoroko, ka dau qaravi Jisu. Eso era tiko Vulagi, vesu, viakana, luvaiwale, meda veisotavi tiko ena draki oqo, sa cakava kece oqo vei Jisu.

Ai tinitini, ni sa yaco ga me vaka na gauna ni Kalou. Na Sucu nei Jisu sa gauna ni Kalou ki vuravura. Sa yaco me tamata na Vosa, sa mai bula ena Vuravura na vosa. Ena gauna e Tui kina ko Eroti ka rauta ni 37 na yabaki ni nona veiliutaki, mai mate ena 6 na BC. E mai basika ena gauna ni veiliutaki vaka Roma. Kilai me gauna butobuto vei ira na Jiu ena gauna oqo ka ni levu na veika dredre era lako curuma ni ra vakalolomataki tu ga ena nodra vanua dina.

Sa basika na Tui na dauniveisaututaki, o koya ga nai Naki dina ni Siga Ni Sucu meda kunea kina na marau, vakacegu kei na sautu!

Me noda vata na marau ni Siga ni Sucu kei na Tawase ni Yabaki.



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METHODIST ALLIANCE
NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

Fokotu'u Faifekau Siosifa Pole Talekita Le'ole'o.

By 'Ikilifi Pope

Kuo fokotu'u 'a Rev. Siosifa Pole ke talekita le'ole'o 'i he ta'u 'e ua lolotonga 'oku 'i he lakanga palesiteni 'a e talekitaá, Setaita Kinahoi Veikune.

'Oku tui foki 'a Siosifa ko e faingamālie eni kiate ia 'a ia na'a ne pehē, " 'Oku 'i ai foki 'etau lea ko e "faingamālie", 'a ia 'oku 'uhinga ia ki ha ngōfua kuo te ma'u na'e 'ikai totonu ke te ma'u, ke te kau ai pē ke te lea ai ha fa'ahinga katoanga. Ko e fakakaukau ia 'oku ou sio'aki ki hono fokotu'u ko 'eni 'o'okuú

'I he 'uhinga ko iaá, kóu fie fakam ālō he faingamālie kuo 'omi 'e he Konifelenisií pea mo e Palesitenií ke te le'ole'o he fatongia ko e Telekita 'o e Pasifika he ta'u 'e ua ka hokoó'pea ko u lau ia ko hoku fakakoloa", ko Siosifa mai ia.

'I ha fehu' 'i o felave'i pe koehā ha'ane visone ki hono fatongia 'i he ta'u ko 'eni 'e ua te ne 'i he lakanga aif' na'a ne pelē, " Kuo mahino pe 'a e fatongia ia 'o e talekita 'o hangē ko ia 'oku hā he Tohi Lao 'a e siasi (Section 5, 3.2 ki he 3.5.5). Ko e taha hono tefito'i fatongia, ko hono fakanaunau'i (resourcing) 'a e siasi. 'I he fakakaukau ko pe fatongia ko iaá



Siosifa Pole with his daughters (l-r) Naomi Jr and Kakala at the beach.

'oku fai ai ha fokotu'u visone pea mo ha fokotu'utu'u ki he ngāue 'oku ou fakahoko; pea 'oku fakatefito pe ki he kakai 'o e Pasifika. Na'e toe pehē foki 'e Siosifa, "kuo 'osi fai 'eku fakataha mo

e kau Faifekau-Sea 'o e ngaahi Vahefonua 'o e Pasifika (Sinoti, Wasewase, Vahefonua Tonga) 'o fakatalanoa ki he fokotu'utu'u ki hono fakanaunau'i hotau kakai pea ko e

'uluaki kongia ia 'o e halafononga ki he fokotu'u visone ko 'eni.

'Oku taufau foki 'ene visone ki he Tohitapu 'a ia na'a ne pehē, "ko e potu folofola 'oku fai 'aki 'a e fokotu'u visone ko 'eni ko hono ui 'e Sisu 'ene kau akonga 'ia Matiu vahe 2 veesi 19, "Mo omi 'o muimui 'iate au, pea teu ngaohi kimoua ko e ongo toutai kakai." Pea mo Matiu 28:19, ko e folofola ia 'a e 'Eiki Toetu'u pea ko e Fekau Lahi ia, "Ko ia, ke mou ō, 'o ngaohi 'a e ngaahi kakai kotoa pē ko 'eku kau ako, 'i he papitaiso kinautolu ki he Huafa 'o e Tamai mo e 'Alo, mo e Laumālie Mā'oni'oni." Ko e lea mahu'inga 'i he ongo potu folofola ko 'eni ko e "ngaohi" (resourcing) pea ko ia 'e fakama'u ki ai 'a e fokotu'u visone mo e fokotu'utu'u ki hotau ngaahi matakali Pasifika 'i he ngāue 'a e 'Eiki", ko e fakamatala ia 'a Siosifa. Ko e fakamatala nounou ia 'a Siosifa Pole, ko e talekita le'ole'o ki he va'a 'o e Pasifiki 'i he ngaue 'a e Siasi Metotisií .

'Oku 'oatu foki 'a e talamonu 'a e Pukolea kia kia autolu kuo hilifaki ki ai e ngaahi fatongia lalahi ko 'eni 'o hange ko e palesiteni, Setaita Veikune, palesiteni e Potungau'e 'a Fafine pea mo Siosifa Pole ko e talekita le'ole'o ki he va'a 'o e Pasifikií

Ko e Poupou Fakakilisimasi Ma'ae To'utupu

Kaveinga: "Ko e Akonaki 'o e Kilisimasi - Tau Langa Honau Kaha'u"

A Metaphor of Christmas - Let us build together their future

By 'Ikilifi Pope

Kuo kamata ke hā lahi mai 'i he ngaahi kaveinga ngāue 'a e siasií 'a e tokangaekina 'o e 'mo'ui ko 'enií ' (physical life) 'a e kau memipa mo e komunitií foki. Ko e taha 'o e ngaahi fakatātā ko e feinga 'a e siasií ke tekolo'i 'a e palopalema 'o e tupu masiva 'a e fānau (child poverty).

'Oku kau ki ai mo e polokalama 'a e Siaola ke langa hake 'a e ngaahi famili 'o hange ko e polokalama 'famili lelei', ko e polokalama 'a e Toko ki he taonakitaá pea pehe ki he To'utupu Tonga Trust mo 'enau polokalama ke tokoni'i e ako 'a e fanau Tonga (NCEA Study Support Programme). Ko e kotoa 'o e ngaahi ngāue ko 'eni 'oku fakatau mu'a ia ke langa hake 'a e mo'ui 'i he taimi ni mo e 'aho ni (here and now) 'a e kau memipaá.

He'ikai foki ke hala 'o kapau te tau pehē 'oku kainga pē felave'i eni mo e fakakaukau 'o e veesi mei he kosipelií , "Sione 1: 14.....pea na'e hoko 'a Folofola 'o kakano...." Neongo 'oku lahi 'a e ngaahi me'a mahu'inga (values) 'oku pine'i ki he fakakaukau ko 'enií ka 'e kau ai mo e pehē ko e hoko 'a Folofola 'o kakano 'ia Sisu Kalaisi ke ne toe 'mahino'i ange 'a e mo'ui ko 'enií mo



kaungākau mo mamani 'i he mamahi pe faingata'a'ia 'o e mo'ui ko 'eni í . Kou tui ko fakakaukau ia na'e 'uhinga ki ai 'a e palofita ko 'Aisea, "... pea ko e tokotaha ko ia 'oku maheni mo e mamahi...."

'I hono 'omi 'a e fakakaukau ko iaá ki he to'utupu 'o e 'aho ni, 'oku hoko 'a

Sisu ko e mōtolo pē fa'ifa'itaki'anga kia kitautolu 'i he fakakaukau mahu'inga "ke tau ngāue fakataha ke langa hake 'a e kaha'u 'o 'etau fānau 'i he siasií pea mo e ngaahi familií foki. 'I he 'etau langa 'a e kaha'u 'o e to'utupuúkuopau pē ke tau hifo (flexible) ki he lēvolo 'o e mahino pea mo e manako 'o e to'utupuú

'o ngāue mei ai kae malava ke tau fetaulaki mo kinautolu.

Ko e faka'amu ia 'a e kolomu ni 'i he kilisimasi 'o e ta'u ni 'ke tau langa fakataha honau kaha'uú Pea ki he fanau mo e to'utupu:

'OFA KE MOU MA'U HA KILISIMASI FIEFIA MO HA TA'U FO'OU MONU'IA.

FAKALOTOFALÉ'IA

Ko e fakalotofale'ia 'o e mahina ni 'oku fakahoko atu ia 'e he talekita le'ole'o Rev. Sosifa Pole

Fakalotofale'ia reflection for this month is conducted by the Acting Director for Pacific, Rev. Siosifa Pole
Potu Folofola/Scripture verse: Luke vahe 2:8-20. Kaveinga/Theme: "Kilisimasi Fiefia/Merry Christmas"

'Oku 'i ai e ki'i hiva 'oku tau fa'a hiva'i mo 'etau fanau pea 'oku pehe hono lea, "Kilisimasi fiefia, Kilisimasi fiefia, Kilisimasi fiefia, Ta'u Fo'ou monu'ia." Ko e fehu'i, 'Oku tu'unga 'i he hā 'etau fiefia 'i he Kilisimasi? Pea ko hai 'oku fiefia 'i he Kilisimasi? 'E tali 'e he ni'ihi 'oku tu'unga 'etau fiefia 'i he Kilisimasi ko e me'alele fo'ou, fale fo'ou, vala fo'ou, kai lelei, 'eva ki he famili ki Tonga, ko e ngaahi paati Kilisimasi, 'akau Kilisimasi, mo hono sisi 'uhila pea pehe ki hono ngaahi hiva faka-Kilisimasi.

Mo'oni katoa 'a e ngaahi tali ko



Siosifa Pole

ia he ko e me'a ia 'oku ne 'omai 'a e fiefia, neongo 'oku fakataimi pe. Ko e fehu'i hono ua pea ko e fehu'i mahu'inga ia, "Ka ko hai 'oku fiefia 'i he Kilisimasi?" 'I he fehu'i ko ia, 'oku ne 'omai kiate kitautolu 'a e matasio'ata ke tau sio takai ki hotau kaunga'api pe ko hai 'oku malava kene ma'u 'a e ngaahi me'a kotoa kuo u lave ki ai 'i 'olunga kae ma'u ai 'a e fiefia. Ko e matasio'ata ko ia he'ikai fakangatanga 'etau sio ki hotau kaunga'api pe 'i

Nu'u Sila ni, pe 'i Tonga, pe ko hotau famili pē, ka kuopau ke a'u atu ki hotau ngaahi kaunga'api 'oku nofo masiva mo fiekaia 'i Nu'u Sila ni pea a'u atu ki he ngaahi fonua muli, tau tefito ki he ngaahi fonua 'oku hoko ai 'a e tau mo e feikaia hange ko Silia mo 'Afilika. 'E anga fēfē ha'anau hiva he hiva ko 'eni, "Kilisimasi fiefia, Kilisimasi fiefia..." 'Oku talanoa 'a e Kosipeli 'a Luke vahe 2:8-20 ki he kau tauhi sipi na'e nofo vao mo mohe vao, 'o le'ohi 'enau fanga sipi he vao, ko e potu ia 'o e kau ta'e'iloa mo e li'ekina. Fakafofokifā pē kuo hā mai 'a e 'angelo mo e ongoongo fakafiefia 'o e Kilisimasi, "'Oua 'e manavahē; he ko eni kuo u ha'u mo au ha talanoa mālie, ko e me'a fakafiefia 'aupito, ko e me'a ma'ae kakai 'Isileli katoa. He na'e 'alo'i kiate kimoutolu 'anenai 'i he Kolo 'o Tevita ha Fakamo'ui, 'a ia ko e 'Eiki

Misaia. Pea ko hono faka'ilonga 'eni kiate kimoutolu: te mou 'ilo ha tamasi'i valevale, pea 'oku ne tokoto 'i he 'ai'angakai 'o e manu." 'Oku 'i ai 'a e me'a 'e tolu 'i he lea 'a e 'angelo tene 'omi ha fiefia 'oku mo'oni (real joy) 'i he faha'i Ta'u Kilimasi, 'uluaki, ke kau 'a e taha kotoa he fiefia (inclusive joy) "ma'ae kakai 'Isileli katoa". Neongo 'oku fakangatanga heni 'a e lea 'a e 'angelo ma'a 'Isileli pē, ka ko e tala-'Otua 'o e Kosipeli 'a Luke, ko e fakamo'ui 'a e 'Otua 'ia Sisu Kalaisi ma'ae taha kotoa 'o kau ai 'a e Senitaile. Ua, ko e fiefia ko ia kuopau ke faka-hā sino mai (incarnate), ko e fa'ahinga fiefia 'oku tau sio, fanongo, mo ala ki ai. Pea ko hono tolu, ko e fa'ahinga fiefia ke 'inasi ai 'a e si'isi'i taha pea mo e potu 'o e li'ekina (joy for the least and discarded places). Ko e talanoa mālie (good news) 'o e Kilisimasi 'e

mo'oni 'okapau 'e 'inasi 'a e tokotaha kotoa he fakamo'ui 'a e 'Otua 'ia Sisu Kalaisi, sino, 'atamai, mo e laumālie. Kapau 'e sio mata 'a e fiekaia ki ha me'akai kene ma'u tokoni mei ai pea a'usia 'e kinautolu 'oku hola mei he fetau'aki 'o hoko ko e kau kumi hufanga (refugees) 'a e melino mo'oni pea mo honau talitali lelei kinautolu he ngaahi fonua 'oku nau kumi hufanga ki ai. Ko e ongoongo 'o e Kilimasi na'e fakahā ia ki he kau nofo vao ke nau 'alu ki he feitu'u 'oku toe vao pe mo ia ('ai'angakai 'o e manu) pea ko e faka'ilonga ko e ki'i tamasi'i valevale (the least and discarded places). Ko e Kilisimasi fiefia ko e hoko mai 'a e 'Otua 'o kakano 'o tapanekale hotau lotolotonga, ko e 'ofa mo'oni (real love), 'ofa 'oku ofi (closer love), 'ofa 'oku hāmai (reveal love). Tauange ke pehe 'etau fiefia 'i he faha'i Ta'u Kilisimasi ko 'eni.

Fakanofu Fuofua Tonga Palesiteni Potungaue Fafine

Induction of First Tongan President Methodist Women's Fellowship



Ko e komiti eni 'a e palesiteni ke nau 'alofi 'a e ngāue he ta'u 'e ua ka hoko mai. The new executive committee will guide the Methodist Women's Fellowship over the next two years.

By Tiulipe Pope

Na'e fakahoko 'i he ngaahi uike si'i kuo toki maliu atuu 'a e fakanofu 'o e fuofua Tonga ki he lakanga palesiteni 'o e Potungaue 'a Fafine 'o e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'u Sila ni.

Na'e fakanofu 'a Siniva Moli-Vaitohi ki he lakanga palesiteni

'i ha konivēsio 'a e Potungaue 'a Fafine 'a e Siasif 'a ia na'e fakahoko 'i Christchurch he 'aho 25 - 28 'o 'Okatopa. Ko e siate folau pe kaveinga 'o e fakataha ni ko e "Chosen people, called to proclaim" pe ko e "Kakai fili, ui ke talaki". Ko e konivesio na'e fokotu'u pea mo fakalele ia 'e he palesiteni lototonga, Dianne Cloughton (2016 - 2018) pea mo 'ene komiti 'a ia 'oku kau

ki ai 'a Ofa Giblin, Valmai Horton, Moe Petaia, Philomena Petaia, Lynne Scott, Unaisi Tikoinaki and Roz Wilkie.

'I he ouau 'o e fakanofu ni na'e kau atu ki ai mo e komiti 'a e palesiteni kuo ne fili mei he ngaahi Potungaue 'a Fafine 'a e Vahefonua. 'I he lakanga kotoa pe'oku 'i ai 'a hono tokoni pe tokotaha fale'i. 'I he founa ko 'eni' 'oku tui 'a Siniva 'e lava ai ke fetokoni'aki

mo fepoupouaki 'a e hou'eiki fafine 'o e Vahefonua ke langa hake 'a e ngāue e Potungaue 'a Fafine.

Kuo 'osi 'i ai foki e fokotu'utu'u 'a e palesiteni ke langa hake 'a e mo'ui 'a e famili, ako pea pehe ki he to'utupu. Kuo tuku atu 'a 'ene ngaahi palani pea mo 'ene kaveinga ngaue ki he ta'u 'e ua ko 'eni te ne 'i he lakanga aii ke me'a ki ai 'a 'ene komiti. 'I he kamata'anga 'o e

ta'u fo'ou kuo maau malie 'a e ngaahi visone pea mo e siate folau 'oku faka'amu 'a e palesiteni fo'ou ke fakataulama ki ai e ngaue 'a e potungaue ni ki he kaha'u.

Kuo 'oatu foki mo e fakamālō 'a e palesiteni, Siniva Vaitohi ki he palesiteni kuo toki mavahe atuu, Dianne Cloughton pea mo 'ene komiti koe'uhii' ko 'enau fataki mai 'a e.