

TOUCHSTONE

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



UCANZ 50 years of unity and compassion

By Sophie Parish

Attending UCANZ Forum 2017 were (from left) Jocelyn Armstrong, Rev Jekheli Kibami and David Hall.

This year *Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa (UCANZ)* celebrates 50 years since the Churches' Act of Commitment, whereby the partner churches declared that they would work together for greater unity.

"The unitedness of the Co-operating Parishes and their will to stay together, work together and support their mission has been very significant over the past 50 years," says Methodist Church of NZ president Rev Prince Devanandan.

The milestone coincided with the biannual UCANZ Forum. More than 70 ministers and lay leaders for Uniting Congregations gathered at the Onehunga Co-operating Parish in Auckland September 27th-29th for the Forum.

The theme for the Forum was

'One More at the Table'. It highlighted the umbrella of Christian faith and the numerous ways the Co-operating Parishes throughout New Zealand are serving their communities, evolving with the times and to looking ahead to meet the challenges of our current age.

UCANZ executive officer Rev Adrian Skelton says the Church has been and will continue to be an example of the ideal in society.

"We can hope that while so much in today's society is targeted niche marketing, including niche churches, we hope that the Co-operating Ventures will be able to cut across that and continue to carry the message of unity and compassion."

Prince says the Forum theme also addressed the need to really listen to other partners in a conversation.

"The openness among the participants who are willing to

shift from an inherited traditional model to an emerging model in the context of the challenges we face is very interesting and inspiring. As is their firm commitment to take up the mission where they are called to," he says.

Keynote speakers at the Forum included Prince, Methodist Church of NZ vice president Viv Whimster, Trinity Theological College lecturer Rev Dr Mary Caygill, University of Otago Professor Dr Paul Trebilco, Religious Diversity Centre trustee Jocelyn Armstrong and Barbarian Productions coordinator Jo Randerson.

All speakers discussed the challenges they face in their ministries and their communities, their explorations of faith, and how they bring the message of Christianity and inclusiveness 'to the table'.

Topics covered in the Forum's workshops included intercultural communication, religious

diversity, inclusiveness, compassion, and deaf fellowship.

Speakers urged people to contemplate the need to sincerely listen in their congregations and communities to best serve their needs. Morning teas and lunches offered a time for participants to share their stories and what they envisage for their own parishes.

Rev Wayne Toleafoa from Te Atatu Peninsula Union Parish attended UCANZ Forum for the first time.

"It was good to see what other ministers' challenges are, have an opportunity to affirm our unity, and see that we are the same within our differences," he says.

Wayne reflected on the diversity of cultures within the church. "We begin our services with 20 greetings, as a way to show the Christ who is for everyone and Christ who transcends the barriers of culture and denomination."

Jo Randerson intrigued the

crowd with her presentation on Wellington's Barbarian Productions, a creative group of performers. Jo says they took on a challenging project recently to find a way for people aged 5-60+ to come together and express their generation's prejudices in a palatable way through a musical production.

The combination of singing, art and truth was a creative way to allow for dialogue and seek to reach deeper understanding about each other in the era we co-exist in today.

At the Forum the UCANZ Standing Committee met and elected Stuart Sinclair and David Hall to be the co-chairs for the next two year term.

Prince said the conference underscored Co-operating Parishes' commitment to persist amidst their differences, both theological and doctrinal. "They move together, learn from each other and continue to find new ways of uniting," he says.

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Commissioner urges better focus on children

The Children's Commissioner Judge Andrew Becroft is calling on New Zealanders to focus children's rights in order to ensure a better quality of life for all.

"The new Government has declared that 'if we put child well-being at the heart of what we do, then the well-being of all New Zealanders will be lifted'," Andrew says.

"The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child shows us the many different ways that government can influence the well-being of children and young people. We have an opportunity now to cement our approach to child rights."

The UN convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) Monitoring Group has released a report about how New Zealand is putting the Convention into practice and where it can do better.

The report makes three recommendations that the government can put into place immediately:

- 1) Make sure children's rights and needs are at the centre of policy and legislative reform. This approach will identify where children's rights are not being met, what needs to be done, who will do the work, when it will happen, and how those efforts will be monitored.
- 2) Allocate responsibility and resources to coordinate the implementation of the Children's Convention across government.
- 3) Ensure children and young people's views are taken into consideration as legislation and policies are developed.



Children's Commissioner Judge Andrew Becroft.

"Children's voices need to be heard in our country. We are very bad at seeking out their voices, listening to them, factoring them into our decision making and then reporting back to children the decisions made," Andrew says.

"If the practice was ingrained in government departments and community groups, there would be a significant change in the way policy is created. This would affect policy in areas of education, health and housing, for example, and in the way we respond to child poverty."

Upholding the Children's Convention can improve the lives of children and young people living in the most difficult circumstances.

"We need to be much more positive about the Convention and what it can do for our children. Yes, 70 percent of our children do well, and some do outstandingly well. But 20 percent are struggling, and 10 percent do as badly, if not worse, than most comparable OECD countries," Andrew says.

"All our children would benefit significantly from the Convention if fully applied, but especially those whose needs are not being met."

From 2018, the UNCROC Monitoring Group will publish progress reports focusing on legal and policy developments for children and young people in New Zealand and how those developments align with the principles of the Children's Convention.

NZ churches bolster ties with Asian Christians

By David Hill

The New Zealand Methodist connection with Asian churches is as strong as ever.

President Rev Prince Devanandan led an eight-strong New Zealand Methodist delegation to the Christian Conference of Asia's (CCA) 60th annual conference in Yangon, Myanmar, in October. Te Taha Maori tumuaki Rev Diana Tana served as vice-moderator of the conference.

The link with CCA dates back to 1957 when the then Sri Lankan Methodist president, who was instrumental in the CCA's establishment, visited New Zealand.

New Zealand also has strong political links with Asian countries through the Commonwealth and as trading partners, but how much do we know about the issues facing Asian Christians?

"New Zealand has historically been considered to be a Christian nation, though it is now becoming religiously diverse, whereas in Asian countries Christianity has always been in the minority," Prince says.

"I grew up in Sri Lanka and



The two CCA conferences in Myanmar promoted ecumenism and mission.

I would say I am Christian because I was brought up in a Christian family, but for my grandfather's generation there were privileges to convert to Christianity and to be part of the English-speaking community."

Prince says in many Asian countries Buddhism is the dominant religion, because it came without imperial baggage.

Whereas after independence Christianity came to be seen by many as the religion of the former enemy and these historical grievances continue to divide people today and lead to

persecution of religious minorities, not just Christian.

"Even in New Zealand today, some churches give money based on how many people have been converted to Christianity," Prince says.

The CCA's diamond jubilee conference was preceded by a six-day Asia Mission Conference, (AMC) with the theme of 'Journeying Together: Prophetic Witness to the Truth and Light in Asia'.

"The Mission conference opened us up to ask how we can be a witness to truth and life, and



Tumuaki Diana Tana played an important role moderating the CCA's diamond jubilee conference.

not just through Christianity," Prince says.

Former Methodist Church of NZ president Rev Rex Nathan says the two conferences were real eye-openers.

"In New Zealand we don't really know the issues that those Christians in Asia go through because we are so far removed. Some churches are powerless to speak out for fear of being shut down.

"In Myanmar, the population is 53 million. About 88 percent are Buddhist and just 6 percent Christian, though they are still significant numbers compared to New Zealand. They go and worship as best they can."

Prince says the two conferences drew 658 people from 112 churches from 22

countries from Iran to Australia and New Zealand.

The AMC brought together voices from around the world, including China Christian Council associate general secretary Rev Manhong Melissa Lin, who says the conference has helped the Chinese church to be heard.

"We need to contextualise our missiology which involves de-Westernisation and de-colonisation," Manhong says.

"We must find our own inclusive approach to mission, which this conference inspires us to do. It echoes what we are doing right now which is called 'zhongguohua' and means 'Chinazation'."

Myanmar Council of Churches associate general secretary Mai Kaythi Min Din says the conference was an inspiration for Myanmar's ecumenical movement.

"It really is something special to be here for the first time. Being gathered here inspires being involved more and to walk more in the ecumenical movement."

Religious leaders advocate diverse, more just NZ

Education about different religion in schools, inequality, the climate crisis and refugees in Australian detention centres were topics discussed at a meeting of national leaders from a range of different faiths last month.

The Religious Diversity Centre hosted the meeting in Auckland on 15 November.

Archbishops and other leaders from various Christian denominations including Latter Day Saints and the Ratana Church joined representatives from the Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Baha'i, Buddhist, and Jewish faiths at the gathering.

The leaders confirmed their commitment to respecting religious diversity in New Zealand and to ensuring that people of all faiths can live in harmony.

They also expressed their concern that the growing levels inequality and poverty in New Zealand need urgent action, and said this can only be solved through addressing structural issues.

In a statement they said there should be more training for teachers so they can feel confident in bringing religious diversity education into classrooms.

Methodist Church of NZ president Rev Prince Devanandan attended the meeting.



Leaders from an array of faiths gathered at the Religious Diversity Centre in Auckland last month.

Prince says the leaders agreed that through education people in New Zealand can improve their understanding of each other's commonalities and differences, which will lead to more religious harmony.

"We also stressed the need to recognise the climate crisis as an urgent issue for human beings and one that impacts the well-being of everyone on the planet."

The religions leaders are already working

within their own faith communities to implement solutions to these issues, and they are now calling for wider collective action and advocacy. Lasting solutions require action from central and local government as well as from civil society.

The gathering also passed a resolution the religious leaders also called for a humane resolution to the situation in Manus Island and Nauru.

Their statement says "asylum seekers must be treated with dignity and given a chance to live in safety and freedom".

The leaders support the offer to relocate 150 refugees to New Zealand and are willing to help with resettlement efforts as needed.

"Irrespective of any political and religious differences, we are facing a humanitarian crisis in the Pacific region, and we need to come together to resolve this issue," they say.

At the end of the November meeting the religious leaders committed themselves to work together to provide leadership at a time of global turmoil. They look forward to meeting regularly to achieve these and other aims.

In-coming presidential team breaks new ground

The Methodist Church of NZ's incoming presidential team says they are excited about the opportunity they have received and they are now focused on preparing for the task ahead.

President elect for 2019-2020 is Rev Setaita Kinahoi Veikune, and vice president elect is Nicola Grundy.

A special sitting of the Conference Panel met on October 31st to select the next presidential team from the three candidates for president and three candidates for vice president put forward by the Taha Maori and Taiuiwi sections of Te Hahi Weteriana.

The Panel's selection of Setaita and Nicola establishes a number of 'firsts'.

It is the first time a Pasifika woman will serve as MCNZ president, it is the first time the MCNZ will have a presidential team made up of two women, and it is the first time a layperson will serve two terms as vice president. (Nicola was the MCNZ's vice president in 1999).

"We are both very happy to receive the support of the Conference Panel and the Methodist Church," Setaita says.

"We recognise that the selection process has been unusual and quite difficult for some people. We are now looking forward and getting to know one another.

"From our initial discussions we believe we will work together well. We have the same heart, mind and vision for the life, growth and future of the Church."

Nicola says one of the things she and Setaita are discussing is what it means to be a Connexional church.

"We have similar thoughts on what it means to be in Connexion. Sometimes it feels as if we operate in silos and we want to bring people from different parts of the Church together."

Although there are few ordained women in Pacific churches, Setaita does not expect any resistance to her role as president when working with other church leaders in the region.

"I warmly await being embraced by my Pacific brothers," she says. "I do not anticipate any difficulties."

Similarly Nicola says the fact that the presidential team is made up of two women will not be an

issue.

"For long periods the presidential team was an all-male scene. That was not a big deal, and it shouldn't be a big deal that the new team is two women," Nicola says.

MCNZ general secretary Rev David Bush says the Conference Panel's deliberations to select the next presidential team went smoothly.

The Conference Panel of five representatives of Te Taha Maori and five representatives of Taiuiwi met at the MCNZ offices in Auckland.

It met for two hours in the morning, broke for lunch, and reached a decision by 3:00 in the afternoon.

"The panel took its time to consider all the names and possible combinations for the presidential team," David says.

"Afterwards some members of the panel said in some ways it was a better process than when the panel meets at Conference. They were not under pressure, whereas at Conference some members of the panel also have reports to present or other duties to carry out."



Setaita Kinahoi Veikune (left) and Nicola Grundy.

The decision follows a drawn-out process after no decision on the new presidential team was reached at Conference 2016.

Since then Taiuiwi held two ballots to determine its nominees. After voting at regional synods was inconclusive, Taiuiwi used an on-line system to hold a second ballot.

David says the on-line voting was effective as were changes made to the way the Conference Panel (formally called the 5 + 5) operates.

"After Conference was unable to reach a decision on the next presidential team, the Council of Conference made some modifications to the process and these were approved by the president.

"The changes are subtle but they make the Conference Panel's role more collaborative and consultative."

David hopes the changes make it much less likely that the Conference Panel reaches an impasse at Conference in future.



Celebrations at the Vatican to mark 50 years of the international Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue.

Catholics and Methodists share a jubilee moment

By David Hill

Despite the Methodist Church of NZ's small size it was well represented at the celebrations in Rome in October that marked 50 years of Methodist-Catholic dialogue.

MCNZ Mission Resourcing director Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard and general secretary Rev David Bush joined 32 Methodists from around the world at the gathering on October 19, which included an audience with Pope Francis.

David attended as part of the World Methodist Council's (WMC) steering committee, while Trevor has been a member of the Methodist-Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue for the last six years.

"I think Methodists in this country can be proud that New Zealand is playing its role in world Methodism," Trevor says.

"Generally speaking, in many countries Methodism is not the dominant faith.

Countries in South America have a very large Catholic population and the percentage of Methodists is small, but in sheer numbers they are much bigger than New Zealand.

"So it is remarkable that we should have two representatives at an event of this magnitude."

The celebration was held in the Consistory Hall at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican, where WMC general secretary Bishop Ivan Abrahams delivered an address to the Pope and the Pope responded.

Bishop Abrahams said Methodists were "grateful for the foundation which has been laid to further our conversations toward unity as one body in Christ".

During the visit, the Bishop was interviewed on Vatican Radio where he commended Pope Francis for being "a beacon of hope" and "somebody who embodies the unity that we are seeking to live".

In his response, Pope Francis noted that

in the Old Testament, a golden jubilee was a moment to set slaves free.

"We too have been freed from the slavery of estrangement and mutual suspicion. We are no longer strangers, but rather, through our shared baptism, members of the household of God."

Francis cited Methodist movement founder John Wesley's devotion and holiness, which brought many people to Christ.

"When we recognise the working of the Holy Spirit in other Christian confessions we cannot fail to rejoice, as they can also help us grow closer to the Lord."

Francis said our faith becomes tangible "when it takes the concrete form of love and service to the poor and marginalised. As Methodists and Catholics together, when we assist those who are alienated or in need we are responding to the Lord's summons."

The international Methodist-Catholic dialogue commission meets each year and produces a report every five years on

progress being made in relations between the two churches.

Trevor says the theme for the latest round is reconciliation.

"This latest gathering marks the start of the next five-year cycle. We will meet in Hong Kong next year, in Nairobi in 2019 and in Jerusalem in 2020. Then we will present a report to the World Methodist Conference in Gothenburg, Sweden in 2021."

As the new phase of dialogue gets underway, Pope Francis offered some thoughts:

"As you begin a new phase of dialogue devoted to reconciliation, may your discussions be a gift for Christians everywhere to become ministers of reconciliation.

"Let us prepare ourselves with humble hope and concrete efforts for that full recognition, which will enable us to join one another in the breaking of bread together."



Brian Turner (left) and other protestors against the sale of kwila timber.

Stop the sale of kwila timber

To the editor,

On November 11th a group of protesters targeted Mitre10 in Papanui, Christchurch for selling kwila timber that has been illegally or unsustainably logged from forests in Asia-Pacific, notably West Papua.

We gave Mitre10 customers leaflets and presented the store's manager with a petition asking that it stop selling kwila products.

Kwila (also known as merbau or ipil) is an endangered tropical hardwood timber sourced from Indonesia-controlled West Papua and neighbouring Papua New Guinea. There is no need for New Zealanders to keep using kwila. There are alternative timbers.

We shouldn't be destroying the homes of indigenous people and wildlife in Papua to put decks on our homes.

Kwila comes from the last remaining

rainforests in the Asia-Pacific region. The forests are the home and food basket of the indigenous Papuan people, who have not given their consent for this destructive logging.

These rainforests are also home to many unique animals and plants such as birds of paradise and cassowary, and are critical stores of carbon in the fight to save the climate and keep global warming under 2 degrees.

Kwila trees take 80 years to reach commercial size and one hectare of its range may contain only one tree.

Protesters will target other Mitre10 stores and other retailers around New Zealand for selling kwila wood products.

Brian Turner, Waikuku Beach

A vision of Pentecost

To the editor,

In Acts chapter two there is the marvellous vision of peoples from different ethnicities and languages all gathered in worship together as one people.

It is still possible for the Holy Spirit to work the same miracle in our church in 2018. Not just once every two years at conference, but on each and every Sunday.

John Thornley, Palmerston North

What do we mean by mainstream?

By Brian Kendrick

For the whole of his life and in his teaching as revealed in the Gospels and taught by the Church, Jesus upheld the rights of the disadvantaged and the marginalised.

He identified with those who suffered because they were not in the mainstream of humanity of the time. So what do we mean by 'mainstream'?

It seems to me that we use mainstream to refer to our own humanity and our own mode of existence, which includes the majority of those with whom we come into contact.

It is perhaps unfortunate that we tend to overlook the absolute uniqueness of others and their vital importance to the functioning of our community.

Some of us are teachers, nurses, artists, musicians, number crunchers, scientists, builders, farmers, etc., etc. It is this variety of people that do not have an opportunity to express themselves, our communities would be much the poorer.

However, within these differences, we have identifiable qualities that can have an effect on our personalities. One of these many qualities is autism.

In its various guises, autism can be identified

in people who make inspirational leaders, scientists, mathematicians, musicians, chess players and savants. It can also be expressed in conditions that require full time caregivers.

It is likely that we all have some measure of such identifiable qualities. Likewise, we are just as likely to be bearers of other qualities to different degrees.

Yet to all intents and purposes, we would like to be thought of as mainstream.

In exactly the same way, we are each a blend of male and female with most of us falling into the two predominant expressions of gender and sexuality. We identify as male or female and regard ourselves as mainstream. (I'll guarantee that Jesus didn't know that he was part female!)

What puzzles me is that for some reason the Church seems to have taken a position that follows the Jesus model to support people who fall out of the mainstream due to the conditions of their birth or other circumstance, yet it maintains a right to deny full human rights to those who, fall outside the mainstream in terms of their gender or sexuality.

I would like to know how the Church sees this as justified in the teaching and life of Jesus.



@cartoons by Tim.

The Ageing Experience By Jan Fogg

The best Christmas gift

My son's family is holding the Christmas celebration at their place this year. His partner Teresa told me that she just loves Christmas for all its get-togethers, sharing, decorating and special foods.

Other parts of the conversation, however, revealed her busyness, uncertainty about jobs in the family, depression, financial concerns - the common pressures that are so evident in our society.

As older people, we too may have financial pressures and wonder how best to leap into the spirit of secular Christmas.

The joy of Christmas for me has always focused on the gifts of the Christ in our lives: hope, peace, joy and love, and the church's celebration of these. If my faith is real, in what ways do I pass them on in my family?

Some of us have done well in bringing people from younger generations into our churches, but many of us have not. As I listen to groups of senior folk from a variety of churches, they talk about their older congregations with very few children or younger people to take up tasks.

Christmas in the church now can be different from how we might remember it from some years back, when younger people filled the worship space. It was such a joy celebrating the Christmas story with the children, hearing happy young voices chattering with older voices.

So as we think about Christmas giving, let us take some time to

consider how to pass on the gift of hope for struggling families, the gift of peace for communities where violence in families is all too prevalent, the gift of joy where depression and suicide figures soar, and the gift of love where mistrust and fear abound.

We talk about these gifts in our church life, so let's make them real in our giving this year.

Simply giving time can help meet many of the needs of young families and will be a more precious gift than yet another imported piece of something. Although wrapping it to go under the tree is a challenge!

Many of us will give a gift of a goat or a fruit-tree which will travel to a community helped by our Christian World Service. Telling the story that goes with it is a different kind of a gift for our families here in Aotearoa - an opportunity to build the gift of compassion in a child.

Our missions are doing wonderful work to help brighten Christmas for many families here at home - let's support them as well as we can.

Surprisingly, such giving also gifts ourselves. A task of older age is to look back and question the degree of generativity in our life: how well did we nurture younger people and contribute to the next generation?

Giving our younger people precious values leaves them with so much more than another bulky parcel under the tree. May you have a blessed Christmas.

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE PRESIDENT

How far is it...?

Greetings from us both in this time of Advent and Christmas.

Christmas is a time of journeying and we can imagine hearing the question being asked 'How far is it?' from expectant parents hoping to reach their destination before the arrival of their child, shepherds on a night-time mission, and star-gazers pursuing a conviction.

Today, we may be on a local or international journey to be with family and friends or extra trips to the shopping mall.

Some journeys require months of planning, some are so routine that we hardly think about them. Others can suddenly be precipitated by unforeseen opportunities or unwelcome news.

When travelling, we may have to re-examine our luggage limit and leave things behind, change direction, or face delays. How far is it? We do not know and sometimes the journey itself may be more exciting than reaching the destination!

The journeys that we make physically are symbolic of life's journeys. Christmas can be a time to reflect and the coming of

the New Year can be an opportunity to reconsider our direction of travel.

As a Church, we have been on the familiar path of Connexional meetings, Synods and stationing. We have appointed committees, allocated budgets, and done many other things this year, without Conference gathering.

We also selected a presidential team for 2018-20. This has given us the chance to discover slightly different ways of doing things, perhaps working smarter rather than harder. We extend our greetings to the presidential team elect, Rev Setaita Kinahoi Veikune and Nicola Grundy as they prepare for their term of office.

Recent overseas meetings with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), and with the UCANZ Forum in Auckland remind us that we journey with other Christians trying to live out Jesus' way.

Through inter-faith dialogue, we know that people of other faiths are working and praying for peace and justice in the world. Prince attended the Religious Diversity Centre meeting on Wednesday 15

November in Auckland, along with more than 25 other leaders from many religions in New Zealand.

This gathering was an opportunity to focus on people's common concerns irrespective of their differences. Methodist Mission and Ecumenical will continue to work with the Religious Diversity Centre as mandated by the Conference 2014. The Centre is working with Human Rights Commission to review the Religious Diversity Statement in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Among parishes, we have been glad to join those celebrating decades or even a century of congregational life. At the same time we hear the pain of others who cannot see themselves continuing further than a year or so.

'How far is it?' maybe becomes less important than 'Who travels with us?' Each year brings changes in the world and in our personal lives, and those changes invite a response from us.

We know that for some, it has been a year of loss and health challenges. For others it has been a year of new



President
Prince Devanandan



Vice President
Viv Whimster

opportunities.

In all situations, the assurance of God's presence and the company of those who care about us, makes it possible to keep going when we don't know the answer to How far is it?

We hope that Touchstone readers will have time to spend with the people who are important to you during this festive season as well as some space for reflection.

We pray for safety in your physical travels and, for you and for your travelling companions on life's journey as you have new experiences of God's hope, peace, joy and love.

How far is it - to Bethlehem, to the Christ child, to God? It may not be far.

The Reformation's unfinished business

By Eric Laurenson

On October 31st Christians marked Reformation Day. It was 500 years since Martin Luther nailed those pesky theses to his church's front door and sparked off a revolution.

It would be easy to think that when Luther made his bold move all the questions and challenges the Church faced were dealt with, but we have to remember the very different environment in which he made his stand.

Luther's big gripe was the sale of indulgences without a corresponding requirement of penitence. He also emphasised that folk could relate directly to God without the necessary mediation of anyone else - not churches or priests or any human agency.

To deal with the awkward question of the enormous actual power that churches and princes held over people, he developed the idea that God ruled his creation through two kingdoms. One was the heavenly kingdom ruled by God's love. In the other realm, God ruled through earthly authorities - by force if necessary.

We owe an immense debt to Luther and whilst we can critique his two kingdoms concept, there are still anomalies in our position which remain stubbornly unresolved.

These might not seem particularly significant, but I suggest that the confusion they engender is behind the modern church's diminishing influence in our communities.

When Lloyd Geering recently appeared on the Sunday

programme he repeated his notion that the concept of God is dead in the water and we are motivated not by a superstitious idea of God, but by simple concepts of human kindness.

Peter Lineham, on the other hand, acknowledged that non-European churches are flourishing and evangelical denominations continue to pick up a limited section of the population.

Methodism as we know it in our own world is an inheritor of the tangled path from Luther to the present day. We have much of Luther's pragmatism but we have never entirely cast off some of his Catholic concepts.

One of these regards priesthood. 'Every member a minister', we say but we qualify that with talk of special roles within the church which give some the unchallenged role of gatekeeper between God and people.

Communion, the reminder of our common humanity under God in our shared meals, rather than being a uniting influence within human society becomes a mark of our distinction from the everyday life of most people.

Many Methodists work hard at ecumenical relationships with other denominations and, in more recent years, relationships with other faiths. It is a worthy effort but behind it all sits a non-negotiable position.

In the final analysis, we say that the only real path to God is via a male Palestinian Jew - Jesus of Nazareth. One of the real dangers facing the world today is

the insidious war between Christians and Muslims. What are we doing to look at our theology to see the other messages that rest within the teaching of Jesus?

They are there for those who choose to see them - visions of the equality and interrelationship of all people within the realm of God as we extend our image of God to include all of creation. It seems to me that Luther could never quite get to grips with such an

overarching view of our place in the scheme of things.

As a lifelong Methodist, I value our denomination's contribution to the life of the Christian church. We have a proud record of working for social justice and promoting lay people.

Wesley's deep thinking and constant debate with himself and others lie behind much of our life together. However, the present day debate over the type of leadership

we should have in the church and the fading importance of Conference as a place of meeting, point to a need to consider whether we are just another denomination or actually a spiritual movement with an important message of reformation for our world.

Eric Laurenson is convenor of the Liberal Network and a former president of the Methodist Church of NZ.

Poet's Corner

THE STORM

By Trevor Hoggard

*Rods of rain piledrive mercilessly into the tarmac
and bounce back
to the billowing, black clouds above;
the drains spew back the gurgling torrent's flow,
sweeping away bedraggled, drowning rats below.*

*Rrrrrumble...CRACK! The heavens tear themselves asunder;
buffeted pilots helplessly curse the thunder.
Lightning sizzles, the air's alight.
The moped rider anxiously looks for cover;
frightened children run to their frightened mother.*

*In agony radios hiss and spit;
a splintering tree screams as it's hit;
rain trickles from my squelching boots;
pea-pullers scatter to escape the carnage,
as God puts proud Man back into the Dark Age.*

*The digger's arm stretches imploringly towards the sky,
but the arm of cloud passes remorselessly by,
gradually disappearing over the hill;
the abandoned digger ruefully drips, weak and forlorn,
and thankful birds emerge to greet the second dawn.*

*Originally published in 100 Contemporary Christian Poets,
Lion Publishing, 1983*

THE SEA STORM

By Desmond Cooper

*The sea is torn across
like a frayed fabric
tufted white and
tormented.*

*Torn across by a steel
wire brush...snared
raging raw and
tortured.*

*She maps our island shores
manipulated
masochist and
terrified.*

*Becalming sun eclipses
manoeuvring
moon's strength and
tempting*

*but the sea is afraid
to lose the gains of
tide, squalling and
tearing.*

*The sea is troubled
a frayed fabric, affrayed
tufted temper
torn across.*

Lindisfarne looks back, springs ahead

Invercargill's Lindisfarne Methodist Worship & Community Centre celebrated its 20th anniversary in style on the weekend of 18-19 November.

More than 80 people gathered for a dinner on Saturday and even more came along for the Sunday service.

At the service a previous member of the congregation, Carole Worley, and previous presbyter Rev Motekiai Fakatou shared the Bible readings, and Methodist Church president Rev Prince Devanandan preached with the theme of God's Mission.

At both events the 20-strong church choir sang. Current presbyter Rev Peter Taylor says the emphasis of the two events was to celebrate the past 20 years as a springboard for the next 20.

Two ways the parish did this were through the blessing of a Remembrance Tree (on which were leaves with names of people who were once part of the parish, but have now died or moved away), and through a frieze created by the present Kids Klub.



Lilly Melligan (left) and Rev Peter Taylor in front of the Kids Klub frieze.



Heritage NZ has restored the Melanesian Mission and added an upmarket restaurant.

Auckland's Melanesian Mission rejuvenated

By Cory Miller

The iconic stone building along Auckland's Mission Bay, once an Anglican boarding school for Melanesian boys, has been given a makeover in the hopes of drawing in the crowds to learn about its history.

More than a century and a half ago the Melanesian Mission on Tamaki Drive was a boarding school for boys from Melanesia, known as St Andrew's College.

Today the school is no longer and its Anglican owners have moved on, but the 157-year-old building remains.

The early colonial structure has been the home of the Mecca Stonehouse for the last few years, but has recently undergone a \$3.3m restoration complete with a new restaurant pavilion.

The Mission Bay Pavilion, as it is now known, had its official opening ceremony in late November, which included a keynote speech by the Archbishop of Melanesia George Angus Takeli.

Heritage New Zealand's director of organisational development Nicholas Chin says the organisation hopes the public can learn more about this history.

The Melanesian Mission building, now owned by Heritage NZ, was first built in 1859, with basalt quarried on Rangitoto Island.

When the mission moved to Norfolk Island and the school closed down, the building remained and was used for a variety of purposes, including as a naval training base and a museum.

From 1915 to the early 1920s it was the Walsh Brothers' flying school, a training ground for many of the pilots who fought in World War I.

Nicholas says the site had become quite run down in recent years and so the call was made to restore it and get in new restaurant tenants.

"We needed to improve public engagement with

the building, as not many in Auckland were aware of its significance and importance in history."

Nicholas says the land upon which the building sits has also had a long-standing significance to Auckland and to iwi.

It was the site of the Kohimarama conference held in 1860. At that event several hundred Maori chiefs gathered and in an effort to reduce the risk of the Taranaki War spreading and to restate their commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and to peace.

Nicholas says the restoration project, combined with the new restaurant would draw people through its doors to learn about the role the stone house played in Auckland's history.

"We hope a lot more people will use the premises. That alone should expose the history of the building."

A number of signs were also going up around the building to tell visitors to the building, a little of its story.

The multi-million dollar project, has received funding from a variety of organisations including Foundation North, the Stout Trust and Vector, along with some donations from Heritage New Zealand supporters.

The project began in December last year and was completed in October.

Nicholas says extensive seismic strengthening work has been done on the building. Its exterior and interior have been restored in line with heritage requirements, and the restaurant pavilion has been added.

He says the final result is "looking fantastic".

"We are looking forward to seeing the Melanesian Mission being a focal point for Aucklanders and visitors again this summer. People will be able to enjoy this heritage landmark at its best."

HONEST TO GOD

By Ian Harris

The history and poetry of Christmas

So just who was this Jesus whose birth billions of people will celebrate again this month?

Contemporary scholars across the spectrum - Christian, Jewish, humanist, sceptical - have delved into history in search of the answer that question. A broad consensus has emerged though two major questions still lie open.

In his book *Who on Earth was Jesus?*, English Quaker and humanist David Boulton sums up the "almost indisputable facts" most scholars would sign up to, while conceding that all of them would want to add their own two-penn'orth.

First, Jesus lived. Historical research has finally laid to rest the quaint conspiracy theory that the early church made up the human Jesus to ground its developing cult of the Christ figure in a flesh-and-blood personality.

He was born to a mother named Mary, probably in Nazareth about 4BC. All the rich detail embroidering the Christmas story including Bethlehem, the virgin birth, the shepherds, a star guiding wise men from the east, the heavenly choir, and the flight to Egypt are there for good theological reasons, especially for the links they made with the Jews' religious heritage.

They can still be appreciated as such. But they are not eye-witness accounts.

Jesus lived in Galilee, in northern Palestine and joined the rough-hewn prophet John the Baptist in the wilderness before beginning a ministry of teaching and healing in the Galilean villages.

The core of his message was that the kingdom of God was an earthly possibility. His preaching was characterised by memorable sayings and vivid illustrations drawn from the life of the people around him - a wayward son, a peasant sowing seeds, a lost coin. His reputation grew as a prophet and holy man: healings and miracles were attributed to him.

Many people were attracted to him, and some became his disciples.

About 30AD he travelled south to Jerusalem, where he was arrested as a trouble-maker and put to death by the Roman authorities. However, his followers came to believe that he had burst back from the dead and his spirit would guide them in spreading his message of God's kingdom.

So that's it: the mainstream scholarly consensus in the early 21st century points to the Jesus of history as a wisdom teacher, a charismatic sage, a healer, a good man unjustly executed.

From the beginning, however, a stream of letters, gospels, dialogues and papyrus fragments tell more than the bare facts of history. Without exception they spring from the period after Jesus' death as his followers tried to make sense of his continuing influence on them.

That took them beyond memories of what he said and did during his life to interpreting these in a context of ultimate meaning and purpose. This lifted our notions of Jesus from a historical template into the language of poetry, mythology and religion, and this is why the stories embellishing Christmas still resonate.

If a single word can encapsulate that post-Jesus experience, it is 'Christ' - and there the consensus ends.

What are we to understand by the term today? Is it a legitimate development



Ian Harris

from the historical Jesus? Was Jesus God as well as man?

By 'kingdom of God' did he mean a radically transformed way of living in the here and now, or a cataclysmic supernatural intervention when God would impose his rule on earth? On all these questions, scholars argue both extremes and every shade between.

Whatever, it was the Christ as principle, presence and power who quickly became the dynamic heart of the infant faith. Here you move beyond what history can establish and into the subjective realm of the creative imagination.

Here the test is not the analysis of objective facts, but the power to enrich and enlarge human experience - which is the point of religion at its best.

In Christianity Jesus is the historical aspect, and Christ is the mythic or creative. Neither is complete without the other.

Different views of Jesus over time have led to different ways of thinking about Christ - but that should not faze anyone, for every generation is free to bring its own needs, knowledge, worldview and creativity to bear in shaping its own religious understanding.

As Irish American scholar John Dominic Crossan says, "Christianity must repeatedly, generation after generation, make its best historical judgment about who Jesus was then [that is, as a man in history] and, on that basis, decide what that reconstruction means as Christ now."

Christmas comes alive when the history and the poetry, the human and the mythic, Jesus and the Christ, are glimpsed and held together.

PUBLIC ISSUES

By Betsan Martin, Public Issues co-ordinator

What is sacred? Spirituality and the fourth technological age

What has been called the fourth technological revolution is not new, nor is it one event.

This fourth revolution is the development of robots with intelligence and genetic editing. This technology blurs the lines between biological and digital worlds.

It will change organisations, revolutionise the way we move around, and, some say, could regenerate nature that industrialisation has destroyed.

Can technology cure the human desire for mastery and for treating other people and nature as objects?

What is writ large in the fourth technological age is global interdependence. The inter-connections among humans and nature are more intense in our globalised, industrialised world.

Climate change is the most compelling symptom of this dynamic.

As science expands the

understanding of human impact on our ecosystems, we have to include ethics as part of our spirituality and our actions. These new conditions change our understanding of our place in the world and much of it is beyond comprehension.

These new technologies are firmly displacing human control over life, and questioning how we continue to see God as creator.

Are we moving toward an ecocentric worldview instead of a human centred worldview? The way in which all things are inter-related and connected is perhaps the first element of the sacred.

In New Zealand we face questions of how to transition to zero carbon economies. Will we just reduce carbon emissions and carry on exploiting with continued biodiversity loss and inequality?

Or, do we take a system-wide approach that recognises climate change is symptomatic of a

system of exploitation that does create wealth but has human and environmental consequences?

Some ways that fourth revolution technology could mitigate climate change are:

A fleet of 1500 unmanned ships dragging turbines through the water to create sea spray that is then pumped some 25 metres into the air as vaporised salt. This spray would cause existing clouds above the Earth to become brighter and reflect more sunlight back into space to take heat out of our atmosphere.

Another proposal is to pump 100,000 tonnes of liquid sulphur dioxide into the stratosphere every year creating aerosol clouds of sulphates that would effectively act as a sunshield.

In New Zealand genetic technology is being investigated as a means to eradicate invasive species. Editing the genome of pests could stop their reproduction.

Others are exploring biocontrol technology to eliminate malaria mosquitos. The use of genetic technology could intensify the presence of certain traits and interfere with the reproduction of female genes.

What are some of the ecological effects and the unintended consequences of these interventions? Would we even think of consulting with nature?

If we remove a species from the food web what are the effects? Intervening into natural order could cause ecological cascades. If we eradicate rats, for example, could there be a proliferation of stoats and other predators?

These questions address our notions of the sacred.

It is difficult to put a line in the sand of what is sacred in the sense of that which should not be tampered with. Humankind has a remarkable and infinite quest to expand the horizons of knowledge.

We have only just begun to grapple with human interdependence with nature and to appreciate the complexity of all forms of ecosystems.

We would do well to start with approaches that recover a relational way of living which includes all the effects of human exploration and pollution.

Compassion and responsibility both arise from a sense of the sacredness of our relationships with each other and all forms of life.

Ethical values have a dimension of accountability. This accountability needs to put limits on the unintended consequences of technological interventions.

When these may cross millennia, their consequences cannot be foreseen. Another dimension of the sacred is to respect the threshold of what is unknowable. While human comprehension is ever-expanding, the unknowable is infinite.

New hall brings new life to Tongan congregation

Christchurch South Tongan Methodist Parish wasted little time in putting its new church hall to good use.

Local MP and Minister of Regenerate Christchurch Dr Meagan Wood officially opened the new hall on November 4th, and on November 16th Christchurch's Tongan community used it to host Tonga's rugby league team, Mate Ma'a Tonga.

Parish superintendent Rev Moi Kaufononga says Mate Ma'a Tonga does not have a lot of resources and the event raised \$15,000, which will help the team meet the expenses of playing in the Rugby League World Cup.

He says the evening is just the sort of community event the hall was designed for.

"The reopening of the hall is very good for our people. With our restored church and the new hall it is a rebirth for the congregation and important resource for our community," Moi says.

Although the former hall did not withstand significant damage during the Christchurch earthquakes, the building was assessed as unsafe. It was closed in 2011 and demolished in 2016.

The Parish had limited funds to build the new hall, but it carried out fund-raising and received a Lottery grant. It took 10 months construct the hall.

The adjacent church building required significant earthquake strengthening. This was carried out last year and the church was re-opened earlier this year.

A number of Methodist Church leaders were present for the opening of the hall. They included MCNZ president Rev Prince Devanandan, president elect Rev Setaita Kinahoi Veikune, Vahefonua Tonga superintendent Rev Tevita Finau, and Auckland-Manukau Tongan Parish superintendent Rev Vaikoloa Kilikiti.

Also on hand were the president of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga Rev Dr



Rev Moi Kaufononga speaking at the opening of the Christchurch Tongan congregation's new church hall.



Members of the Tongan national rugby league team were hosted at the new hall before their game in Christchurch.

Finau 'Aho and Labour MP Anahila Kanongata'a. Local Methodist ministers, ministers from other Christchurch Tongan churches, and members of Vahefonua Tonga from around New Zealand also joined the party.

Moi says with the refurbished church and new hall the congregation is excited to have a home for their celebrations, activities, clubs and functions.

The Tongan congregation comes from throughout wider Christchurch but its buildings will be used by the local Addington community. The hall will provide facilities for after school programmes and pre-school childcare.

The new facility also offers a safe environment for the congregation's youth group, and another event held soon after the new hall meeting was a Central South Island Synod youth rally.

The congregation presents music recitals and its brass band and choir practice in the hall and provide tuition for children.

The church and hall were previously the property of St Marks Parish, Somerfield. St Marks gifted the church and hall to the Tongan congregation in 2008.

To acknowledge its history the hall has been named St John's Hall. The honours board that acknowledges members of the congregation who fought in World War I

has been retained from the old hall and it takes pride of place in the entry of the new building.

"We want to acknowledge the gift of the church to our congregation, recognise the history, and respect the families that have been involved with it from the beginning," Moi says.



The price of being the Chosen One

**MOTEKIAI FAKATOU
REFLECTS ON LUKE**

Luke (1:26-38) announces that God gives birth to grace, hope, new possibilities, and salvation to everyone.

Therefore, during the Advent season we are invited to ponder God's purpose, even as we hope and trust that this purpose is unfolding in our lives.

As I prepared this reflection, our country has witnessed the biggest upset of the Rugby League World Cup 2017. It started with a few dramas as some of the top players of the competition declined the offer to play on the national teams of New Zealand and Australia.

Some in the media suggested these Pacific Island players did the unthinkable and were disrespectful of the Kiwi jersey as they opted to play for the minor Pacific teams like Tonga rather than take up well-paid positions on the major teams.

These players took advantage of rugby league rules that allow them to play for their homelands, but their choices came with some criticism and financial sacrifices. Their commitment says a lot about how much they value their cultures, their families and their nations.

In Luke's gospel, God's purpose unfolded in ways that people both in that time and today might not expect. The young woman Mary receives news that she is chosen to play an important role in God's purpose for the world.

Mary was young, poor, and female - all characteristics that to the people of her day would make her seem unacceptable to God for any major task. But God chose Mary for one of the most important acts of obedience he has ever demanded of anyone.

God's favour does not automatically bring instant success or fame. His blessing on Mary - the honour of being the mother of the Messiah - would lead to much pain. Her peers would ridicule her, her fiancé would come close to leaving her; and her son would be rejected and murdered.

But through her son would come the world's hope. Therefore, Mary has been praised by countless generations as the young girl who "found favour with God". Her submission was part of God's plan to bring about our salvation.

As we journey through the Advent season towards Christmas may our rejoicing express confidence that God continues to make things happen. Have confidence in God's promise through Mary's son - Jesus Christ to reshape and restore us in unexpected ways as grace,

hope, new possibilities, and salvation enter our lives.

During this festive season if sorrow weighs you down and dims your hope, think of Mary and her son the Prince of Peace who both bore the pain of being chosen and who waited patiently for God's Holy Spirit to come upon them and work out God's plan.

You may feel that your ability, experience, or education makes you an unlikely candidate for God's service. Don't let the cost of yielding to God's plan limit God's choices. God can use you if you trust him.

Would we respond with faith and praise, as did Mary? How will you respond to God's promise that continues to be born among us this Christmas? Do we sense God's favour is upon us and others?

Go where the life is

Sometimes it is just a phrase. That's all it takes to open new windows and strike a chord deep inside that says: 'This is what I have wanted to articulate in some way, yet had not identified it clearly enough to put it into words.'

It was while listening to Rob Bell that the phrase struck: 'Go where the life is'. Yes!

As I sit with this phrase and use it as a lens to review what Jesus said and did, I am struck by the thought that two groups he addressed missed the point.

"Be careful," Jesus said. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees," (Matt 16:6). This speaks to our situation today and strikes right at the heart of the two main historical



Andrew Doubleday

camps in our church.

In simplistic, broad brush terms the Evangelicals (yes, that's me, guilty as charged) could equate to the Pharisees, who clung to a literal and legalistic understanding of their scriptures.

The Liberals could equate to the Sadducees, who were more interested in temporal power and exercised this among the Jewish people by embracing the form of their religion while rejecting its substance.

I can imagine objections to my caricature from both perspectives will be loud, hostile, and erudite as each camp agrees with the caricature of the other but not of themselves.

Jesus points us in a new direction that picked up some elements of each group while rejecting others. At the heart of his mission is the statement in John 10:10: "I am come that you might have life, and have it in all its fullness."

It strikes me that Rob Bell effectively transforms this into a litmus test. Does our strategy, plan, action, argument or course of thinking lead to life. Or does it lead somewhere else?

Does it bring us into a more expansive, generous, inclusive, love unfolding, life-giving space? Or does it pull us back into a silo mentality, drawing us back into our fortress of fear and uncertainty, and ultimately reducing our humanity?

As we move into Advent, we are invited to open ourselves to the embrace of the God who 'so loved the world that

FROM WHERE I SIT

By Andrew Doubleday

he gave his one and only Son'. This Son came, "that we might have life, and have it in all its fullness".

And God did this in the most amazing way with a vulnerability which clearly demonstrates the depth of divine commitment to us - by starting as a single cell in the womb of a young peasant woman in a troubled-wracked corner of the Roman Empire.

What was God's purpose? To draw us all into life, a life that is life-giving and full. This is a life beyond our silos, where we are willing to be vulnerable and open to the 'other' and seek their highest and best good.

In other words, we are invited to 'go where the life is'.

Thought experiment to change the world

By Adrian Skelton, UCANZ executive officer.

Advent marks the start of the Church Year, and so is a suitable time for followers of Jesus to make New Year's resolutions. Aside from resolving to be a better individual, could you resolve to improve society as a whole?

After all deep down most of us want just that. We want a better world for everyone, yet the undertaking seems so vast. Why should I care about the prospects for people I do not even know?

American philosopher, John Rawls, argued that our reluctance to engage with this can be put down to a lack of imagination. John offers a deceptively simple 'thought experiment' to persuade you to put your good intentions for humankind into practice. Here it is:

STEP 1. Recognise that, for the vast majority of people, our prospects in terms of quality of life and life



The circumstances of our birth largely determine the quality of our life.

expectancy are determined by the circumstances into which we are born. (Rags-to-riches stories are so rare as to be statistically insignificant).

STEP 2. Imagine you are conscious, intelligent, but yet to be born. You are ignorant of what circumstances you will be born into: rich or poor, black or white, in a supportive or an abusive family.

Ask yourself honestly, would you be happy to take your chances with what part of society you might be born into? The question prompts you to realise that life is like a lottery and the difference between prizes is vast. Are you willing to take the risk?

STEP 3. Since you do not know in advance what sort of parents you will have, what your neighbourhood

will be like, how good the schools will be, what healthcare you can afford or will be given - what would you want to fix now so that the lottery of birth does not deliver too nasty a surprise for you?

Probably you would be keen to see all parents given good support, public housing is sound, state schools are well-resourced, and there is a high standard of public healthcare. We naturally want all these things to be in place for our 'unborn' selves.

STEP 4. Now it should be clear what your New Year resolution will be: to improve our society in specific ways to such a level that you can risk being born into it. In all honesty, aren't there things you would want to change? Those are the changes you should now resolve to make in the world.

Sounds rather like I'm asking you to be born again!

Community-led development and social services

A highlight of the Methodist Alliance's first forum was the presentations from the members. They included overviews of the work of Northcote Takapuna Methodist Parish and Lifewise.

Rev Peter Norman and Jennifer Moor gave a presentation on the history of Northcote Takapuna Parish's involvement in the community and how it has changed over time.

Peter is the Parish's superintendent. He says it has a long history in community development and it was where Neighbours Day Aotearoa began.

The Parish's vision is 'compassionate, creative, connected communities' and their mission is 'Living a life of purpose and meaning with and for others'.

Jennifer is the facilitator of Community Matters, a group that engages with the community. The ways that Community Matters does this include Nancy's Afternoon, which is in its 50th year.

Nancy's Afternoon was inspired by a member of the congregation who wanted to



Zoel Truell described the alternative to foster care that Lifewise has developed.

provide something for people at rest homes to go out to do. Rest home residents are provided transport to come to the church to sing and have afternoon tea.

After the founder - Nancy - died in the 1990s, another member took over this work and today rest home vans bring people to the church on third Tuesdays. Along with a homemade afternoon tea artists and special guests provide entertainment.

Takapuna Parish has also carried out surveys to find out the needs of their community. This led to Know Your Neighbour, which



Peter Norman and Jennifer Moor presented an overview of Northcote Takapuna Parish's community work.

undertook work in four communities. With the help of Lifewise the communities came together and made their own groups, some of which are still growing.

The Richardson Centre is a commercial building adjacent to the Takapuna church. Rent a Dentist subsidises the rent of a non-government social service in the same building. Lollipops also rents space from the parish to provide early childhood education.

Other parish projects include Shore to Thrive, which focuses on strengths-based and community-

led efforts to improve the lives of whanau and children and Repair Café.

Another presenter at the Alliance conference was Zoe Truell from Lifewise. Zoe described the in-fahome intensive parenting support programme that Lifewise has developed as an alternative to foster care.

Intensive parenting support builds the capacity of parents and whanau to provide a safe, nurturing place for their children. It supports families with children who are at risk of coming into state care and families who are already in Oranga

Tamariki care who are struggling to meet the requirements for the safe return home.

The programme builds parents' capacity by reducing stressors and supporting families as they work towards their goals. A dedicated support worker in the home addresses the safety of the children.

The clients help determine what support the programme provides. In addition to help with practical matters it includes coaching, mentoring, and creating links to local services and community activities.

Initially family support workers work in the home with the family for up to nine hours a day, seven days a week. This face to face contact and support decreases over a six month period.

The programme relies on a partnership between the family, Oranga Tamariki and Lifewise. Progress is continually monitored and after six months, an assessment is carried out to ascertain if the family have the skills to care for their children safely and permanently.

Forum helps Alliance stay on target

The Methodist Alliance of missions and church-based social service providers held its first national forum in Christchurch in early November.

It began with a powhiri at Rehua Marae at which Bella Ngaha and Rev Rex Nathan led the manuhiri on to the marae.

Representing Te Taha Maori, Bella and Rex then led Alliance members on a discussion of what it means to work bi-culturally.

In small groups delegates discussed what bi-culturalism is in Aotearoa and what bi-culturalism could look like in our organisation. There was a rich discussion when the groups reported back.

One description of the bi-cultural journey is that of two cultures journeying together and everyone being equal in the waka.

Feedback on the conference reported that the workshop with Taha Maori was one of the most useful. One suggestion that came out of the discussions was for missions and parishes to receive training in Te Tiriti.

After lunch at the marae, conference delegates separated into groups to visit social development projects around Christchurch. They were the grass-root neighbourhood initiative Te Whare Roimata, Aratupu early childhood education centre, the community garden at Christchurch South Tongan Methodist Parish, and Linwood Avenue Union Parish's social housing project.

The rest of the forum was held at the Chapel Street Centre, where Methodist Alliance convenors Jill Hawkey and Carol



The evening's Star Wars theme included a Jedi knighthood ceremony.

Barron gave a presentation on the Methodist Alliance journey to date.

That afternoon Alliance members described their work in Christchurch, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, and Papakura.

Diakonia Task Group representative Margaret Birtles discussed the role of deacons in Te Hahi and NZ Council of Christian Social Services director gave a presentation on inequality Aotearoa.

After an evening meal that featured entertainment by Star Wars' Yoda, keynote speaker Lincoln University economist Professor Paul Dalziel presented a talk.

Paul discussed how the economy is measured and challenged the notion that NZ has a 'rock star economy' when we factor in measures of wellbeing.

Methodist general secretary Rev David Bush started the second day of the forum with a prayer and theological reflection on what it means to be an alliance. David asked how we

might draw into deep relationships with each other so that we are better equipped to meet the needs of others.

The morning of the second day featured more presentations by Alliance members on their work in three areas: supporting children and families, building strong neighbourhoods, and housing.

Workshops in the afternoon focused on Maori staff, housing strategies, new ways to work with children and families, fundraising, and building strong neighbourhoods.

These groups reported back and their feedback will inform the Alliance's strategic direction.

Methodist Alliance national coordinator Carol Barron says the people who came to the forum made it successful. Their presentations, knowledge, experience and skills helped form new relationships and strengthen existing ones.

"We celebrated the work that is being done under the Methodist name, learnt from each other and explored new ways of working together."



Bella Ngaha (front right) led the manuhiri onto Rehua marae.



**METHODIST
ALLIANCE AOTEAROA**
NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

If your parish is engaged in community or social service work, you should join the Methodist Alliance.

The Alliance supports the work of its members by leveraging collective skills and experience, providing resources and information, and raising the profile of the work you do.

If you would like to join the Alliance please contact the National Coordinator Carol Barron:

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Seeds of Hope in Fields of Conflict



In the classrooms of Lebanon, young refugees gain energy and hope. Far from the war that has torn Syria to shreds, young people want to help their families survive.

Young refugees are worried about their future and with good support are determined to learn and have some fun. Living cramped in small spaces with few resources, they dream of a future

where there is enough food, water and electricity for their families and neighbours.

In the battle for survival, their voices like others in areas of high conflict or widespread poverty are often lost. Many of these young people know only conflict and the daily fear of not getting enough to eat.

They have watched as forces stronger than them have tried to

resolve differences with words of division and violence, or destroyed the land of its vitality and life force.

Their dreams of good food, clean water and safety are in danger as our world fractures along lines of wealth, ethnicity and power. We need to listen to their words to find the seeds of hope in the war zones of our planet.

815 million people - more than one-in-nine - went hungry last year.

489 million of them lived in countries troubled by conflict and violence.

65.6 million people fled their homes last year.

22.5 million of them left their country.

28,300 people are forced from their homes every day because of conflict or persecution.

Violence costs 12.6 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product or \$7.95 per person per day.

CWS partners working in these communities start with the most vulnerable people - children, older people and those with disabilities. They want to make sure that those with the fewest resources have the basics for living and a say over their future. They want to do what is good for the land and the sea.

From war torn South Sudan to the rising tides of the Pacific

Ocean, CWS partners are determined to forge a way forward. Young Palestinian and Syrian refugees attend school or extra classes to learn skills that will increase opportunities.

In South India, Dalit women who have been elected to their local panchayat or councils are trained so they deliver safe water or the protection of street lighting to the communities that elected them. Filipinos plant many times more trees and root crops than they lost in the 2013 typhoon as a cushion against dangerous weather events.

This year's Christmas Appeal highlights the successes of five of our partners who are changing their community's story from loss and despair to one of hope. Listening to the voices of those who have survived violence, disaster and hardship, we can find the energy to stand alongside people who need food, water and justice.

Your donations will give our partners some of the resources they need to make sure families have food, displaced people have shelter, and children can attend school.

Working together we can make hope our story this Christmas.

Make Hope our Christmas Story

In February, I met Sujathi on a visit to Tamil Nadu, South India. Sujathi had been elected the first woman panchayat or local council president for her village.

She is also a Dalit officially known in India as one of the 'Scheduled Castes' - people who face daily discrimination and sometimes persecution.

It was Sujathi's campaign team that impressed me. After her husband died, her daughter and sister canvassed their small village for votes. If she had not won, the Dalit community would have lost ground in their efforts to keep access to community lands.

Victorious, she took up office, benefiting from the training and support she received from our partner the Human Rights Foundation (HRF).

Since the first women were elected to lead panchayats, HRF has trained more than 2,000 presidents. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have learned the skills needed to manage relationships with the Collector, a government appointed administrator.

From what I could tell, Sujathi was doing a great job. She helps villagers get government entitlements like food rations or the 100 days of work guaranteed to them, and has pushed back the power of the landowners.

She won an award for organising a successful health scheme, which she could do because she knew her community so well. She keeps a

watchful eye on people trying to mine the sand illegally, something that contributes to coastal erosion.

Talking to HRF staff I realised how effective they are at helping people out of poverty. The state of Tamil Nadu had been an early adopter of the government requirement to reserve 33 percent and now 50 percent of panchayat presidencies for women.

Trained women presidents had been able to implement community-wide improvements that have had a lasting impact. A shared tap, street lighting or reclaiming shared land that had been taken over by a large landlord have had immediate benefits in many communities.

The ability of women like Sujathi to resolve local disputes and implement anti-poverty measures has had a very deep impact that will keep people out of poverty.

Sujathi's is one story I can tell that shows how your donations are gifts of hope for the world. Working through skilled local partners, people can get what they need to care for their families and make decisions about their own community.

Please give generously to the 2017 Christmas Appeal so that vulnerable people have better access to food, water, dignity and justice. Working together, we can make hope our Christmas story!

*Pauline McKay,
National Director*



Pauline McKay

In Uganda our Story is of Water



A Rainwater tank saves Musa, Kakama and Twine hours of walking each day to collect water that is often unsafe to drink in southwest Uganda.

When their parents died from HIV and AIDS, brothers Musa, Kakama and Twine were left to fend for themselves.

The oldest, Musa, looked after the others, but they had no money for school or even food. The brothers knew they were finished. They lived with the shame of having to steal in order to feed themselves. Worse, when the middle brother Kakama was caught in the act, he was beaten and left for dead.

Word of what happened reached their grandmother who took the boys home with her. She did not have much food and the boys

had to spend long periods of the day collecting water.

Poor quality water meant poor health. They picked up malaria, and because there was not enough food for them all, often went to bed hungry.

There seemed no way out of their misery until their grandmother, Ziporo, heard about the work of the Centre for Community Solidarity (CCS). CCS was established to support caregivers in her community, and joining it transformed their lives.

Your donations to CWS gave Ziporo the matching funds needed to construct a rainwater tank. Now the family has safe water and the boys are back in school.

Musa the eldest is in his second year of high school and wants to be a doctor. Kakama wants to be a teacher and after seeing an airplane fly over their village, the youngest Twine wants to be a pilot.

According to Charles Rwabambari of CCS, there are literally thousands of young people affected by HIV and AIDS in Isingiro District where they live.

"Musa and his brothers are among the lucky ones. So many of these children are affected by the lack of access to safe water coupled with HIV. Others live with the punishing legacy of poverty: poor health, inadequate infrastructure and too few opportunities to go to school," Charles says.

"These girls and boys are eager to learn. But for so many of them, circumstances far beyond their control have robbed them of the opportunity to build brighter futures.

"More support to construct more rainwater tanks will assist so many more children like Musa and his brothers overcome seemingly insurmountable odds," he adds.

“Lift up your voice with strength” Isaiah 40:9b

Local Partners Make Hope Our Story

74 year old Clarita is determined to plant enough fruit trees and root crops with the Developers Foundation as a cushion against severe weather events in the Philippines.

Milika Tovi faced disaster when Cyclone Ian hit Tonga's Ha'apai Islands. The Pacific Conference of Churches is campaigning to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees in climate negotiations.

Syrian and Palestinian refugees are keen to enrol in the electronic repair course and other vocational training programmes run by the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon.

Photo credits: ACT Alliance/Paul Jeffrey, Developers and Rob Wayne.

Sujathi (centre) with her campaign team by her side. Trained by the Human Rights Foundation, she has implemented an effective health programme for her Dalit community and is challenging people illegally mining sand in her South Indian village.

Gifts of Hope

Ethical gifts are proving a popular option this Christmas. In a few minutes you can purchase something special for family or friends that is meaningful and life-saving. Prices for these gifts start at an affordable \$15.

So far this year the gift of fruit trees is at the top of the list. This is a new addition to the range of CWS gifts. It gives you a chance to invest with Filipinos eager to plant many more trees and root crops as a cushion against severe weather events like super typhoons.

Another new gift is Climate Scientist funding South Indian fisherfolk to collect data on their coastline which they need for legal hearings to protect their livelihoods against big business and giant power plants.

CWS offers 25 different gifts that range from sending a child to school to an emergency health kit. CWS sends an attractive printed or e-card of your gift, or you can choose no card if you prefer.

The gift becomes a donation to the programme of a local partner that

may be equipping a rural school in Haiti or providing health kits in a natural disaster.

CWS national director Pauline McKay says, “Gifted makes Christmas shopping easier. Slipping a card in with a box of chocolates or emailing a card on Christmas Day are good ways to mark the season of giving.”

CWS sends a tax-deductible receipt for all donations. Pick up a brochure in your church or check out the website: <http://gift.org.nz/>



President endorses Christmas Appeal

“Make Hope My Story” is the theme picked by CWS to launch the Christmas Appeal 2017. The theme itself is a message to the Christian Community to speak up amidst despair in the world.

For the past 72 years CWS has served many people not only in situations of conflict and displacement, but also by giving a helping hand with development programmes.

The magnitude of the work and the way it has changed lives for the better cannot be described with words. The positive impact of these efforts can be fathomed only when we meet with people who have benefited from the aid from CWS in South America, Africa, Asia and in the Pacific.

I am stating the fact as one who has met people and organizations that have worked with the help of CWS. This was made

possible because Christians in New Zealand have consistently supported CWS through their contributions to the Christmas Appeal.

I invite every Christian who reads this message to DO WHAT YOU CAN as you prepare to celebrate the birth of a Saviour.

In the name of the Saviour's birth please contribute to enhance the work of CWS that is the real meaning of the celebration.

I hope and pray that you will take it to heart and stretch your hand to give your portion to the Christmas Appeal 2017 so that the good work of CWS can continue in 2018 and beyond.

May this festive season bring you and your family the peace and joy by supporting those who are longing for peace and awaiting a meal and a place to rest.

Rev. Prince Devanandan, President.

christmasappeal.org.nz



Kapiti church supports 'world's smallest gay pride parade'

By Cory Miller

When a Kapiti Coast village launched its inaugural gay and lesbian pride festival it was joined by a group of local Christians swinging their own rainbow banners high.

The group from the Kapiti Uniting Parish joined in the festival parade in a visual display of its support for the local LGBTQ community.

The Rainbow in the Village - Paekakariki Pride Festival was held over Labour Day Weekend. It was the first time the village had hosted the event.

Parish member Tralee Sugrue helped rally a group of parishioners together to join the rest of the community in the pride parade, because she feels it is important for the Christian community to be openly supportive of the LGBTQ community.

"Feeling unaccepted by the church can be a terrible thing for some gay people to have to struggle with," she says. "It is very important that we make it known God deeply loves everybody."

She says it is also important the LGBTQ community understands there are Christians "who are perfectly comfortable with God embracing all forms of loving sexuality".

For the parade Tralee made banners labelled Kapiti Christians for Gay Marriage, and the group from the church handed out music sheets of Colin Gibson's hymn Rainbow People to the large crowd.

Tralee says the day was overcast and drizzly

but this did not dampen the spirits of 200-strong group as they crossed the village to the local hall.

"People of all ages wore rainbow flags and clothing. They included school children, toddlers and pet dogs."

She says the official parade was also preceded by an informal walk along the beachfront for a kilometre or so, before it reached the main street.

The parade formed part of this year's Rainbow in the Village event which followed on from the Rainbow dance held in 2016.

This year organisers built the dance into a bigger festival to include several social mixers, a poetry reading and the parade.

Titled Paekakariki's Big Little Gay Pride Parade, organisers currently have a bid in at the Guinness Book of World Records for the title of the smallest gay pride parade.

The aim of the festival is also to raise awareness and funds for OuterSpaces - an advocacy service for young gender and sexually diverse people in Wellington.

Tralee says it is a pleasure to be a part of an event where everyone was having "such great fun".

"It was a very joyous occasion. We all felt very happy after the parade, despite being a bit wet. We felt our colourful contribution was a positive addition and the whole event went well."



Members of Kapiti Uniting Parish supported the Paekakariki's Pride Festival, which claims to be the smallest in the world.

Cambridge op shop's long and faithful service

By Hilaire Campbell

The Union Parish of Cambridge is mourning the loss of its opportunity shop.

A recent survey of the building fell far short of current earthquake safety requirements and the hard decision was made to close it. This happened at the end of June after nearly 40 years of very successful trading.

Parishioner Nanette Jenkin says the loss of the op shop is like a death in the family.

"It has been part of the parish for so long, but we had no choice really. It was way below the earthquake standards required," Nanette says.

"The building was very well placed in town but it was small and the cost of upgrading it would have been huge. With no rear entrance it had limited potential which also influenced the decision."

There were human factors to consider too.

"Times are changing and staffing the shop was becoming more difficult. Those who can work need to work and those who don't are less able now."

The building was leased in 1978 for six weeks when a cash 'seed' of \$10 was given to parishioners to raise funds to furnishings the new church. The initial efforts of those involved in the op shop raised \$6000, which was a substantial amount back then.

More goods were donated and made and more people volunteered to work in the shop, so the lease was extended. Then in 1991 the church bought the building with an interest-free loan from parishioners. The loan has since been repaid from shop proceeds.

Nanette says the shop has donated an amazing amount of money to all sorts of projects. In total \$450,765 has been given to local community causes as well as to national and international appeals and missions connected to this Methodist-Presbyterian Union Parish.

The shop has also given \$215,000 to the Cambridge Parish for such things as office equipment and asphaltting the car park and it still has \$133,000 invested.

Church connections played a part in the shop's most recent donation of \$20,000 to the William Gray Memorial Church reroofing project in

Vanuatu. A parishioner had worked there some time back and this appeal was current.

Nanette says the money was added to what had been saved in the church collection box for the Vanuatu project.

"It went with a prayer that achieving their goal will be a great blessing to the Vanuatu people and will assist God's special work for them in their community."

That the shop has been able to achieve so much is totally due to its dedicated volunteers. Most belong to the church but many local people have also contributed.

Nanette believes that over such a long time they could number in their hundreds. They include not just those who staff the shop day-to-day, but also those who help make, fix, and sort the items that are for sale.

"All of us have been careful with money and that has had a lot to do with our success. You watch the dollars, make do, recycle, give away rather than throw out... and count the biscuits!"

"Sustainability is the buzz word now but really it has been happening a very long time."

Although the shop has contributed substantially to larger causes it has also given priority to its customers. It has helped folk who shop there to live within their budgets and there is no measure to put on the fellowship given and friendships made because of the op shop.

Nanette says the shop was the first to open in Cambridge. "Now there are five, so people on budgets can still find what they need. I am sure they will still be served with a smile and no one will feel abandoned because our shop has closed."

Cambridge Union has a congregation of 60-70 mostly older people who attend regularly.

"They are warm and loving and it's always been like that," says Nanette.

Since their minister retired in July there has been a range of speakers in the pulpit and the congregation has been welcoming and accepting of this variety but are looking forward to an interim minister joining them in the New Year.

The shop is now in the process of being sold and it is just too soon to consider other projects. For the moment it is time for the parish to give thanks - and grieve.



The Cambridge Union Parish op shop (situated next to the Bakehouse) closed in June.



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Young People

By Filo Tu-Faleupolu

Tauiwi youth gather to know Christ

It seems like only yesterday I was writing about how amazing the Tauiwi Youth Conference 2017 (TYC2017) was. Emphasis on was.

That is because, although we are into the season of Advent, we are waiting on more than just the birth of Christ. We are also waiting to know Him. And through Tauiwi Youth Conference 2018 (TYC2018) you can!

With the theme of 'To Know Christ' (#2KC) based on the Gospel of Matthew (16:13-20), the Tauiwi Youth Together in Aotearoa New Zealand (TYTANZ) team has put together another fantastic programme, this time at Mi Camp Lake Taupo from 23-26 January 2018.

Tauiwi Youth Conference aims to bring together young people from across the Connexion to develop their leadership skills and provide spiritual revelation and unity.

TYC2018 also aims to strengthen our Methodist identity so that young people can willingly claim it as their own.

Coming off the back of a highly successful Tauiwi Youth Conference 2017 in Ngaruawahia over Waitangi weekend, TYC is the next big event in the youth calendar. It presents opportunities for young leaders to grow in ways that will benefit all areas of church life.

The TYTANZ team has identified three key areas that they want to challenge participants in at TYC2018: To know Christ in your community, in your Church, and in

your life!

The greatest challenge is not just to know Christ as a biblical figure, but to see how evident He is within these three realms that we as young people tread through too easily and quickly.

Will you accept the challenge to be present? Do you feel that urge to join the cause and be reignited?

The organisers believe that TYC2018 will be an unforgettable Spirit-led gathering that will impact all young people in attendance, as well as the parishes they represent.

But wait...there's more. If you are reading this on a Sunday, now is the time to use that beautiful voice and ask someone...better yet tell someone that this event costs \$200 per person and it would be an amazing Christmas gift. (But if you are reading this during the week, don't hesitate to follow the same instructions. LOL).

For younger Touchstone readers over the age of 50 who are devoted fans of this column, don't forget to give your young people a donation or more for TYC2018.

The \$200 charge covers accommodation, meals, registration packs and a conference shirt.

You can register for TYC2018 online, by visiting the website missionresourcing.org.nz/tyc2018.

Please note that registrations are only open to those aged 16 years and older due to health and safety issues.



What is most important is not just engaging with more young people and seeing them participate in such great inspirational events, but giving them the support from congregations, parishes, synods and all parts of our Connexion family.

Our families are not founded just on finances, but also on our ability to see Christ, to be Christ-like, and most of all, to know Christ and to make Him known.

Hope to see you there: #2KC, #TYC2018, #Methodism2020.

Kidz Korua!

WELCOME TO KIDZ KORUA DECEMBER 2017!

Hi everyone, I can hardly believe that the year has gone so quickly!

I want to say 'Thank You' to all the people who have shared their news and photos during the year. There are so many exciting things happening around the country and I look forward to hearing from even more of you next year!

Looking forward to Christmas is always an exciting time, but as we think about presents and holidays don't let us forget the real reason we celebrate Christmas - the coming of Jesus.

Thank you to Upper Riccarton Methodist and Levin United Church for sharing your news this month.

White Sunday Riccarton style



Riccarton kidz helped lead service on White Sunday.

The children and their parents at Upper Riccarton led a White Sunday service. The kidz sang, read, recited Bible verses from memory and took part in three short plays.

Eleana Siwatibau who is in year seven enhanced the music with her lovely flute playing.

Talofa Fanau from Levin

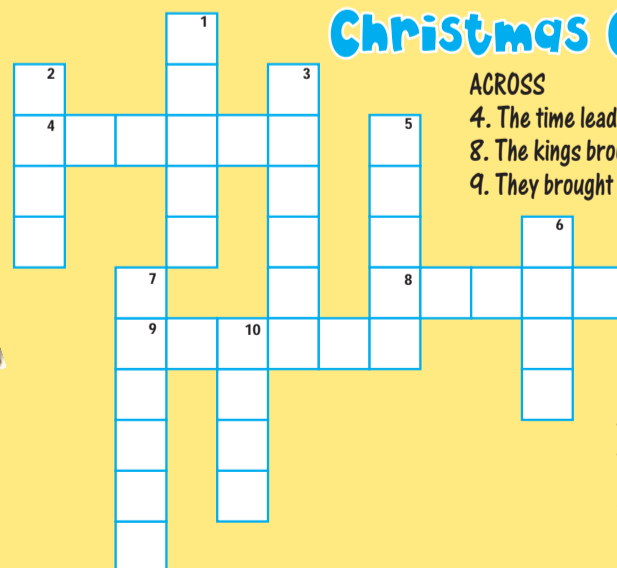


Levin young people lead the congregation in singing Kia Ora Whanau.

The young people at Levin Uniting Parish often sing the song Kia Ora Whanau in Maori and English.

On a recent Sunday Naomi Tausi translated the words of the song into the Tuvalu language. The Levin kidz sang the song in all three languages with everyone in church. 'Kia Ora Whanau' is translated as Talofa Fanau in Tuvalu.

Christmas Crossword



ACROSS

- 4. The time leading up to Christmas.
- 8. The kings brought these.
- 9. They brought good news to the shepherds.

DOWN

- 1. The shepherds care for them.
- 2. Jesus' mother.
- 5 They came from the East.
- 6. This shone over the stable.
- 7. A bed for Jesus.
- 10. One of the kings' gifts.



For your Bookshelf The Christmas Book

By Dick Bruna

This is a real favourite of mine. Published originally in 1964 this later edition tells the Christmas story in a simple form. The large print and simple illustrations are ideal for sharing with very young children and for older ones to read for themselves.



What are the kids in your church up to?

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

Ada Lucy Lee (Endali)

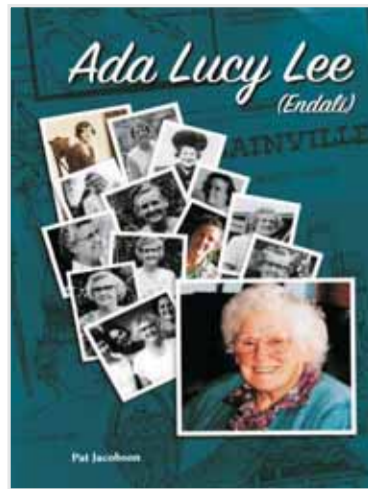
As Allan Davidson says in his introduction to this remarkable book, “the work of women missionaries has often been invisible or diminished in the official missionary record”.

Retired missionary Rev Pat Jacobsen's beautiful and extensive book about Ada Lee is an eminently successful contribution to remedy this situation. Ada was a missionary on Bougainville from 1934 to 1942 and from 1952 to 1966.

As someone who is researching Methodist missionaries in the Solomon Islands, I know how wonderful the archival sources are, but I also know how much work is involved in gleaning the treasures out of the massive amounts of paper.

Missionaries often kept detailed diaries and wrote detailed letters home. Whether this was cathartic for them or whether they actually wanted to leave a record for future generations I do not know.

Transcribing missionaries' diaries may sound a boring task, but there are always hidden gems that drag you into



the life of the missionary. Pat has included many such gems.

Missionaries did not often complain about their living conditions. Any difficulties they experienced are often only visible if one reads between the lines in their diaries and correspondence.

Sometimes this can be seen in the joy they expressed at receiving gifts from home. Ada's joy at receiving a kerosene-powered refrigerator is an example of some of the home comforts she must have been missing.

The book is well-endowed with photographs from Ada's collection of both European missionaries and the

local people.

Missionaries often unwittingly contributed to historical and anthropological research with their photographs and writing. They could access areas that others could not.

These photographs show us what life was like for the missionaries based on Bougainville. They also provide an

important historical record of the development and changes in the lives of the local people over a period of time.

Ada's unassuming humility is clear in this book. She loved the people she served and she left a legacy with them. As Hazel Magug (Itu) and Lydia Iroja (Kuna) say “In her life we saw the living demonstration of God's love in both her physical and spiritual life”.

The use of quotes from three different sources can be confusing at first, but the key at the beginning helps the reader get into the rhythm of the book. There is no table of contents but the book is organised chronologically in 12 month blocks.

Clear references at the end of each chapter help the reader understand what is happening. There is a useful explanation of abbreviations and of Roviana terms at the end of the book.

Names of missionaries and of the local people are memorialised in the text. No-one gets lost in the wider narrative of Methodist missionary work in the Solomon Islands.

This is a handsome book that would grace any coffee table, at the same time it conveys the faith of a dedicated missionary.

By Pat Jacobsen

2017, Nan Peters Print, 389 pages

Reviewer: Lynne McDonald

Being Mortal - Illness, Medicine and What Matters in the End

Scientific advances have turned the processes of aging and dying into medical experiences managed by health care professionals.

Gawande, a surgeon who often deals with people whose days are limited by age or illness, makes this bold statement in his introduction. It is a fact he finds disturbing, and he writes lucidly and draws on his personal and professional experience to illustrate his arguments.

Improvements in public health and advances in medicine mean that people today are living longer and healthier lives than in earlier generations. Yet all life eventually declines in vigour.

While pensions and retirement communities may offer greater freedom for those growing older and ease a family sense of obligation for their care, when frailty or serious illness intervene, what happens then?

Looking at what people experience as their capacities wane through age or ill health, Gawande has come to believe that there is a need to curb the urge to try and fix and control. Medical intervention intended to extend a patient's life may reduce the quality of that life.

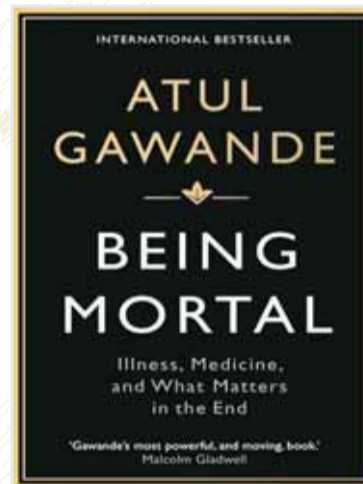
He says even when patients have indicated they want no further treatment families will often insist that whatever

can be done must be done.

Unfortunately, patients may not have made their wishes sufficiently clear. Doctors may then find it easier to try and prolong life, regardless of misery or cost, rather than engage in hard conversations about what is realistic and achievable.

Gawande refers to the kinds of relationships doctors may have with patients and their families. One is an authoritarian doctor-knows-best model. Another is what he calls the retail relationship where the doctor supplies information and the patient/family makes the decision about what they wish to buy from a menu of options.

A third type of relationship is for the doctor to try and help people clarify what they want and how best they may achieve this. This may include such matters as managing daily difficulties, freedom from pain, completion of some task or sorting out relationships.



Gawande recognises that as far as possible people want to end their life story on their own terms.

The conclusion he reaches is that the role of medicine is to enable wellbeing, and wellbeing is the reason one wishes to be alive. He believes that medical intervention should serve the larger aim of a person's life rather than trying this or that treatment because it is available.

The facts that we are mortal and life ends in death should not be regarded as a human or medical failure. While medical treatment may extend the natural limits beyond which illness and frailty take their toll, this is not guaranteed to help people find quality in living and to die with dignity.

Gawande's honesty and compassion may be seen on every page. He stirs readers to think about what they want for life and how they may die in a way that does not cast a pall of gloom over their life.

This is what matters in the end.

By Atul Gawande

2014, Wellcome, 282 pages.

Reviewer: John Meredith

Wallace Woodley busking for Durham Street rebuild

If you are hunting around for a suitable Christmas present and want to help a good cause at the same time, how about a CD of piano recordings by one of New Zealand Methodism's iconic figures, Wallace Woodley?

Wallace recorded the CD 'More Life with the Piano' in 2016, and is now promoting its sale as a means to raise funds for the redevelopment of Durham Street Methodist Church in Christchurch.

The CD has piano solos by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Poulenc and others.

The Durham Street Church was destroyed in the February 2011 earthquake and the congregation is currently finalising plans and applying for consents to replace it. It will have a shortfall in funds needed to meet the total cost of the project, and its members are embarking on schemes to raise money.

In June the Durham Street congregation held a celebration to mark Wallace's 50 years of service as its organist and choir director.

“The choir has performed without a break under my leadership for the past 50 years despite the earthquakes. During that time I have been associated with 23 different clergy members,” Wallace says.

“We have a number of long serving members in the choir. They include Mary Duns who is 92 and has sung with the choir for 75 years, and Jocelyn Rosbottom who has sung with the choir for 69 years. Both of them have received certificates from the Methodist Church of NZ thanking them for their service.”

Wallace is a professional musician and music teacher. He has taught hundreds of students and is a Life Member of the Institute of Registered Music Teachers and a Life Member of the Christchurch Civic Music Council.

In 2003 he was made Companion of the Queen's Service Order for his service to music in the community.

“I have been a private music teacher since 1965 and at my latest count 81 of my pupils have gone on

to become Registered Music Teachers themselves,” he says.

In a career spanning more than 60 years, Wallace has been a solo recitalist and accompanist, and has made numerous recordings for Radio New Zealand.

He was the piano accompanist for the Royal Christchurch Music Society from 1963-1971.

“In those early years with the RCMS, choir rehearsals were held in the hall of Durham Street Methodist Church. That is how I first became acquainted with the Durham Street Church site.”

Wallace says the Durham Street choir currently has 14 members but he hopes that when the congregation moves back to 309 Durham Street those numbers will increase.

The new church building will have about 450 seats and it will serve as a venue for community events such as conferences, performances and celebrations. A reduced enclosed space will normally be used for worship.



Wallace Woodley



CD of 20 piano solos by Wallace Woodley
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Rachel Hurd, Presbyterian Research Centre archivist.

Christmas in overseas Missions

Christmas is celebrated in many different ways in different countries and cultures. The records and photographs in the collections of the Presbyterian Archives show us the different ways that New Zealand Presbyterian Missions in different countries have celebrated Christmas, and how this changed over time.

Initially some didn't even celebrate Christmas at all! Rev Peter Milne, the first Presbyterian missionary in Vanuatu (then the New Hebrides), like many devout 19th century Presbyterians did not celebrate Christmas.

This was because they felt that there was no instruction to celebrate Christmas in the Bible itself, and the actual date of the first Christmas was unknown.

This did not impress some members of the local community who had worked in Australia, and encountered the rather more enthusiastic Christmas celebrations of the Anglicans and Methodists.

Eventually pragmatism won out and the Presbyterian missionaries began to organise



A nativity play performed in Hong Kong in the 1950s.

Christmas sports days packed with games and races. These became very popular, and by 1908 Dr Nicholson of the Lenakel Mission on the island of Tanna recorded that up to 2500 people would come for the Christmas festivities.

The Christmas church services were also a very important part of the proceedings, and photographs show New Hebrides churches richly

decorated with garlands of tropical vegetation.

Photographs from the Indian Missions emphasise a different aspect of Christmas celebrations. Photographs from the Punjab in the 1940s show an emphasis on food (something that was also recorded as an important part of the celebrations in the New Hebrides).

They show people preparing Christmas food in large pots and

sizeable groups gathered to eat an outdoor Christmas meal. Most people wore traditional Indian attire and their mode of celebration seem rooted in an Indian way of life.

An album of Christmas photos from Hong Kong about 15 years later (circa 1955) is quite different. This album is from Sister Alice Cook, who formerly worked in the Canton Villages Mission in southern China before the missionaries there were forced to leave in 1951 following the Communist Revolution.

A number of these missionaries, including Alice, went to Hong Kong, where there was a large population of refugees from China. They provided aid and assistance to the refugees and provided education through Christian schools.

The photographs in the album show a Christmas concert (probably put on by a school). Although the people involved are all Chinese, this could be any Western Christmas celebration.

There is a Christmas tree and decorations, a choir, and children

perform a nativity play. Yet the cultural traffic is not all one way. The handwritten captions for the photographs are all written in Chinese characters, suggesting that the New Zealand woman in the audience had sufficient knowledge of Chinese language and culture to be able to understand them.

Alice records that the Christian schools in Hong Kong encouraged their students to put together Christmas packages for children in the refugee resettlement areas.

In this way they encouraged their students share some of the joy of Christmas that they had experienced in their own concerts and celebrations, the same joy that can be seen in the sports days and decorated churches of the people of Vanuatu and the Christmas meals in Punjab.

Here at the Presbyterian Archives we wish you too a very happy and joyous Christmas.

Unsung Methodists THE METHODIST LITERATURE AND COLPORTEUR SOCIETY

By Donald Phillipps

BOOKS FOR THE BACKBLOCKS

In April 1926, an article in the New Zealand Herald made quite a fuss of the new venture celebrated by Methodists with a service at Pitt St church and launched by the president, Edward Drake.

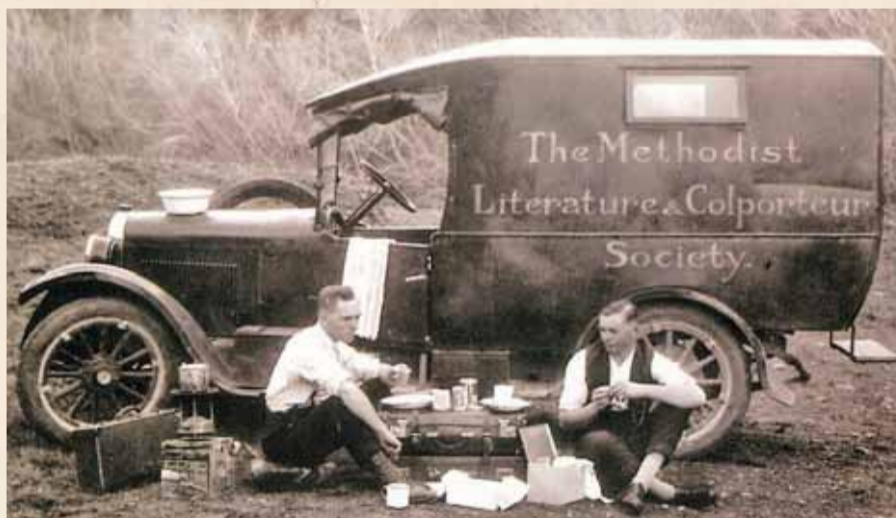
"To carry the gospel to the backblocks, and to provide a supply of better class literature, the Methodist Church has had a van built to carry on the work of the Literature and Colporteur Society. The van supplies sleeping accommodation for two persons, as well as ample room for the stock of books.

"It cost over £400, a sum subscribed by Methodists throughout the Dominion. The driver of the van is to be Mr J.H. Edmondson, a church worker selected by the Home Missions Board for the distribution of books.

"Mr Edmondson will hold services in many districts where religious services have not been held in the past. He sets out on his mission this week, going first to the North Auckland District," the article said.

Three years later when the same van made a brief stop-over in Auckland, the NZH reporter was there again to talk with the latest driver and home missionary, who at that point was Andrew Johnston. Andrew and his companion-worker were in the city only briefly because, as he said, "Time spent in town is time lost."

Over the previous four months Andrew had travelled as far north as Spirits' Bay (for the final stage of their journey they had the use of a more suitable borrowed vehicle). They had been everywhere in North Auckland, they



For two decades home missionaries in the Methodist Literature and Colporteur Society brought the Word to Aotearoa's remote communities.

followed the Bay of Plenty coast around East Cape, they traversed the Waikato and Urewera regions, they followed the Main Trunk Line south to Rangitikei, and they had returned north via Taranaki.

Most of the travel had been on by-roads. They were mostly bad roads, but "even no roads at all" did not deter them. Andrew later recalled that on another occasion, near Kaukapakapa, it had taken 10 hours to travel 10 miles.

Where there were no roads they simply left the van, hoisted a satchel of books on their shoulders, and walked, or rode a borrowed horse, or, in the case of the Hokianga Harbour, rowed a boat.

They worked to no timetable, and they

lived simply, as the photograph suggests. Their vivid white shirts and the wash basin on the bonnet of the brown Dodge van with its golden lettering might suggest they were careful to present themselves as respectable gospel agents.

Inside, the reporter wrote it looked like a hospital ambulance with comfortable bunks. It had no table - rather a couple of suitcases one on top of the other.

They had a kerosene stove safely housed in a special container to make cups of tea, plates and mugs, and a larger tin for food, which we can assume they bought at one of the very occasional country stores they passed, or received from some friendly soul on the way. Their needs were simple - as Andrew said to the reporter, just "benzene, oil, and food".

But they were on the Lord's work. They conducted worship, gave lantern-slide shows, and sold their wares.

They sold only one book for every mile they covered, but that didn't make ends meet. Their £100 stock-in-trade was made up of bibles and New Testaments and hymn-books, as might be expected, but they also sold wholesome literature by such as Joseph Hocking and Peter B Kyne, and children's books by Arthur Mee.

They did not cater for the sophisticated. Rather they felt they had achieved their goal when, for example, they sold items from their stock at some native school.

The Colporteur service lasted for about two decades. After John Edmondson other home missionaries worked for a year or so. They included Colin Gill, Herbert Thornley, Andrew Johnston, Roy Coombridge, Thomas Bailey, Fred Sanderson, George Skuse, William Sussex, Robert Tapp, and Charlie Bell.

From the later 1930s, Rita Snowden held responsibility for many years.

Andrew Johnston reported that the people in these remote areas did not think of themselves as living in the back-blocks - it was just that the other people lived "further in".

Where is 'further out' to be found today in secular New Zealand, where the Church is foreign territory and the Gospel a foreign language?



O LE VIIGA I LE ATUA I MEA AUPITO ALUGA

Ua uma le tau masina, uma le tau vaiaso ma aso, ao lenei ua tatou taunu'u mai i lenei aso faapitoa ma le taua o lo'o fa'amanatuina e le au Kerisiano uma i le lalolagi. Le aso faamanatuina i lea tausaga ma lea tausaga le aso soifua o lo tatou Alii Faaola, le liutino tagata o le Atua i le Pepe o le Kirisimasi.

O Emanuel, o le Atua ua ia tei tatou. Ma o le viiga lea i le Atua i mea aupito aluga e pei ona alagaina e agelu, ae patipatia e le au Kerisiano ma le agaga faafetai e faaneeneina ai lona mamalu ma lona matagofie.

Ona faapea lea o se faafeiloai atu: MANUIA TELE LAVA LE KIRISIMASI i le mamalu o le tatou Sinoti Samoa.

O le a taoto foi faamaene o tai loloto outou paia ma outou sa faale atunuu, le Paia o le Afaigaluega galulue ma faletua

ma alii, ae maise foi o le paia o le Sinoti Samoa i ona tulaga fa'alupelupeina. Aua o paia lava mai le vavau e oo atu lava i le fa'avavau e leai se tasi nate toe fa'aopopoina pe toeseina le atoali'o o le masina i ou mamalu ua uma ona tosilaui ma mamalu fa'atiti.

Ao le viiga ma le fa'afetai e le fa'aititia, e foi i le Atua aua o lenei ua tatou aulia mai i le manuia le toe masina o le tausaga. Ua afu lelea le tausaga i lau auaunaga le Sinoti Samoa, malo faafetai le galulue, faafetai le tautua, fa'afetai le onosa'i, fa'afetai le silasila i le Atua na afua ai lou afu sisina.

O lenei tausaga na tatou lagonaina le leo i Rama i le malaga a le maliu i nisi o matua i totonu o le tatou Sinoti, ae tatou te le fa'anoanoa aua o le soifua ma lo tatou ola, o loo i a'ao agalelei o lo tatou

Matai sili i le lagi.

Le paia e, o le tatou Sinoti Samoa le paia o le Afaigaluega ma faletua ma alii, le paia foi i aiga ma tapa'au, le mamalu i faleupolu o tofiga, faletua ma tautua, saoa ma le malosi o le Sinoti Samoa, seia oo lava i tupulaga ma fanau lalovaoa, ae tainane o lo matou ofisa, fetalaiga Itamua, afioga ia Toleafoa, ma le faletua ia Saunoa, fa'afetai tele lava mo galuega uma o lenei tausaga o le a mavae.

Lo outou galulue punoua'i i lea fata ma lea fata, o lo outou tautua tuavae, tautua matavela i le galuega a le Atua, oute talitonu ua leai lava so outou afu e pau fua, e leai foi se mea e lilo i le silafaga a le Atua.

O lo outou milomilosia ma lo outou gapatia ona o galuega 'ese'ese na outou fitaituga ma tatou galulue ai mo le Atua

e ala i le Sinoti Samoa, o taulaga osiosi ia ua faia mo se viiga o lo tatou Atua.

E le gafa taulimaina i se upu po o se fa'amatalaga lo outou agalelei ua faia ona o le Atua. Fa'afetai, fa'afetai, fa'afetai tele lava. O upu a Ulumu ia Lefaoseu, ua se togi le seu na lagatila, ua faapulou i le tualima, fa'amalo faiva o le faiva.

Ia agalelei mai le Atua ma aao taitaina le tatou faiga malaga i toe aso o lenei tausaga. Ia fa'apea ona tatou ulufale atu ai i le 2018 i le manuia ma le filemu mai ia te ia.

Manuia tele lava le Kirisimasi ma le Tausaga Fou ia te outou uma!

Alofa'aga ma fa'amanuia: Suiva'aia Te'o.

MANUIA LE KERISIMASI MALE TAUSAGA FOU I LE PAIA O LE SINOTI SAMOA.

SUIVA'AIA & MUAIMALAE TE'O



Mafutaga Tamaitai Manukau i lana toe fono ma le faamavaega ma lo latou Taitai fono, afioga i le faletua ia Suresa Tufuga, i Magele Sasae. O se fonotaga tumu, toatele foi tamaitai ua faaopopoina i le numera o le Mafutaga a le Itumalo. Ua fillifilia foi lo latou Taitaifono fou faletua ia Leungseu Amelia Faleatua. Na saunoa faalaeiau ai le faletua ia Suresa ina ia faamalolosi le Mafutaga, aua 'E le Matala uma Faitoto'a' o le Sini lea o le Tusi Faitauaso, na luitauna ai le Mafutaga. Tele faitoto'a ma e toatele foi e uia nei mau faitoto'a, peitai o le faitoto'a sili e tatau ona matala ma uia e le tamaitai faatuatua ma talitonu i le Atua, o le faitoto'a lea i le lagi. Le faitoto'a ua faavanoa mai e le Atua ia tei tatou pe afai tatou te talitonu ma faatuatua i lona maliu ma lona toetu manumalo. Manuia le Mafutaga, o moomooga foi o le Mafutaga ia faafualoa le soifua i lau afioga i le faletua Suresa ma ia manuia lau lua galuega i lo outou nuu fou ma le susuga i le faifeau



Suresa Tufuga i lana toe saunoaga faamalosi.



Suiva'aia & Leotele - Taulimaina meataulima Papakura. Faafetai le faaalalo.



Mafutaga Tamaitai Mangere Central.



Mafutaga Tamaitai Papatoetoe.



Mafutaga Tamaitai Manukau i lana fonotaga.



Mafutaga Tamaitai Manurewa.

Meadowlands and Pukekohe Sunday Schools deliver strong performance

The Fijian Methodist congregations in Meadowlands and Pukekohe had their prize giving ceremonies during the 19th November Sunday services. The children from both parishes sat for the examination in July with the NZ Sunday School Examination.

Both Parishes had an average of 90 percent passes, and Sunday School teachers were overwhelmed at the results. They praised the children and their parents' efforts to support their children especially when it came to memorising verses.

In August the Wasewase Sunday School teachers met at Whanganui with Rev Akuila Bale to discuss and adopt the NZ Sunday Schools Examination as part of their curriculum. The Wasewase supported the move.



Retired presbyter Rev Mie Yasa presented their certificates of achievement to the Pukekohe Sunday School children.



The Meadowlands congregation's children and teachers celebrate their achievement and display their certificates.

NA SERE TOTOKA NEI MERI NA TINANA NA GONE-TURAGA (Luke 1: 46 – 55)

Rev Dr IS Tuwere

Sa ulutaga levu na Sere. Na sere kecega ni dua na vanua ka vaka kina na kena meke. Koto kina na italanoa me baleta edua na ka e yaco se vakayacori ka vaka kina na italanoa ni noda bula na tamata se talanoa me baleta edua na vanua. Sere kecega ka ra biuta vata se bulia na dau-ni-sere.

Sa dua na ulutaga levu ka ulutaga bibi talega na 'Sere' ena noda Vakabauta na Lotu Va-Karisito, vakabibi na Lotu Wesele. Cavuti koto ena ikabakaba ni sere na MHB ena kena preface - "Methodism Was Born in Song".

Ulutaga levu ni vei-Sere taucoko ni Lotu Wesele ka rau biuta vata na veitacini ko Jone kei Jalesi Wesele na tacina me tekivu mai na 1730 vakacaca na yabaki sa ikoya na "Loloma-Levu-Taumada-Soli-Wale ni Kalou" (Prevenient Grace of God).

Na Nona vakacaucautaki ka vakavinavakataki na Kalou. Cavuti ka seretaki vinaka kina na Nona Loloma levu na Kalou. Mai tomana eso tale na dau-ni-sere na ulutaga levu oqo ena 1840 me vakataki George Matheson (1842-1906). Dua na nona sere na: "Loloma levu ni Kalou. Sa bese tu ni laivi au" - FHB (183) O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go".

Tubutubu nei Jone kei Jalesi Wesele ko Samuela kei Susana Wesele. Ratou lewe 19 taucoko na luvedrau. Lewe 9 ratou a mate ka vo ga e lewe 10 na

veitacini. Ena 9th February 1709, a kama kina na nodratou vale mai Epworth, Igiladi, ni se qai yabaki 6 ga ko Jone Wesele.

Sa qai laki kau mai ko koya mai na taba vale e cake ka tiko kiina. Ka veivakurabuitaki na nona vakabulai. Na sere ni nona vakabulai oqo ko Jone Wesele a bulia ko Jalesi na tacina ena 1738, ni sa yabaki 29 ko Jone Wesele ka kunei ena MHB 361 (Raica talega na Sakaraia 3:2).

*Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeemed from death and sin,
A brand plucked from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliverer's praise?*

E seretaki koto na Loloma-Levu-Soli-Wale ni Kalou (Prevenient Grace of God) ena sere oqo, me vaka ena vuqa sara na Sere ni Lotu Wesele e vuravura raraba. Sa dua na itavi levu ena loma ni noda Lotu edaidai na kena lagati, ka me lagati vinaka na Sere ni lotu.

Ilisapeci kei Meri

O Ilisapeci na tinai Joni na Dau-veipapitaisotaki ka rau veiwekani voleka sara kei Meri na tinai Jisu. Marautaki Meri ko Ilisapeci ni sa kila ni tiko vua na gone yalataki ka iVakabula ko Jisu Karisito. Mai sikovi Ilisapeci ko Meri. Rau veimarautaki ni sa tiko ruarua vei rau na gone...Joni vei Ilisapeci na tinana... kei na Gone Turaga ko Jisu...vei Meri na

tinana.

Sucu e liu ko Joni...sa qai sucu e muri nai Vakabula. O Joni eda raica ni vaka e liu mai vei rau me mai samaka na 'sala' me qai muri mai na Gone Turaga. Kaya cake ko Ilisapeci vei Meri ni rau sota: "Ko sa kalougata vakalevu mai vei ira kece na yalewa, ka sa kalougata talega na lewe ni ketemu! (Luke 1: 42).

Na Sere nei Meri

Sa koto na Sere nei Meri ena Luke 1: 46-56. Sa dau vakatokai na wase ni Vola oqo nei Luke me "Sere nei Meri" (Song of Mary) se Magnificat... (magnify)...Na Nona vakalevulevu ni vakavinavakataki na Kalou. Sa sega walega ni Sere nei Meri, ia sa Sere rogo levu ka bibi ni Lotu Va-Karisito mai liu me yacova mai edaidai.

Na veitikina bibi ena Sere oqo
"Sa vakalagilagia na Turaga na yaloqu, ka sa reki na yaloqu vua na Kalou na noqu iVakabula" (vss. 46-70). Sa ka bibi na "vakavinavaka" - na noda marautaka na Nona loloma-levu-soli-wale na noda Kalou.

Kaya tiko na Dau-ni-Same: "Dou ia vei Jiova na vakavinavaka. Mo vakavinavaka vei Jiova na yaloqu. Niu sa bula tiko kau na vakavinavaka vei Jiova; kau na sere vua na noqu Kalou ena gauna kecega kau sa bula kina" (Same 146: 1 - 2).

"Sa dodoka na ligana kaukauwa ka ra sa veiseyaki na viavalevu ena

vakananau ni yalodra" (Luke 1: 51). Sa yaco ka vakayacori tikoga na ka oqo mai liu me yacova mai edaidai.

"Sa talaraki ira na kaukauwa mai na nodra itikitiko vakatui, ka laveti ira cake na tamata lalai" (vs. 52). Sa yaco tikoga na qaqa ni sere oqo e vuravura edaidai.

"Sa vakamamautaki ira na viakana ena ka vinaka; ka vakatalai ira wale na vutuniyau" (vs. 53). Sa sega vakadua ni vakabekataki na tikina oqori.

Eda yacova mai na vula ko Noveba ka cabe mai vakamalua na Tiseba, na vula namaki ka marautaki. Eda vakananuma tale kina na Nona sucu na noda iVakabula ko Jisu Karisito.

Meda sere, vakavinavaka ka marau tiko me vaka ka liutaki keda kina ko Meri na marama-tinana na iVakabul kei vuravura. Meda vakasinaiti talega ena yalo dau-vosota kei na Masu: "Moni qai vosota toka mada gona kina, oi kemuni na wekaqu, me yacova na lako mai ni Turaga. Ni bau raica mada na dauteitei, ni sa waraka na vuata talei ni nona qele, ni waraka tu vakadede ka yacova ni sa tau oti na uca taumada kei na uca e muri. Ni wawa talega vaka kina! Ni vakataudeitaka na yalomuni, ni sa roro mai na lako mai ni Turaga" (Jemesa 5: 7 - 8).

Me noda vata kece na kalougata kei na marau ni Siga ni Sucu ena yabaki oqo.

Ko e Laumalie 'o e Mate ma'a Tonga koeha nai hono tatau

What is the spirit of Mate ma'a Tonga?

By 'Ikilifi Pope

Na'e pehe mai 'e ha tokotaha 'oku 'ikai ko ha Tonga, ".....ko moutolu ia 'a e kau Tonga' 'oku mou fu'u fakamaatoato 'aupito ki moutolu ke ma'u 'a e ipu 'a mamani 'i he 'akapulu liiki...'. Ko 'eku tali ki ai na'e pehee, "... 'oku 'ikai ke u tui pehe ka ko 'eku tui 'oku lahi ange 'a e ngaahi me'a 'oku toe mahu'inga ange (values) ia 'oku feinga 'a e kakai ke nau fakahaa'i 'i he fe'auhi ko 'eni. Koh ono fakatata eni:

'Ofa fonua:

Ko Jason Taumalolo ko e tokotaha ia na'e nafui 'e he mitia koe'uhi ko 'ene tukuange 'a e timi 'a e Kiwi kae 'alu ia 'o va'inga mei Tonga. Ko 'ene fakamatala na'e pehe ko e 'uhinga na'e fili ai ke 'alu 'o tau ma'a Tonga koe'uhii ke langa'i hake 'a e 'akapulu liiki 'i he fanga ki'i fonua iiki 'o e Pasifiki.

Ngaue fakataha mo e komuniti Tonga:

'Oku 'i ai 'a e mafana makehe 'a e kau va'inga koe'uhi ko e mahino 'oku poupu mavahe ange 'a e komuniti ma'a nautolu. Kuo lea'aki 'e he kau va'inga 'o hange ko e talaloto 'a David Fusitu'a ki he mitia, 'oku fakatupu ivi lahi mo e loto lahi 'a e fanongo ki he hiva pea mo e tue mei tu'a 'a e kau Tonga. 'Oku hiva pea nau tue pea 'oku lahi ai pe honau ivi.

Ko e feohi mo e famili:

'Oku fiefia lahi e fanau 'i he 'enau feohi pea mo e ngaahi famili. Na'e te'eki pe ke 'i ai ha taimi pehe ia 'i ha'a nau folau mai ki Nu'u Sila ni 'o hange ko 'enau kau mai ko eni ma'ae timi Mate Ma'a Tonga.

'A ia ko e Laumalie 'o e Mate ma'a Tonga 'oku kau ai 'a e famili. Hange ko e lau 'iloa ko ia 'a e kau va'inga na'e pehee

'oku 'ikai ke kau 'a e pa'anga ia he alea ko 'enii ka ko e fakahounga'i pe 'a e 'ofa mo e ongosia 'emau ngaahi matu'aa 'ia kimautuluu. Fakamafana 'aupito ia.

Ko Siosiua Taukei'aho mo e ni'ihii mei 'o e famili 'o Sika Manu mei Saione. Ko Siosiua mei Kanokupolu, Ha'ano, Tongoleleka pea 'oku tokolahi hono famili 'i he peulisi saione.

Ko Sika Manu foki ko e 'ilamutu ia 'o e faifekau, Tavake Manu pea ko e pehe ki he hoa 'emau setuata ko 'Alisi Manu Tupou. Ko Sika Manu foki ko e kapiteni ia 'a e timi. Ko e famili ko e hui tu'a ia 'o e fanau to'utupu

Ko e Siasi mo e Fanau To'utupu:

'Oku polepole 'a e kau va'inga 'i he mahino 'oku kau mai 'a e ngaahi siasi pea mo e lotu 'i he poupu.

Kapau te tau 'omai 'a e lau ko ia 'a e punake, "...ko e ongo 'olive 'e ua,

pule'anga mo e siasi kae malohi ha fonua..." Ko e pule'angaa heni 'oku ne fakafofonga 'a e sisitemi 'oku fakalele 'o tokanga'i'aki 'a e ngaahi me'a 'a e fonua 'o kau ai 'a e sipoti 'oku fakamalumu ki ai 'a e 'akapulu pea pehee ki he Potungae 'a e To'utupu Fakafonua.

Pea ko e Siasi leva 'oku ne fai 'e ia 'a e lotu pea mo e tauhi fakalaumalie 'a e fanau to'utupu.

Ko e fakama'opo'opo 'o e fakamatala ni ko e kongasii'eni 'o e ngaahi me'a 'oku ala fakahaa'i atu 'i he fakamatala ko 'enii ka 'oku toe lahi ange 'a e ngaahi me'a mahu'inga 'oku feinga 'a e komuniti Tonga ke fakahaa'i 'i he fakakaukau ko 'enii. Ko ia 'oku 'ikai ke u tui ko e ma'u 'a e Ipu 'a mamani ka ko e fakahaa'i 'a e laumalie 'o e mate ma'a Tonga mo e ngaahi me'a mahu'inga 'o e ki'i fonua masiva ko ia na'a tau tupu mei ai.



Ko Rev. Haloti Mollitika lolotonga hono talitali 'e he komuniti 'o Christchurch 'a e timi.



Ko e kau poupu eni mo e fuka Tonga. Ko e founa lelei hono 'omai e fanau ke nau mahino'i mo ongo'i 'a honau Tonga.



Ko Jason Taumalolo mo e timi lolotonga 'a e vainga.



Ko Fotu Fisi'iahi Jr, foha 'o e faifekau, Kuli Fisi'iahi na'e a'u mai ki ai 'a e me'a'ofa mei he taha 'o e kau va'inga ka ko e famili foki ko Manu Ma'u. Ko Fotu 'oku kei tokoto falemahaki pea 'oku fakafofonga mai 'e Afe Sikaleti mei he siasi 'o Dominion.



Ko Rev. Villami Finau pea mo e siasi 'o Pukekohe 'oku nau faka'ali'alu 'a e kulokula ko e poupu ki he timi Mate ma'a Tonga.



Ko Siosiua Taukei'aho mo e ni'ihii mei 'o e famili 'o Sika Manu mei Saione.

FAKALOTOFALE 'IA

Ko e Kilisimasi & Laumalie 'o e Mate Ma'a Tonga

Christmas & the Spirit of Mate Ma'a Tonga

By 'Ikilifi Pope

Potu Folofola: Himi 391:6

Tama Tonga tu'u 'o ngaue
Ho koloa ke fakamoni
Lotu ki he 'Eiki ma'u pe
Ke ne poupu ki he lotu
'O malu'i, 'o malu'i, 'a Tupou

'Oku tau malie'ia he ngaahi fatu fakakaukau 'a e kau tangata'eiki 'o e 'aho ko e kuo hoko ko e moto, siate folau pea fakaveinga'aki 'a e tukufua e fonua he ngaahi mala'e kehekehe 'o kau ai e mo'ui fakasino, faka'atamai, fakasosiale pea mo e fakalaumalie foki.

'Oku kau 'i he ngaahi lea ko ia 'a e 'Tonga mo'unga ki he lotu', 'Mo'ui ma'a Tonga, 'Mate ma'a Tonga', 'Ki he lelei taha', pea mo e ngaahi kupu'i lea kehe pe ka kuo 'iloa 'a hono ngaue'aki 'i he tapa kehekehe 'o 'etau nonofo 'i he sosaieti faka-Tonga.

'Oku ou fie taki 'etau tokanga ki he lea 'Mate ma'a Tonga', 'a ia 'oku fakahinga'aki 'a e timi 'akapulu liiki fakafonua. Telia na'a fu'u loloa 'a e fakamatala ni he'ikai ke u lave'i ai heni 'a e tupu'anga pea mo hono ohi mai 'o e lea ni 'o hoko ko e moto ia 'o e Kolisi Tonga.

Ka ko e fakakaukau 'e fai ai 'a e fakahoha'a. ko e mahu'inga'ia 'i he faivaola kae'uma'a 'a e ngaahi 'ausia kuo tau mata 'i he lolotonga ni. 'Oku hanga 'e he 'mate ma'a Tonga' 'o fakafuo (embody) 'a e laumalie, loto, mafana pea mo e uho 'o e mo'ui 'a e kakai Tonga. Sino-e-me'a



Ko e laumalie 'o e 'Mate Ma'a Tonga' 'oku fakahaa'i ia 'i he lotomafana poupu 'a e kakai 'o hange ko ia na'e hoko 'i he mala'e 'akapulu 'i Hamilton.

ke toe mahu'inga ange ko e a'usia 'e he 'etau fanau 'oku tutupu hake 'i muli ni 'a e mafana mo e loto ko ia.

'I he ngaahi a'usia kuo tau mamata ai 'oku kau ai 'a hono fakaava 'o e car park 'o e mala'e vakapuna koe'uhi ko e fu'u tokolahi 'a e kau poupu 'i he talitali e folau mai 'a e timi 'Ikaletahi (2011), ko e ngaahi lele fuka he shopping centre 'o Otahuhu, teuteu'i 'o e ngaahi me'alele 'aki 'a e fuka Tonga, teuteu'i 'o e ngaahi 'api 'aki 'a e lanu kulokula pea mo e fuka Tonga foki. Ko e fa'ahinga laumalie ia 'oku ha mai mei he 'Mate ma'a Tonga'.

Ko e poini 'oku ou fie fakamamafa'i heni ko e laumalie 'o e mate ma'a Tonga 'oku mahulu atu ia 'i he sipoti pea mo e fe'auhi ki he ngaahi me'a mahu'inga (values) 'oku toe loloto ange ia mo

matu'aki mahu'inga ke fakatolonga pea faka'ilonga'i foki.

Ko e fanau va'inga 'o 'etau timi ko e kongahala na'e fanau'i ia 'i muli ni. Ka ko 'enau kalusefai pea mo 'enau 'ofa 'i he 'enau matu'a pea mo honau Tonga 'oku fakamafana 'aupito ia. Ko e taha 'o e ngaahi talaloto mafana na'e fai 'e he fanau va'ingaa ko e pehee 'oku 'ikai ke ma'u ha' a nau seniti lelei 'akinautolu 'i he 'enau oo mai 'o va'inga ma'a Tonga 'o hange ko e ngaahi totongi na'a nau mei ma'u 'o kapau na'a nau va'inga ma'ae ngaahi fonua muli na'e fanau'i ai kinautolu ka ko 'enau fai pe eni ke fakahounga'aki 'a e tauhi pea mo e ngaue mateaki kuo fai 'e he 'enau ngaahi matu'aa ma'a nautolu.

'Oku hanga ai 'e he fakakaukau ko ia 'o ue'ia 'a e loto mo e 'atamai 'o e kakai

Tonga he tapa kotoa pe 'o mamani pea kamata pe mei he kakai lalahi 'o a'u ki he fanau iiki ke nau fakahaa'i 'enau fie Tonga.

'I he fakakaukau ko ia, ta ko e 'mate ma'a Tonga' 'e fa'olaki ai 'a e ngaahi me'a mahu'inga (values) 'oku ou lave ki ai 'i 'olunga 'o hange ko e ia mateaki, 'ofa he matu'a, fakahounga'i, kalusefai, loto'aki pea mo e 'ofa fonua foki. Ta ko e ngaahi me'a mahu'inga ia 'oku totonu ke tau toe fakamamafa'i pea mo fakahaa'i ki he 'etau fanau pea ako'aki ki he ngaahi lautohi faka-Sapate koe'uhi he ko e uho ia 'o e Tonga pea mo e lotu foki.

'Oku tau teuteu atu eni ki he kilisimasi pea 'oku ou faka'amu ke toe 'oatu mu'a 'a e fakakaukau 'o hotau Tonga ke hoko ia ko e me'a'ofa ma'a 'etau fanau to'utupu 'i muli ni. Ko e himi malie eni 'oku ou pehe ko e taha ia he fakakoloa kia kitautolu, "Tama Tonga tu'u 'o ngaue ho koloa ke fakamon_.

'Oku tau vakai 'i he timi 'Mate ma'a Tonga ko 'eni 'oku haa ai 'a 'etau koloa pea mo 'etau koloa'ia 'i hono fakakoloa kitautolu 'e he 'Otua. Ko ia 'oku fiema'u ke tau matu'aki ngaue malohi ke fakamon_ pe fakaola mo fakafua 'a e koloa ko ia.

'E hoko leva ia ko e tapuaki mo e monu'ia kia kitautolu 'o hange ko e 'etau taa'imalie 'i he me'a'ofa 'o e **KILISIMASI.**

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

Fakakoloa 'E he Holo Fo'ou 'A e Siasi 'Aki Ha Mo'ui Fo'ou

By 'Ikilifi Pope

'Oku 'i ai 'a e tui 'e hanga 'e he holo fo'ou 'o e kainga lotu Tonga 'o Christchurch South 'o toe fakaiuia pea mo tanaki mai ha ngaahi me'a fo'ou ki he ngaue 'a e Siasi.

Na'e pehe 'e Moi Kaufononga ko e faifekau pule ia 'o e peulisi ni, ko e koloa ni 'e lava ia ke ngaue'aki 'e he kakai Tonga ki he ngaahi fatongia anga maheni kehekehe hange ko e kalapu, ngaahi fakafiefia mo ha toe fatongia pe 'e lava fakahoko he holo ni.

'E fakalele ai foki pea mo e akoteu pea pehe ki ha toe fatongia pe 'a e komuniti, ko

e lau ia 'a Moi.

Ko e kakai Tonga 'o Christchurch 'e lava pe ke nau ngaue'aki 'a e holo ni ka 'i he taimi tatau 'e lahi 'a hono ngaue'aki 'e he komuniti 'o Addington 'a ia ko e feitu'u ia 'oku tu'u ai 'a e 'api siasi ko 'enu.

Na'e lava lelei hono huufi 'a e holo ni 'e he fakafongia falealea 'o e vahe ni, Dr. Meagan Wood 'i he 'aho 4 'o Novema. Ko e toe langa foki eni hili ia hono maumau'i 'e he mofu'ike 'a e holo pea mo e falelotu.

Na'e me'a foki 'i he katoanga ni 'a e kau taki 'o e siasi 'o kau ai 'a e palesiteni, Rev Prince Devanandan, palesiteni fili, Rev

Setaita Kinahoe Veikune, faifekausea 'o e Vahefonua Tonga, Rev Tevita Finau, pea pehe ki he faifekau pule 'o 'Okalani/Manukau, Rev Vaikoloa Kilikiti.

Na'e 'ikai ko ia pe ka na'e me'a ai foki mo e palesiteni 'o e Siasi Ueasiliana Tau'ataina 'o Tonga, Rev Dr Ahio, Fakafongia falealea ko 'Ahila Kanongata'a pea pehe ki he kau faifekau tokolahi pea mo e siasi 'o Christchurch foki.

Ka ko e me'a tepu ko e 'aonga 'a e koloa ni ki he ngaue 'a e siasi 'o hange ko e Potungau Talavou, Akohiva mo e Ifi, Kalasi'aho kae'uma' 'a e ngaahi fatongia

kehe pe 'a e siasi.

Ko e koloa ni na'e 'uluaki hingoa ia ko St Marks 'a ia ko e peulisi ia 'o Somerfield ka na'a kau me'a'ofa ia ki he kainga Tonga 'i he 2008.

Na'e toe pehe foki 'e Moi te nau kei tauhi pe 'a e hisitolia ko iaa' kae 'uma'aa 'a e fakatolonga 'o e lisi 'o kinautolu na'e kau 'i he siasi 'o St. Marks 'a ia ko 'enau faka'apa'apa ia ki he mahu'inga 'o e me'a'ofa ni ki he kainga Tonga.



Ko e faifekau pule 'o e kainga lotu, Moi Kaufononga lolotonga 'ene fakahoko fatongia 'i he katoanga ni. 'Oku haa 'i he taa' 'a e faifekausea, Tevita Finau, Palesiteni 'a Tonga, Dr. 'Ahio, fakafongia falealea, Dr Meagan Wood pea mo e palesiteni 'a Nu'u Sila ni, Prince Devanandan.



evita Finau, Setaita Kinahoe Veikune, Prince Devanandan, Meagan Wood, Dr Ahio, Anahila Kanongata'a pea mo Moi Kaufononga.