

Touchstone

Published monthly by The Methodist Church of New Zealand • Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa

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



Conference 2022 Celebrates 200 Years of Methodist History in Aotearoa



Make Puamau, Ratu Tuicakau and Sianti Nakabea.

In November the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa celebrated 200 years of Methodism at Conference 2022 in the place where our first missionaries landed in 1822.

The theme was:

He hokinga mahara, Ka haere whakamua

Looking back and moving forward

The programme included pilgrimages to sites of special significance, along with sessions dedicated to conducting

the business of church at a national level. Over several days of worship, celebrations, discussions and debate Conference shared many powerful messages of hope, pain, shame, guilt, joy, prayer, worship and fellowship. Highlights included ...

Memorable Moments

- Induction of the incoming presidential team of President Rev Peter Taylor and Vice President TeRito Peyroux-Semu.
- Te ao Māori and tikanga Māori principles at the forefront of all Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa discussions, decisions, policies and principles.

- Musical performances by the choirs: Samoan, Tongan, Rotuman, Fijian and Northland Children's Choir. Our Church is rich in musical talent and Conference provided many opportunities - on stage and in sessions - to showcase those exceptional voices and musical skills.
- Rev Robyn Allen-Goudge singing and playing her harp to *Take my Life and Let it Be* during the Service of Recognition. Exceptional.
- Devotions led by the Trinity College Bachelor of Theology graduates; in prayer, poem and song delivered with confidence, grace and humour they showed a new way of doing ministry with the vigour of youth.
- Eruptions of song and shouts of encouragement from proud whanau and parish supporters during the Trinity College Graduations ceremony. Spontaneous, heartfelt and moving.
- The many instances where Conference was invited to ensure the invisible were made visible. We recognise the contributions of all those whose names have not been recorded on plaques and written in history books.

- Rangatahi facilitating plenary discussions and workshops. They bring a new energy, enthusiasm, and innovation.
- Geoff Allen's play *Amazing Love – Aroha Kaiora*. A performance that gave life and credibility to the first couple who brought Methodism to Aotearoa.
- A tribute to the attendance at Conference of Rev Donald Phillipps. He is our taonga. At the age of 90, Donald is as committed as ever to the life and history of Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, recording, retelling and sharing the history of the past 200 years.



- Michael Lemanu's interview with retiree Leigh Sundberg. Michael's exemplary interviewing and editing skills enabled Leigh to be present, despite his inability to attend Conference.
- Ex-President Rev Andrew Doubleday officiating at the Rainbow / LGBTQ communion service.
- The Vahefonua Tonga Choir in full voice performing Handel's Messiah under the carefully controlled baton of Siniva Vaitohi. 60 voices and 30 musicians in perfect harmony.
- The Māori Battalion Museum Te Rau Aroha at Waitangi Treaty Grounds. A powerful and honest depiction of the sacrifice made by Māori supporting their country at war.
- Music by Rev Ieremia Amituana'i. Outstanding.

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Conference 2022 Celebrates 200 Years of Methodist History in Aotearoa



Conference illustration by Ruth Heta.

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Youth representation at Conference. Two tables of young people learning from and challenging Conference to make church relevant to Gen Z by giving rangatahi a role and opportunity to participate at every level of Church.

Ex-President Rev Andrew Doubleday taking on the role of Ministry Enabler for UCANZ. A new direction for Andrew and UCANZ.

Outgoing presidential team singing *How Great Thou Art*.

The reinstatement of Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard into full Connexion.

Trinity Theological College award Bachelor of Theology Degree to four students for the first time. We congratulate:

- Paula Moala (Tonga) (Moana Studies)
- Sione Teisina Koloa (Tonga) (Biblical Studies)
- Sione Tesimale, (Samoa; Tonga) (Religious Studies)
- So'otaga Tamana P. Misikei (New Plymouth, New Zealand) (Theological Studies)

Guests from Aotearoa, Australia and the Pacific region included representatives from many denominations.

The launch of three publications significant to the life and history of our Church:



Rowan Tautari at the stone cairn, Kaeo.

- **Maea Te Kupu: Kaeo, He Whenua Kurahuna** Author: Rowan Tautari
- **Theology as Threshold** Editors: Jione Havea, Emily Colgan, and Nāsili Vaka'uta
- **Methodism Towards the Future** Rev Donald Phillipps (Books will be reviewed in *Touchstone* in 2023)

MEMORABLE DECISIONS

■ Climate Change initiatives given priority status. MCNZ will adopt the Climate Justice Working Group proposal for observing a decade for Climate Justice, *Rekindle the vā of Papatūānuku* commencing from 2023.



Rev Tovia Aumua lights the Conference candle.



Diane Paterson and Rev Saikolone Taufa.



A tribute to Dr Helen Laurenson at the Service to Honour Those Who Have Died.

- Green Grants initiative launched by MCPC; funding for projects that address climate change and sustainability. Application information on MCNZ website.
- Te Taha Māori commends a discussion paper on the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery. A decision to be made at Conference 2023.
- Te Taha Māori commends a discussion paper on He Wakaputanga o te Rangiratanga o Niu Tirenī, the Declaration of Independence 1835 and a suggested amendment to the Mission Statement. A decision to be made at Conference 2023.
- The evangelical network has been discontinued after 22 years. That work is done.
- The reinstatement of Te Taha Māori Hui Pōari. BoA Chair Nan Russell said, "This is a tremendous cause for celebration."
- MCPC will establish a committee to develop a property strategy for MCNZ in consultation with partner churches.
- A commitment to ensuring Conference will be an annual event, alternatively

- meeting face to face one year, and in an online forum the next.
- The Year of Discernment programme confirmed to begin in 2023.
- Ongoing funding to support the position of Children Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator confirmed.
- Real change and commitment to the rangatahi in our church. There's been a lot of talk and now there is affirmative and real change. Transformative.
- Conference announced President Elect Te Aroha Rountree and Vice President Elect Rev Peter Norman.
- Bricks and Mortar Section 8 to be replaced by booklet *Kōrero Papatupu Whenua Land Stories* to ensure land stories are captured for all church property.
- Law Book Section 8 on disciplinary procedures to be reviewed to ensure tikanga and restorative justice principles prevail in all decisions.
- The function and purpose of each standing committee to be reviewed and reports and recommendations to be presented at Conference 2023.



President's Report - Rev Peter Taylor

Leadership Theme; Servant Ministry

I was brought up by parents Harry and Dorothy on the Yorkshire coast in northern England within sight of the towering Huntcliff and beside Skelton Beck. I have spent all my life within the Methodist Church, began lay preaching when 17 and entered presbyteral training when I was 23.

These roots of mine are important to me. Although I recognise life and Methodism in the UK is not the same as in Aotearoa, the same Wesleyan heritage lies at the heart of who I am. To understand me you need to know my background.

This is also true of Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, The Methodist Church of New Zealand.

To understand ourselves as a church we need to know our background. We celebrated some of that background at Conference this year, visiting Waitangi, Kaeo and Māngungu, remembering those British missionaries who brought the Wesleyan message and those Māori

who embraced it. Alongside the celebration of our past was an acknowledgement that there is much to regret.

In the first of four special panel discussions we recognised some of the pain as Māori and Pākehā tried to learn how to live together respectfully but so often failing, especially when the latter invoked the destructive *Doctrine of Discovery* (Britain discovered New Zealand, so it was British!) which conveniently dismissed any Māori claims to whenua/land, since they were uncultured natives in British eyes. Later in Conference we heard a report on our church's response to the Historic Abuse in Care Tribunal, realising that many cases are still to emerge. It was deeply saddening to hear what supposedly well-meaning Christian adults thought was acceptable, or allowed to happen to children under their care.

I just described my past, but I am not fully described by my past - I have changed over the years, including while living in Aotearoa from 2006. So also the church is not fully described by what happened in the distant past - our church has also changed - for example,

with the influx of Pasifica churches and synods.

It is a normal part of religious experience to say that reconciliation with God and with each other can only occur after repentance. It is for this reason that we must not dismiss the past, with all its failings. But it is also for this reason that we must not dwell on the past as though no change, no future, no hope was possible. There is always room for hope even in the middle of the deepest despair. "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Put your hope in God" (Psalm 42.5 and 11).

Our Conference theme, He hokinga mahara, ka haere whakamua, that roughly translates into English as Looking backwards, and moving forwards, was chosen to declare that whatever the past, which we need to acknowledge and 'own', we can also face the future with a confidence that is based on hope in God, and God alone. TeRito and I also chose a personal two-year theme of Servant Ministry. We



Peter Taylor and TeRito Peyroux-Semu.

believe this is what God is calling us to do and what, if we all join in, will bring a future we can embrace with hope. We want to model that style of leadership, which we believe is one shown by the actions of Jesus who 'did not come to be served, but to serve' (Mark 10.45).

This is not about doing what everyone else tells us to, but about humbly following God who forever supports the church, so that we can all mirror Christ's image to which we are called. May we all let go of our 'position' and 'status' in the church and in society, and seek to serve our communities as John and Charles Wesley did; only then can those around us truly see Christ in our midst.

He hokinga mahara. Ka haere whakamua.

Reflecting on our past and moving forward.

Vice President

TeRito Peyroux-Semu

Te' ne gagaj atakoa Aus Noa'ia 'e Mauri, Kia Orana koutou katoatoa na roto i te Aro'a Ma'ata o Te Atua, and Very Warm Greetings!

After months of collective anticipation, prayer, discussion, and planning, it's hard to believe that our Bicentenary Conference is over.

Naturally, like any event or experience, everyone will have their own perspective and take on how things went, so in addition to actually catching up with people, or receiving feedback from the Conference Evaluation Forms over the next few weeks, I'm looking forward to reading this edition of *Touchstone*, to see the ways in which the essence of people's Conference experience are expressed.

This Conference was always going to be an emotional one for me. The dedication, love and service given to the church by all those we honoured at the Tribute Service for the Deceased, like every year, was both phenomenal and humbling.

Many of these people were pioneers in both the church and wider community, many had become personal or family friends over the years, all led extraordinary ministries and lives, all will always be loved and remembered ... and one of them was my Nana.

Twenty-five years ago, with Rev Norman Brookes as President, my Nana Susau was inducted into the role of Vice-President. As mentioned in her Conference tribute, their presidential term and leadership was at the beginning of what was a turbulent and for many, a difficult time in the church's history. Thankfully, our recent Conference experience wasn't

anything like theirs back then. If anything, amidst the many causes for celebration throughout each day, for my family and I, Conference was ultimately, a much welcomed and much appreciated opportunity for healing.

Following Conference, the first event that I was invited to attend was Karakia on the first Sunday of Advent with members of Te Rohe Potae, Waikato Rohe and Waikato-Waiariki Synod, at the Methodist Church in Kawhia. Together we celebrated the 88th anniversary of the Kawhia Methodist Church, and reminisced over significant memories and photos and beautiful kai. We even touched on future and succession planning.

Here's to an Advent Season of healing, of peace, of hope and of much more to celebrate and be thankful for! Hanisiof ma Alalum ma kikia, ē Kia Manuia rava i teia Kiritimiti e te Mataiti 'Ou!



The 1997-1998 Presidential Team Rev Norman Brookes and my nana Susau Strickland.



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Moving with the Changes

Siosifa Pole,
Co-director Mission Resourcing

It was a joy to join with colleagues and friends at our Bicentennial Conference 2022 to reflect on our past and learn from it as we journey toward the future with new vision that would help shaping our church in the context where it exists. As we were constantly reminded during Conference, the Methodist Church is a movement and therefore it's not static but it's moving and changing in order to be relevant to the time and space where it exercises its mission and ministry. Mission Resourcing in its capacity as a resourcing arm of the church is trying its best to operate along that line in order to be relevant.

We came to Conference with two suggested decisions to be approved; the Year of Discernment Programme and for long-term funding to support the role of Tauwi Coordinator for children, Youth, and Families Ministries. We are grateful

for the Conference decision to support these suggestions. The Year of Discernment programme will assist the church to recruit future quality leaders that are competent in their respective ministries and know the contexts where they exercise their ministries, especially the current issues that affect families and society.

In addition, this programme will help those who are interested in doing ministry in the Methodist Church of New Zealand to discern and articulate their sense of calling into ministry. The church through mentors, parishes, Mission Resourcing and Trinity Theological College will journey with these people during that one year to discern together their sense of calling. It is the church at the end of this journey that will make the final decision. We are grateful for the robust discussion about the programme so the whole church is well informed. Introducing the Year of Discernment programme signals we are moving into another level of recruiting our leaders to do ministry in our church.

Youth ministry is always vital to the life of our church and therefore, we are thankful to the Conference on its decision to begin the process of securing long-term funding to support the role of Tauwi



Youth at Conference with the Presidential team.

Coordinator for Children, Youth, and Families Ministries. We heard in the discussion at Conference that young people are not only the future of our church but certainly the present. They are the here and now of the church and therefore, the church is accountable for their wellbeing. There are issues that our young people are facing in their current contexts and the role of the Tauwi Youth Coordinator play a big part in running workshops, training sessions, and Youth Conferences to discuss those issues and to find resolutions.

Climate change and global warming is a major issue globally and locally. Conference was supportive of many

suggested decisions that will mitigate climate change. These decisions included, the Decade of Climate Justice, the Green Grant, and Green Sunday. As the chairperson of the Climate Justice Working Group, I'm glad that our church is taking a proactive approach on this issue because the future of our children and grandchildren will definitely be affected by climate change. I believe it is our God-given duty to engage and to make a positive influence in our world, our home. I'm grateful that our church is making the attempt to move with the changes that we encounter in our current context.

H O N E S T T O G O D

Christmas According to John

Sometimes I wonder whether the churches at Christmas put too much emphasis on the stories of Matthew and Luke, and not enough on the gospel of John.

In the broad scheme of things that's not surprising. It's those stories that glow with the human colour and homely detail we can readily relate to, whereas John has no account of Jesus' birth at all - no Mary, no Joseph, no angels, no shepherds, no wise men, no star, no Bethlehem, no inn and no manger. Where would our Christmas pageants, tableaux, paintings and greeting cards be without them?

Yet if we dig deep enough, we find John's gospel is actually all about the meaning of Christmas: Godness experienced in human life, inspiring our human lives to be expressions of God.

Where Matthew and Luke focus on the narrative and its symbolism, John's approach is more philosophical - brilliantly and imaginatively so. Jesus comes to us with a purpose, and his vision of the "kingdom of God" is at the heart of his teaching. John uses the phrase in only one passage early in his

gospel, but that doesn't mean it is absent from his thinking. For him the equivalent is "eternal life" - which doesn't mean everlasting endlessness after we die but life of ultimate quality, lived in the here and now.

That is reflected in the recurring "I am" statements in which he spells out the deeper purposes of what Jesus was born to be:

- I am the bread of life.
- I am the gate for the sheep.
- I am the good shepherd.
- I am the true vine.
- I am the resurrection and the life.
- I am the way, the truth and the life.
- I am the light of the world.

Each of those sayings grows out of some significant incident or conversation Jesus had engaged in. So "I am the bread of life" comes after Jesus feeds the crowd with five loaves and two fishes. "I am the gate for the sheep" and "I am the good shepherd" follow Jesus' stern words about false gatekeepers who do not protect the sheep. "I am the resurrection and the life" is set within the story of Lazarus.

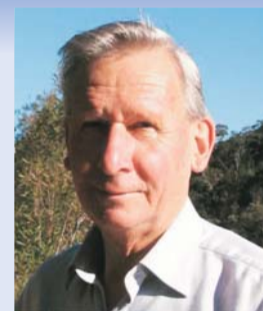
In these passages John is drawing on

scenes from daily life to make a strong statement about how Jesus points the way towards living the kingdom into reality. His everyday images of bread, a gate, a vine, a light are metaphors for the imagination to play with. Enter fully into them and they become profoundly significant for the way we lead our lives.

Did Jesus actually speak those words? Many scholars think not, but they would also say that in them John beautifully distilled the heart of the good news Jesus lived and taught. There's a mysticism in them, but it's a grounded mysticism, a mysticism enfolded in the human - which is what Christmas is all about.

When contemplating the I ams, it is worth asking: "Who exactly is the 'I'?" Several possibilities come to mind, each adding its own nuance. So is it Jesus of Nazareth? Is it the Christ as archetype of love, grace and transformation? Is it the Son of God? Is it God, the great "I am"? Is it the teaching of Jesus personified? Is it all of these?

Or is it us, his followers? In the world



Ian Harris.

Ian Harris

around us, for whom, and how, can we be the bread of life, the gate for the sheep, the good shepherd, the true vine, the way, the truth and the life, the light of the world, the resurrection and the life? Some will think that far too

presumptuous to contemplate but how much richer the message of Christmas becomes if we do.

As the gospels put it, in the beginning was the logos, the Word, the visionary dream of God; and the visionary dream of God became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth ... And Mary gave birth to her first-born son, and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn ... And to all who received him he gave power to become children of God. Wow!

The miracle of Christmas is that we who share Jesus' humanity can also share his vision and purpose, a vision of the kingdom of God, a vision of eternal life experienced here on earth.

***That's worth celebrating.
Happy Christmas according to John!***



Historic Abuse and Safeguarding for the Future

Carol Barron

I found the plenary discussion on historic abuse as one of the most confronting, challenging and moving parts of Conference. Talking about sexual harm and abuse is not something that is normally talked about at Conference, in Church or at home. It is not a comfortable subject.

Earlier this year, the Methodist Church appeared before a Royal Commission of Inquiry to account for the historic abuse and neglect that occurred in Methodist care. An unreserved apology was given for the harm done and for the failures of the Church to respond appropriately to the survivors.

Our Church has a process for those that have suffered harm in Methodist care in the hope that they may experience restoration of mana. Our process is constantly being reviewed and refined as we continue to learn how best to respond. Our responsibility extends beyond providing an apology and redress - we need to move beyond words to focus on preventing harm and abuse happening again for those in our care.

Rev Tara Tautari shared three short stories of people who suffered abuse while in the care of the Church, and its care homes, and how the Church had failed them.

Shirley Rivers shared her experience of being on the Church's Resolution & Redress Panel, a role she shares with two other members who are independent of the Church. The panel does not meet the applicants, but considers their story, which is completed by an independent person to assist the applicant survivor. Shirley brings the cultural guidance to the panel that is needed as many of the applicants are Māori. The panel now has a Pasifika representative to ensure that the response to Pasifika applicants is also appropriate.

Chris Johnston, Wesley College Board General Secretary, also spoke at the Royal Commission of Inquiry and offered an unreserved apology. Chris spoke of the failings that led to the abuse and the cone of silence culture that stopped it being reported. Addressing bullying has been, and continues to be, a priority

for the school principal and the board and he described the changes made to prevent and report abuse.

Rev Setaita Veikune shared her experience of providing apologies to survivors on behalf of the Church, when she was President, along with David Bush, the then General Secretary. The apology included an acknowledgement of the hurt and harm that was suffered. Setaita explained it was important to know what helped a person move on as they reconciled the trauma emotionally, physically and spiritually. The church had a pivotal role in putting right the wrongs of the past.

Setaita also shared about her role on the Royal Commission's Pacific Reference Group and highlighted the need to safeguard for the future, so this can never happen again.

Dr Emily Colgan, Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Trinity Theological College, offered the trauma-informed resource to the church, "Accompanying survivors of sexual harm." This resource will provide support to presbyters and lay people to respond appropriately to those that disclose sexual harm. It also provides the theological foundations that challenge and resist sexual harm. It offers practical ways to ensure the language we use does not negatively impact on survivors of sexual abuse.

President Rev Peter Taylor and Vice President TeRito Peyroux-Semu then led a service of lament. The candle of lament was lit and prayer followed.

Robyn Allen-Goudge led a quiet chorus of Kyrie eléison - Lord, have mercy - Arohanui tonu e after statements that acknowledged the stories of brokenness and breaches of trust, and commitments to take the next steps in building a culture of safety to make the Church safe for all people.

The blessing was sung in te reo and a period of silence and stillness followed.

Conference made decisions reflecting the commitments in the service of lament and affirming that the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church. A small working group will be established to draft a safeguarding policy and procedure to prevent and respond to abuse within the Church.

Reflecting on our Bicultural Journey

Rev Keita Hotere

The first of our Thematic Plenaries for Conference looked at our Bicultural Journey. Facilitator Maungarongo Tito led us through some key questions with panellists Peter Taylor, TeRito Peyroux-Semu, Te Aroha Rountree and So'otaga Misikei. Each panellist shared their wisdom and insight from their different perspectives.

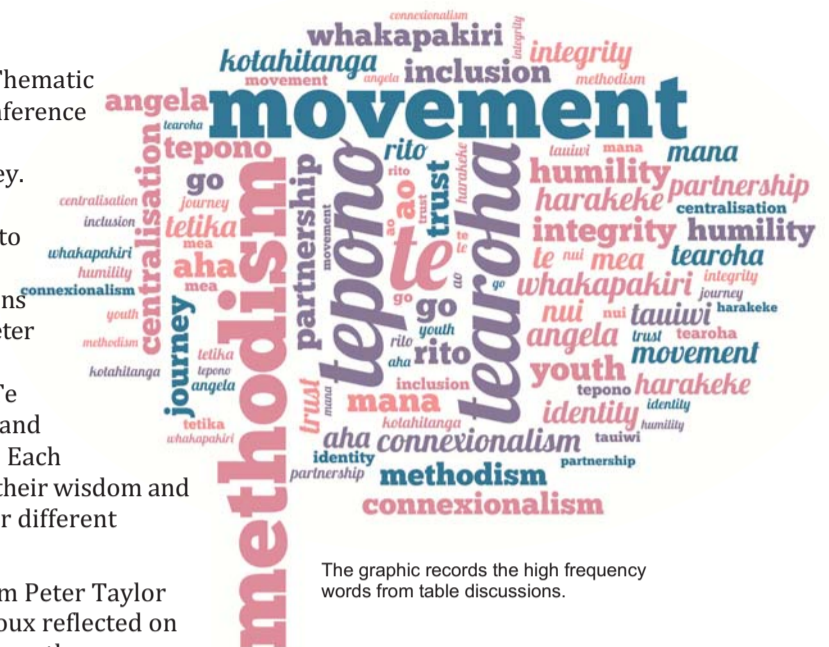
Presidential Team Peter Taylor and TeRito Peyroux reflected on their learnings from the pilgrimages that were part of the commemorative events programme. At all these events the relationship of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the church was paramount.

Te Aroha spoke about the importance of He Wakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Niu Tirenī The Declaration of Independence 1835, the Doctrine of Discovery and its relationship to the Bicultural Journey.

So'otaga Misikei spoke as a youth of Samoan and Pakeha heritage and cultural identity with challenges for the future. Working together doesn't necessarily mean walk or stand together and these are identity questions that he felt needed to be explored further.

Conference members were invited to engage in small group discussion around key questions. What did you hear that resonated with you? What did you hear that surprised you? What would you offer in this space that takes us forward?

Conference members reported back from tables and outcomes from the thematic plenary were captured using a word association diagram capturing high frequency words that came out of the table discussions. Skilled artist Ruth Heta provided feedback in an illustration.



The graphic records the high frequency words from table discussions.

Sites of Special Significance

Day one of the commemorative events programme members travelled to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. They were greeted by Bishop Kito Pikaahu, and then joined the guided tours to explore Busby House, Te Runanga, and Te Rau Aroha Museum.

On day two members visited Wesleydale Church in Kaeo and the cairn. There they were greeted by Ngāti Uru and a service held led by local Anglican ministers. Members shared in a hot meal and used the time to catch up with friends they hadn't seen since the last time Conference met as a full Conference in 2018.

On day three members journeyed to the Mangungu Church and Mission House. TeRito demonstrated her aptitude with the poi; a learning she had gleaned from the service at Mangungu.



Wesleydale Church, Kaeo.



Church at Mangungu.



Conference attendees gather outside Te Whare Runanga meeting house at Waitangi Treaty Grounds.



Was it worth it?"

*Ko ahau anō tētahi i reira
I too was there*

WHARE RŪNANGA PLAQUE, 1940, A REMINDER OF THE MĀORI ROLE IN THE 1840 TREATY-MAKING

Plaque at Te Whare Runanga Waitangi Treaty Grounds. (Credit Trrudy Downes).

Viv Whimster

This confronting question surfaced twice in different places during the first two days of the Bicentenary Methodist Conference in Kerikeri. At the pilgrimage to Waitangi, we were welcomed by tangata whenua (and ua, rain) then taken through the grounds and buildings by tourist guides. Later, some of us visited the Treaty House to gain insights into life for early pākehā settlers as they tried to make Aotearoa their home.

Next door, Te Rau Aroha tells a different story in its main exhibition Te Utu o Te Kirirarunga, The Price of Citizenship. Accepting their place as citizens, spelled out in Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, many Māori took their responsibility seriously and served during British wars. They hoped that this sacrifice would be recognised through being accepted as equal citizens in their own country. However, those who returned continued to experience being disadvantaged and

marginalised. When asked "Was it worth it?" many replied that it was not. I left

the exhibition humbled to have heard this story and reflecting that their lives could be honoured by better honouring their descendants.

The second commemorative event took pilgrims to Kaeo where we were welcomed to a short service of remembrance for the start of the Methodist mission here with the arrival of Samuel and Catherine Leigh in 1822. Afterwards, rain sent many of us scurrying into the little Museum next door or staying inside the church, grateful that the downpour had not brought the flooding that regularly inundates the low-lying building. Generously fed by our hosts and dried out by the sun, we returned to Kerikeri for caucus meetings.

That evening, a third commemoration took the form of Geoff Allen's brilliant play *Amazing Love - Aroha Kaiora: Wesleydale through the eyes of Catherine Leigh*. Marion Prebble and John Goudge skilfully enabled us to enter some of the excitement and passion, the doubts and disappointments experienced by those early Methodists. We heard Catherine ask, "Was it worth it?" as they left for Sydney after little apparent success. It seems she didn't think so.

The fourth commemorative event was held at Māngungu, a Wesleyan Mission station where the largest signing of the Treaty took place. Some of us had to choose between this visit and a lay preachers gathering which was well-attended and worthwhile, so Māngungu continues to invite me personally on pilgrimage.

We who travelled from across Aotearoa to Te Tai Tokerau to the bicentenary Conference also ask - "Was it worth it?" At all Conferences, the pōwhiri and tributes to those who have died are important starting places for gathering. Time spent celebrating the ministry of those who are retiring is a way of saying, "Thank you, your ministry was worth it!" Trinity College's graduation ceremony was held at Conference this year and affirmed the hard work of students and staff. The quality of the devotions led by the Bachelor of Theology graduates reflected a deep level of theological reflection and inspiring creativity, reassuring us that the investment in Trinity is "worth it".



Four thematic plenaries separated the business sessions of Conference. Some hard conversations were avoided, leaving them for another occasion, but time taken to reach good consensus decisions was definitely worth it.

Our Bicentenary Conference; had Catherine Leigh been there to join our singing, hear reports from the Methodist Missions, note the passion of rangatahi to be part of Te Hāhi, watch us reaching forward to build bicultural relationships and work in cross-cultural congregations, would she have responded differently to the question "Was it worth it?"

Thematic plenary session on whenua and property

Carol Dale, Chair MCPC

In the whenua and property plenary session at Conference two papers were discussed regarding:

- **land stories Kōrero Papatupu Whenua and the importance of doing them and doing them well and**
- **Property - the role it plays in the church of both yesterday and moving forward.**

Property is one of the most visible and tangible presences of the church in a community, often steeped in history. Land stories will capture this history and will inform our decisions in the future.

Whenua, references the direct connection between Papatuanuku and the nourishment she provides her people. The connection is physical and spiritual and integral to the survival and wellbeing of all. Whenua is what we are, it is our core, our spirit, it is where we come from and where we are going Māori and Pakehā view property differently; land is not owned, we are Kaitiaki or custodians of our property. It is not a commodity to be traded to suit our purpose. Nothing sits in isolation from something else,

property is just one tool in a larger toolbox of things that enable the Church to worship, nurture, teach, and serve.

Property carries some of the largest risks and most complex of issues such as legal and regulatory compliance. The discussion paper talks about some of these such as seismic strengthening and the Resource Management Act. Our own rules and processes are designed to assist with identifying, managing or mitigating those. What is needed to move forward, ensuring we meet the needs at all levels?

Property is often one of the biggest financial items for a parish. Finding the money to complete work, purchase or develop property can be challenging, and often dictates the timing and scope of work, driving ministry rather than supporting it. Property is more than a church or hall, it can be social housing, urupā, commercial property or land for example. How does our property support what we do? What are the opportunities, can we take them? What do we need to be able to do that?

Those who attended the plenary session commented on the problems of keeping up with repairs and maintenance and growing insurance costs. Looking forward we need to think what can we do to help parishes with the increased burdens of costs and legal and regulatory



Carol Dale reporting to Conference via video.

compliance.

Conference agreed to Methodist Connexional Property Committee establishing a skilled national committee to develop a property strategy for the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The Committee should include both partners and consult with partner churches and report back to Conference on how our property supports our aim of promoting

the work of God now and in the future.

We also launched an exciting new initiative called "Green Grants".

The programme will offer three levels of funding for projects that address climate change and sustainability. More details will be available on the Methodist Church of New Zealand website from early December when applications open.



Law Revision at Work at Conference 2022

Ruby Manukia-Schaumkel

The Law Revision Committee was responsible for the overview of decisions at

Conference. To ensure that consensus decision-making was used for general agreement or substantial support, rather than majority. This was particularly useful during Tauwi caucus to ensure that decisions were of the mind of Conference, especially in ensuring that any opposition was prepared to accept decisions based on the good of the group after viewpoints were adequately expressed.

The Law Revision Committee worked behind the scenes to ensure that suitable language expressed the consensus of Conference. This involved a combination of interpreting the Law Book processes and procedures, and wordsmithing. A team effort ensured that every angle, possibility, and option was explored. At times it involved on-the-spot consultation with applicable members of Conference to test a position or receive consent when possible.

Listening to discussions and reading the room to test the mind of Conference required careful handling of situations to arrive at common ground. Exploring options and processes helped to navigate a way forward for the Church. The process of seeking consensus was used in caucus, brainstorming to collect ideas during the plenary sessions and presentations

The Law Revision's report to Conference highlighted the key elements and timeline proposed to put tikanga and restorative justice as the central principle of Section 8 of the Law Book - to have a restorative focus (relationship, respect, responsibility, repair, reintegration) rather than a



punitive focus.

Restorative justice sits well alongside, and is imbedded in, Te Ao Maori processes for addressing wrongdoing. It is recognised and used within parts of the formal criminal

justice system in New Zealand and abroad. Importantly, the recommendation is to apply across the Church, and as a Church - restorative justice is aligned with Christ's teachings.

A Connexional Standing Committees Review

The Law Book states that after every seven years, Conference shall undertake a review of the purpose and functions of each standing committee. Conference shall appoint a review committee and a report with recommendations be made at the succeeding Conference.

Current standing committees include the President's Committee of Advice, Pastoral Committee, Law Revision Committee and Faith and Order Committee. In addition, the Public Issues Network was reviewed in 2020 and the PAC Distribution Group is currently under review. An anomaly occurs with the Mission Resourcing and Ecumenical Boards which the Law Revision Committee should review.

A recommendation to Conference is that a review committee be appointed to gauge the current standing committees and the Professional Development Grants Committee. The terms of reference for the respective committees that need to be reviewed include the President's Committee of Advice, Pastoral Committee, Law Revision Committee, Faith and Order Committee and the Professional Development Grants Committee.

The Law Revision Committee will review the decisions of Conference that are applicable and update the Law Book.

To that end Conference celebrates the decisions for the future, especially in relation to the bicultural journey and how that reality and vision is being carried out through the Church in Aotearoa at present and into the future.

Conference 2022 A Great Family Reunion

Nana Russell,
 Chair Board of Administration

"He hoki nga mahara, Ka haere whakamua. Looking back and moving forward."

The theme for Conference could equally be the operating statement for the Board of Administration. We have a keen understanding of our responsibility to manage the assets we have inherited, and we must ensure we can meet the operational needs of the current and future church. Conference reporting for the BoA is mostly of a financial nature; largely to give Conference the confidence that the assets of the church under our auspices are being carefully and professionally managed. Because we report on so many funds, there is a perception that the BoA have the ability to find funding for various projects around the Haahi. Members needed to be reminded that actually, the BoA does not have funds to allocate.

Our Church has to operate in the secular world, and that means we have compliance issues that I know frustrate many in the wider church. It is inescapable and we are extra ordinarily blessed to have the highly skilled team at the Connexional Office making it all look easy.

One of the highlights of the BoA report is the introduction of Green Grants by MCPC. This is really the church putting its money where its mouth is. There is much to do in the Climate Justice space, and Green Grants are a small part of it. It is hoped that this fund will mean many of our buildings can be better positioned going forward and parishes can reap the rewards of lower energy costs and better efficiency.

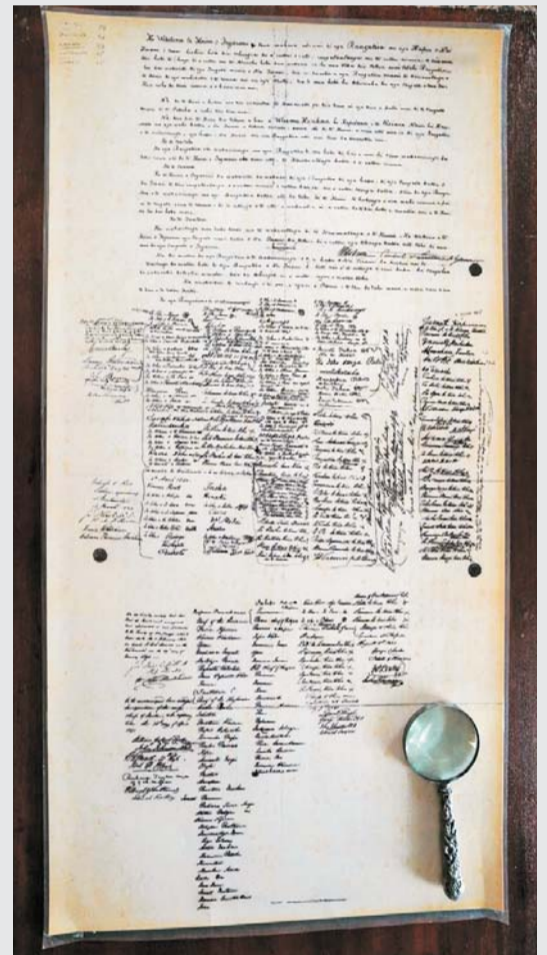
MCPC's workload is definitely on the increase as parishes that have financial concerns look to their property and plant as potential ways to address these issues. We have introduced some new ways of looking at certain types of projects to ensure a holistic view is taken. I believe this is an area that is only going to grow in terms of the projects brought to MCPC for consideration. We also now have representatives from Te Taha Maori Property Trust, which will ensure a broader view can be taken on property matters for the whole church.

Significantly, we now have a mandate from Conference to put together a team to start work on a church wide property strategy. It is my view that this work will be one of the biggest legacies we can leave for those who will come after us in managing church property. I also believe it will push the wider church to address issues of strategy as a strategy around property cannot stand in isolation. As said in the property discussion paper "Property is long term, it is not fluid and dynamic like people. As congregations change, both in size, composition, ministry and mission, property cannot change as quickly. Flexibility is required to meet specific user groups and needs ... Strategies need to be designed to address issues including ministry changing needs, maintenance and running costs, seismic strengthening, building safety, heritage and community. In some

regions it could be more effective and efficient for churches to amalgamate and sell surplus buildings. The development of key strategic criteria should be undertaken to assist with making these decisions."

Mission House Visit

Many Conference attendees went to Mangungu for their Sunday worship. It was one of the highlights of Conference for me, and I wonder how many people realise that more signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi happened at Mangungu than at Waitangi. Over 3000 people were there on February 12th 1840 for the signing. MCNZ actually owns the Mission House there. It has an interesting history, having been moved to Onehunga and back during its lifetime. This is an interesting example of just how wide ranging the assets of the church are.



A copy of the Treaty at Mission House.

Another Conference highlight was the announcement that Hui Poari has been reconstituted, and Te Aroha Rountree is the acting Tumauki. This is fantastic news for the whole church; a painful chapter can now be put in the past and we are able to move forward in a positive and constructive manner. This isn't just good news for Te Taha Maori, its good news for us all.

My final reflection about Conference is that it left me with a profound feeling of hope. We are a changing church, and that is not always easy, but we are facing it and making decisions that will help us navigate the coming decades of church life. While there is still much to do, I am really impressed with how we are living the Bi-cultural journey in a better, joyful, more open way. As Vice President TeRito said in her address to Conference, we are one big family.

And this was a great family reunion!



The View from Here

Rev David Poultney, Convenor, reflects on the life and work of the Faith and Order Committee in an evolving Church.

Many people reading this edition of *Touchstone* will have seen the title of this article and moved on. Faith and Order deals with matters which don't have the traction or interest that some issues do. An article about children and young people's ministry or the response of the Methodist Missions to the housing crisis will get more attention and that is okay.

However Faith and Order has a set of important tasks and coming out of a Conference where we have been looking back and looking forward seems a good time to look at our work.

Sometimes the charge has been laid at Faith and Order that we are "conservative". Theologically "conservative" comes in a range of types; a conservative evangelical and a conservative catholic are not the same. Some of us on Faith and Order would probably own the word conservative, in one form or another. Some of us would not. However Faith and Order has an essentially conservative aspect in that it looks to how faith, order, doctrine and worship have been expressed over time.

We have a particular role in regard to the Sacraments; Baptism and the Eucharist or Holy Communion. We are responsible for the revision of liturgies for celebrating the Sacraments but in doing so, however, we are mindful that these are not ours alone. The Sacraments are the heritage of the whole Church, virtually all Christian churches baptise and celebrate the Eucharist. What does this mean for us here and now? What does this mean for the future? Let's consider Baptism.

When it comes to Baptism it means holding true to the shared practice of Christians over time. Occasionally we are asked if the words of the baptismal formula "*I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*" can be altered to use more inclusive language about God. The answer is no we cannot because this belongs to the whole Church and a permitted departure from the traditional formula would call into question the validity of baptisms performed by this Church in the future amongst our ecumenical partners. Also we are asked from time to time about the possibility of baptizing adults who were baptised as infants who clearly have no reflection of the event and who perhaps grew up without a real connection to the Church. Again the answer is no, as baptism is a once only event. If baptism is incorporation into the body that cannot be done twice.

Order refers to the structure of governance and ministry in the Church. The question we are still engaged with about whether or not in the person of the



David Poultney and Tony Franklin Ross share a moment at Conference.

president and those people who have held the office we see a ministry of oversight personal to them and continuing after office is a question of order. How we order *Te Haahi* has evolved over time. For example Synod Superintendency used to be reserved for presbyters alone and Faith and Order defended that position as Methodist historic practice and as congruent with regional leadership in our partner churches. However we now have a diversity of practice in regards to Synod Superintendency with shared superintendency between presbyter and lay and team superintendencies of three people. The one in Waikato Waiaitiki is a case in point with a Deacon, lay person and presbyter.

From time to time Faith and Order seeks to add its voice to conversations about live ethical issues. One of the most personally satisfying contributions we have made in my time was an essay on Assisted Dying and the Christian Tradition. That came out after the death of Lucretia Seales and an ensuing private members bill to legalise assisted dying. Though that bill did not pass it was clear it was only a matter of time until the law changed; which of course it has. Though I am not sure Faith and Order is the right forum for it, I would love to see a conversation amongst those of us in ministry on our experiences of offering pastoral care to those who consider and opt for assisted dying.

Often our conversations in Faith and Order seem to be continuations of conversations from Europe and North America. They can seem to have little connection to the Pacific or to Tangata Whenua. We have a duty to engage with these issues across the whole Church and also have a duty to listen and learn to the contextualities and theologies of both Maori and Pasifika that our understanding of what it is to be Christian and Methodist in this place be enriched and deepened. There is perhaps work ahead of us in helping to bring some of these insights to the Pakeha Church. We are here for you.

Looking Back To Move Forward

Jackie McGeorge, Chair Methodist Mission and Ecumenical Board

We have "looked back to move forward" this year in the Mission and Ecumenical Board when we were asked by Conference 2021 to meet with Mission Resourcing Board to find synergies between our two organisations. After many meetings we found no common ground, however it has made our board look hard at our strategies and examine them before moving forward with the way we do mission. We will be working with a professional facilitator to relook at our Strategic Plan with a hope to have this enacted/confirmed, or if necessary approved by Conference 2023.

Our guest at Conference this year was Murry Overton, National Director of Christian World Service. Murray spoke of the great connection between our church both nationally and at local parish level in the support given to those in need in the Pacific and at times, the world. Murray spoke of the rich history since the Methodist Church was instrumental in the formation of CWS and its unwavering confidence each year especially in the support for the Christmas Appeal.

Our director Rev Tony Franklin Ross talked about his involvement ecumenically at a national and international level and his work in the World Council of Churches when they met in Germany this year. We also shared news about our overseas mission engagement. The report was accepted without question thereby affirming our work this year.

This year Rev Dr Terry Wall steps down from the Board after 10 years faithful service. We will miss Terry's institutional knowledge and understanding of Methodism in the world.

Conference Highlights

We witnessed great respectfulness amongst our many cultures as we visited various historic Methodist sites around Northland to celebrate the 200 year anniversary of our first mission

station. The re-energisation of Te Taha Māori who have completed their work with the commissioner and re-established their own leadership under Hui Pōari was uplifting. As was having our rangatahi leading four plenary sessions; these covered topics of Bi Cultural Journey, Historic Abuse and Safeguarding for the Future, Whenua and Property and finally, Moving Forward in Faith.

Personal highlights included the graduation of my cousin Richard Small from Trinity Theological College, along with a large number of his fellow cohorts, celebrated in front of the whole church. The granting of four Bachelor of Theology degrees by the College for the first time was a very special moment in the life of our Church. Congregational singing always lifts the spirits and Methodists do this especially well.

The location of the Conference at the Turner Centre in Kerikeri was special being close to historical landmarks that told the story of our beginnings as a Church in New Zealand as well as being significant for our nation. We were well looked after by the locals who ensured that we were comfortable and well-nourished with quality catering. I also extend a big thanks to the people behind the scenes who ensured Conference ran smoothly.

Youth Call for Action

Conference again wrestled with what it meant to support the work of the Tauwiwi Children, Youth and Families Ministries National Coordinator position. Across the floor of Conference we debated the report from the Mission Resourcing Directors. It became clear that funding this position was causing issues every year and our young people at Conference asked the question of what support for their work looked like. Were we willing to put resources into their work in the form of secure funding for the stipend of their dedicated worker?

They made two valid points. The first was the cost of attending Conference being met by a young person, could actually look like a week's net pay. The second was where was their place to stand; a church or hall that they could call their own. It was confronting stuff and Conference agreed to set up a team to look at finding dedicated funds for this work, initially by looking at PAC as a source.



Methodist Alliance Spearheading Social Change at all Levels

The Methodist Alliance Co-convenors, Rev Dr Arapera Ngaha and Jill Hawkey, provided a summary of the mahi done by the Methodist Alliance members during the last financial year. Covid-19 continued to impact the mahi with staff absences and having to adjust how services and projects were delivered. Despite this, significant work was undertaken with over 4,200 families, supported through our members services. A further 2,000 people were supported with their housing. Acknowledgement and thanks were given for the continued support from parishes and individuals throughout the Connexion for this mahi.

An overview of the Methodist Alliance strategic plan was presented - the full plan can be found on the Methodist Church website.

A history of the Methodist Missions bicultural journey since the 1980s was portrayed via a video with members describing where they are now in their bicultural journey.

Throughout the past year the working group campaigning to increase benefit levels and abatement rates created a discussion paper on wealth distribution and income security.

Rich and valuable feedback from synods, parishes and individuals helped shape and refine the Conference report and suggested decisions relating to it. The working group also presented a video on the realities of life on a benefit. The video included people with lived experience of life on a benefit sharing their struggles to make ends meet. Thanks were given to everyone who generously shared their personal stories in the video.

As well as approving the appointment of board members to the various Mission Boards, and acknowledging those board members that retired over the past year, Conference passed the following decisions relating to wealth distribution and income security:

1. Actively encourage Government to fully implement all the recommendations of the Welfare Expert Advisory Group to provide immediate response to inequity.
2. The President write to the Prime Minister actively encouraging Government to find new ways to redistribute wealth via the tax system.
3. Conference directs the Methodist Alliance to produce resources, in partnership with allied groups, for facilitating robust discussions within parishes and the wider MCNZ on wealth distribution.
4. Encourage parishes and Methodist entities to use these resources leading up to the election in discussion with local candidates and key Ministers.

The Methodist Alliance had representatives on the working group that drafted the housing action plan for the MCNZ in response to the housing crisis. The plan provided a theology of housing including the verse below which describes God's vision for housing the multitudes, allowing everyone the right to a place, a space, a home.

"Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord of the thousands has spoken."

Micah 4:4

The vine and the fig tree are symbolic of the shelter and abundance of life that housing security can bring to the homeless, marginalised and vulnerable of our hāpori (community). The theological imperative that every person has the right to a home is essential to our collective response. However, this imperative is not without implications for our understanding of land and kaitiakitanga (intergenerational sustainability), and for our commitment to the church's bicultural journey. The telling of our Kōrero Papatupu Whenua - land stories links community to the whenua.

The plan outlined how we have responded to date to the housing crisis and identified opportunities to increase our impact in the future.

Conference made the following decisions relating to the housing action plan which included:

- Asking synods and other Connexional entities to identify land which could be made available for social housing.
- Before any Methodist owned land is sold, consideration is given as to whether the land is able to be used for social housing.
- Establishing a Methodist Social Housing Group
- The criteria and a process for distribution of funds from Grafton Downs dedicated for social housing.
- MTA & CB&L will be asked to explore the total value of low interest loans they can make available to for Methodist social housing and advise the Methodist Social Housing Group.
- MTA to work with their major investors to explore the establishment of a specific social housing investment fund.
- Actively work with NZCCSS to identify and support further possible ecumenical responses to the housing crisis.

It was questioned at Conference, whether the Methodist Trust Associations investment in the for-profit residential aged care sector was socially responsible, as these models do not offer capital sharing with the elderly residents. Tamahere Eventide and Christchurch Methodist Mission are the two remaining Methodist entities which continue to provide residential care for the elderly in an increasingly competitive market. Conference agreed to consider this investment with a view to divesting.

NGĀ PURAPURA WETERIANA • METHODIST ALLIANCE

Aotearoa New Zealand not Paradise for All

Kiwis often refer to Aotearoa New Zealand as paradise, or Godzone and for many it is. However, for others it is not.

Bryan Perry's report on child poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand for the Ministry of Social Development was released in October. The report found the rate of material hardship for children had fallen from 13.5 percent in 2017 to 10.6 percent in 2020. That is great, but I am not sure it is worthy of celebration. These rates are still above the medium European rate which fell from 12.3 percent to 10.3 percent in the same time period.

Having 130,000 children living in material hardship throughout our motu should be an impetus for immediate action.

"Children's perspectives on the wicked problem of child poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand: a wearable camera study" was the title of a recent article in The New Zealand Medical Journal. The University of Otago study gave 168 randomly selected children in Wellington aged between 11 and 13 a body camera that they wore for four consecutive days during their time outside of school. The study showed the reality of life from a child's perspective and revealed a sharp

contrast with the children living in high socioeconomic deprivation more likely to "consume sweets, less likely to have their own rooms, and more likely to live in mouldy homes but children in low socioeconomic deprivation often had their own personal space and bowls of fruit on spacious countertops."

Professor Louise Signal, the senior author of the study, said that poverty in Aotearoa permanently impacts children's health and wellbeing and is no way to build a thriving nation. She said, "It's shameful we have child poverty in this country of plenty where we have such a good economy. We don't need to have children in poverty." She is right.

Bryan Perry's report on child poverty found that the material and social deprivation rate for sole parent households in Aotearoa is 29 percent a significant drop from 34 percent in 2017, but sadly this is a full 10 percent higher than the medium European rate for sole parent households. New Zealand also has a relatively high proportion of sole parent households compared with European countries.

Days after this report was released, news reported the story of children found eating food scraps out of a rubbish bag

in Kaitaia. A girl aged about five and her brother, aged about two years, were spotted by Stacey-Lee Ropiha and her sister who were driving past. The sisters stopped and asked the children if they were ok and offered them some food. Stacey-Lee reported the chance meeting to the Police, who said they would investigate and do a welfare check.

In the same news article Kelvin Davis, Minister for Children, is quoted as saying that "children roaming the streets of Kaitaia had been a long-standing problem dating back to before he was a principal."

The Minister went on to say how the government had increased family incomes and the free healthy school lunch programme was "putting food in the bellies of our tamariki."

I found no outrage, shame, concern, or sense of responsibility in his comments about two small children searching for food in an open rubbish bag. We should all be outraged and ashamed that this is happening in our country. We share the responsibility to act to make a difference in the lives of these children and the 129,298 children that are also living in poverty.

The gap between the rich and poor is widening and our current economic

policies compound and entrench these inequities. Part of Wesley Community Action's submission to the Productivity Commission was quoted in their overview report - the only organisation to be quoted in this report. Wesley Community Action said,

"The current welfare system is broken and no longer fit-for-purpose. Our system that is meant to stop people moving into persistent disadvantage was designed for a different environment and reflects a world view that is not reflective of our Te Tiriti o Waitangi honouring commitment. Related to this is a lack of a vital role for people/communities experiencing disadvantage to be agents for their own change. The current system supports the status quo (persistent disadvantage). The current policy approach is not geared to embrace the interconnection between environmental, economic, social, cultural and political domains and how they support wellbeing."

Colin Hamlin, a Wesley Community Action board member, leads the working group that is campaigning to increase benefit levels and abatement rates. We as Weteriana can take the lead in making life in Aotearoa New Zealand paradise for everyone.



Celebrating 200 years of alleviating hardship across Aotearoa.

Di MacDonald,
Lifewise

The Methodist Church of New Zealand, Te

Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa stands as a pillar of hope for social justice and equality. With a mission to provide practical help to those in need, while inspiring hope toward a future where all can flourish, the church has devoted itself to fostering equity and dignity for the people of Aotearoa.

Throughout its history, the church has launched many initiatives to uplift those experiencing hardship. From the Helping Hand Mission charities, to the temperance cause targeting alcohol misuse of the early 1900s, Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa strives to create a just and inclusive society in which all people flourish.

Today, alongside organisations like Methodist Mission Northern and Lifewise, The Methodist Church of New Zealand continues to carry these values forward into the changing landscape of Aotearoa's 21st century.

With four churches and a range of community spaces nestled in the heart of Auckland's inner-city, the Methodist church offers a range of social services including early childhood education, mental health and addiction, housing,

LIFEWISE

poverty, and healthcare.

East Street Hall is currently home to Al-Anon, and

Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Peace Foundation. Visitors from the nearby Merge Café are welcome in East Street Hall for services such as Orange Sky, who provide clothing and laundry services. The hall also hosts digital upskilling workshops, and various community engagement programmes run by independent organisations.

Merge Café, born from Methodist Mission Northern, was established after acknowledging the need for change from providing free kai through soup kitchen to a café where street whānau could go for food and practical support.

Now run by Lifewise, Merge Café is a hub for the community where those needing help can get it, while also providing subsidised, free, or full priced meals to anyone who walks through the doors.

Lifewise, has worked alongside the Methodist Church for 150 years, running community initiatives that not only support those in need, but inspire and empower them to live interdependently.

Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa is committed to improving the lives of New Zealanders and endeavours to carry its heritage and vision into the future for generations to come.

A Day in the Life of a Mana Whānau Family Worker

Mana Whānau is an in-home intensive parenting support programme that supports families/whānau to stay together. The programme was designed to keep tamariki who are at imminent risk of being taken into care by Oranga Tamariki, to stay living safely with their own whānau and in their own communities.

It was inspired by evidence that tamariki generally do better in the care of their whānau and by the strongly held conviction that there are safe alternatives to removing tamariki from their whānau.

Mana Whānau is offered by Lifewise in Auckland and Wesley Community Action in Wellington. The programme focusses on reducing risk of harm to tamariki instead of removing tamariki from their homes. Staff work intensively with whānau in their homes for up to 65 hours a week. The times and the number of hours worked are those that suit whānau. This can include early mornings, evenings and weekends. The programme is an authentically whānau-led process, flexible and tailored to the needs of each whānau.

Asha Innes has been working in the Mana Whānau team at Lifewise for three and a half years.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

As the Mana Whānau programme is an intensive inhome parenting programme we get to spend a lot of time with the families that we are working with. My role allows me the time to form a relationship and make a connection with whānau. It is throughout this process that trust is built and families become open and receptive to support and change. I like that it is a whānau-led programme and they identify what their stressors/challenges are, and together we come up with some goals that they would like to achieve. It is very much about what they want - not what we think they need!

What does a typical day look like for you?

At Family Services we always start our day with a karakia, waiata and a check in to see what we're all up to for the day. Typically the day would be spent with whānau in their home working on goals that they have identified they would like support with.

My role is flexible so I work around when whānau need me the most. This could include coming in the evenings to support with bedtime routines, which can be the most stressful part of the day for some, or supporting whānau to implement rules and boundaries in the home. I may be supporting whānau to a counselling session one day or to a medical appointment the next. If I'm not with whānau then I am in the office writing up notes and finding resources and information that can be useful for whānau.

What is on your to-do list?

Shortly I will be begin working with a new whānau so I will be preparing for that, and as we get closer to the Christmas



Asha Innes, Mana Whānau Family Worker at Lifewise.

and holiday period, working with my team as to how our service can best support our families in the community.

What do you love most about your job?

In my role we like to celebrate the small wins with our families. This could be Mum learning a new positive parenting strategy, putting it into action and getting a good result.

I also love to see the positive growth in people. They may have once been at a stage in their lives where they faced many challenges where drugs, alcohol and domestic violence were a part of their lives and now they've left that all behind and are learning, growing and wanting to make some good choices for their own lives and that of their children.

What have you learned since you started?

The more I have worked with different whānau over the years, it reinforces to me that everyone has strengths, skills and potential, and as social workers we should always focus on building on their strengths rather than focusing on the negative. When you emphasise the good stuff, it builds up people's confidence, self-worth and independence.

If you could change two things about the world, what would you change & why?

That is a big question that I have a long list for but two that come to mind would be:

- Education should be free from primary school right up to university and accessible to all children all over the world. Education gives children and youth the knowledge and skills they need to face life's challenges. Education provides opportunities, and it can also be a key driver for reducing poverty.
- NO WAR! It is pointless. It destroys communities and families, causes psychological harm to adults and children, and death and destruction to our planet.

If you could give one piece of advice, what would it be?

Before you pass judgement on a person's situation or choices they make, ask yourself, "What could have led this individual to this point in their lives? What is their story? You never know so please, show a little empathy.

What is worth smiling about right now?

The thought of Christmas and summer approaching. The beach, bbq's, activities and time spent with my own whānau!



WESLEY COLLEGE CELEBRATES OUTSTANDING STUDENT SUCCESS



Wesley College Dux Ludorum 2022
Blues in Sport
Margaret Lolohea Saiti



Top Level 1 Student
Alana Edmonds



BIDRO Cup for
Top Academic Achievement at Level 2
Kalisi-Pakiamala Fissiahi



Wesley College Proxime Accessit
Christopher Lo Tam



Wesley College DUX
Troy Wigley

Drama Christi 75th Anniversary



Nativity scene from the play *Back and Beyond*.

Daphne Pilaar reports on a joyful and proud celebration of 75 years of Drama Christi held on 5 and 6 November.

Under the direction of Don and Tim (Allona) Priestley, Wesley Church drama group put on its first play in 1947.

Consequently, the members of the church who took part were keen to experience more of 'this art'. The group took the name 'Drama Christi' in 1949 and has produced drama and dance performances every year since.

Over time an increasing proportion of

Drama Christi participants came from outside Wesley church and its productions were performed in a wide range of locations around Wellington and beyond.

For our 75th anniversary we created and performed a play *Back and Beyond*, which was an entertaining journey through time with scenes

from some of our most significant productions. We performed pieces of dance drama from *Navidad Nuestra* in the church service on Sunday and shared reflections on the impact of Drama Christi over the years. Drama Christi has held firm to its kaupapa of presenting performances of ideas and ideals and

being a community where all are welcome and encouraged. It is free to belong and we ensure there are parts for people of all levels of experience and confidence. We have at least one production per year suitable for children to participate in. There have been members who had their first acting experience with Drama Christi and went on to become professional actors or directors.

Celebrations with past and present members included an anniversary dinner on the Saturday evening.

Participants thoroughly enjoyed catching up with each other, sharing memories and stories and perusing displays of photos, props and costumes.

Having Jenny Patrick and Dinah Priestley, daughters of Tim and Don Priestley, speak at the dinner was a special highlight. They told stories of their early years acting with Drama Christi and of their parents. As they said "Mum would be proud" of Drama Christi still going strong 75 years on.

Auckland Ecumenical Lay Preachers' Gathering

In November, Linda Hall and Doreen Sunman facilitated a workshop for the Auckland ecumenical lay preachers' gathering at St Paul's Methodist Church, Remuera. Doreen reports on a workshop that opened with participants sharing their faith journeys and ways in which Covid restrictions changed their churches' lives.

Church members learned new technology skills to access zoom services, meetings and Bible studies. Services were emailed to members as documents with embedded YouTube clips.

Creative ways to come together included drive-through take-away communion and outdoor services. Pastoral care consisted of phone calls and printed services delivered to letterboxes for those with no computer.

Funerals and weddings were cancelled, postponed or greatly reduced in size. Mask wearing hindered communication because we were unable to see one another smile.

Foodbanks continued, observing restrictions. Op Shops were unable to open. However, donations piled up at the door as people used the lockdowns to have a "spring clean".

We brainstormed ideas for a service on our theme: "Reconnecting with God" - and each other. Suggestions included Bible readings and hymns. Bridges or team sports were two themes suggested for the young people but we ran out of time before we could list ideas for a reflection for the adults!

Our prayers would include thanks for our government's response to the pandemic and the work done by essential workers; confession of our negative thoughts; prayers for world leaders, the medical profession, students whose education had been disrupted, people cut off from friends



At their Auckland workshop, lay preachers celebrated Brenda Skinner's 89th birthday and acknowledged her 65 years of lay preaching.

and family in rest homes and hospitals.

We concluded by considering the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury written in April 2021. "The pandemic has confronted us with our deep interdependence. Each of us is essential,

and none of us is alone in the building of God's glory. If, in the power of the spirit, we bear one another's weight, lift one another up and stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us, we will begin to build community."

Choir Showcases Musical Flair of Two Northland Families



The Northland Choir.

At Conference during the Time of Recognition service four retiring ministry leaders were invited by rangatahi Sui Williams-Lemi and Michael Lemanu to reflect on their best and worst ministry moments.

A choir group of nine children, accompanied by their parents appeared on stage. They had been waiting patiently in the wings for a gap in the Q&A session. Their performance bought joy, laughter and rousing applause to the auditorium.

George and Ofa Sikulu of the Methodist Warkworth Parish travelled to Kerikeri with their four children aged eight to 14 and another parish family with five children aged five to 14 to perform at Conference. The choir was created just two weeks before at the suggestion of Kuli Fisiiahi. George says, "We encourage them. They love to sing and they are all very confident. My eldest daughter is learning to play the violin".

As the troupe exited stage right, Sui suggested to the young stars, "I heard you are getting shouted McDonalds. I think you should ask for an upsize."



Let hope FLOW this Christmas

Christmas is a time for children, for food and for gifts. Together we sing carols and read Scripture, celebrating God's great gift of love for the world. At church we pray for each other and for peace. We remember those people who do not have water, food and justice.



People like Caleb in Uganda live on the frontline of the climate crisis. More than half of the world's people are 'highly vulnerable' to its effects according to a recent report. At Christmas our focus is on hope and the belief that love can transform the world. In this year's Christian World Service Christmas Appeal, we are sharing stories of the people facing the challenge to survive. Global unity and action are needed to address the use of fossil fuels, but in local communities, people are taking practical steps to meet their urgent needs.

People on the frontline need assistance with water, food, shelter and more, to replace what they have already lost. Climate change is contributing to the loss of life and livelihoods. It is also a driver of conflict. Supporting families and communities to adapt to our changed environment in ways that respect and honour their dignity is critical as global temperatures continue to rise.

In our Christmas Appeal you can read about Caleb and his grandmother in southwest Uganda. With their own water tank they will be able to have clean water for drinking, cooking and hygiene. They can use the grey water on their garden. Most of all they will be safer from waterborne disease and Caleb will be able to go to school more often rather than making the long trek to find dangerous, dirty water.

We deeply appreciate your wonderful support to people around the world in need of food, water and justice. Thank you for your generosity and in supporting the amazing work our partners do in this world that God loves. Through your giving and their skilful work, people get the help they need today and the skills they need for the days ahead.

Please give generously to the Christmas Appeal and Let hope flow this Christmas.

Happy Christmas

Hari Kirihimete

Nga mihi nui

Murray Overton, National Director

"... and the life was the light of all people" John 1:4b

From the President

In Advent, when we recall the coming of Christ into our world to help us in our need, it is a good time to remember how God comes to all in need whether that need is spiritual, emotional or material.

My approach to being President of the Methodist Church for the next two years is one of service, following Christ who came not to be served but to serve. This theme fits very well with the style of evangelism shown by Christian World Service. It is often frustrating when we hear the news of disasters, especially in the Pacific region, and feel powerless to help. CWS is one of the best ways of giving the help we know we are called to give as Christians, and so I urge all congregations and members to offer their support to the work CWS does on our behalf to show the same loving service that mirrors that of Christ himself.

Rev Peter Taylor, President of the Methodist Church.

Caleb's Story

Every night Caleb and his grandmother pray for a rainwater tank for their home in southwest Uganda. Like too many children, Caleb spends a good part of his day fetching water for the household. During the rainy season he walks two kilometres to a rock dam, but once the short season is over, he has to walk four kilometres to a spring and when that dries up, it is six kilometres to the river. Carrying a full 20 litre can is no easy matter, especially when he is hungry or sick with another water-borne disease like the typhoid that took his sister's life.

The water in the region is heavily mineralised and often brown. Without this water, there would be nothing to drink. Collecting wood for cooking and the water for drinking and washing is his job. If he gets back to the home he shares with his grandmother in time, he can go to school. It's hard to go to school when there is not enough water to clean himself. Caleb misses so many days that he is always behind.

Caleb was only five years old when his father died from AIDS. It took his mother two years later, so he and an older sister moved in with his grandmother while his other three siblings moved in with an aunt. Now 13 years old, he has already lost his sister to typhoid from the dangerous water. Sometimes his neighbours will share water with the family or they can catch it in plastic containers when it rains.

His grandmother is getting older and finds it harder to care for Caleb and his three younger cousins who live



Caleb with his grandmother.

with them. Like many in the region they grow a few bananas to provide a little cash income. The bananas grow well in the dry region and can survive the rain that hits the hard ground, uprooting smaller crops. Every year the weather gets drier and the rains if they come, are more hazardous.

The family has faced so many challenges, but they hold on to the hope of safe, clean water. For nine years his grandmother has been saving a few coins at the monthly meeting of her caregivers' association so she can pay for half the cost. At the group meetings, members discuss local concerns and learn about better healthcare and ways to improve their livelihoods.

"Our grandmother taught us how to wash our hands thoroughly and regularly because she learnt in her group," says Caleb.

Thanks to the Centre for Community Solidarity the family has the support of the local association members. Best of all Caleb knows their turn will come. With their own water tank, they will be healthier and he can go to school.

"The Centre for Community Solidarity unreservedly thanks CWS and the lovely, generous and compassionate people from New Zealand for non-stop support to the vulnerable communities in Isingiro living in water stressed conditions hit hard by climate change".

About the Christmas Appeal

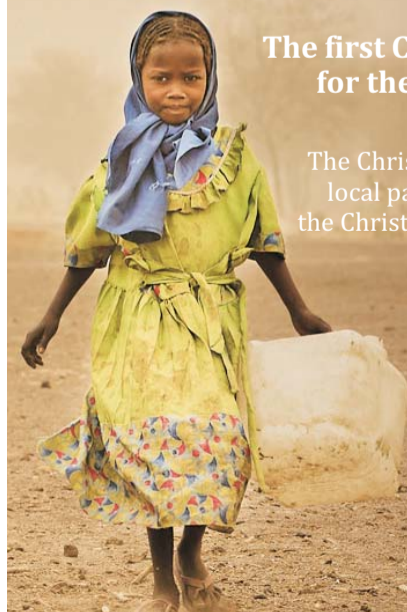
The first Christmas Appeal was launched by Archbishop West-Watson for the National Council of Churches in 1945. The appeal assisted people in war-torn Greece.

The Christmas Appeal supports the core work of Christian World Service, funding its local partners to address the causes of poverty and injustice every day. In this way, the Christmas Appeal shares resources with people who need water, food and justice.

Through good community development, people can live with dignity and have a say in matters that affect them.

Christian World Service is the aid and development agency of its five partner churches, including the Methodist Church of Aotearoa New Zealand General Secretary Tara Tautari represents the church on the CWS Board. National Director Murray Overton welcomed the opportunity to attend Conference. CWS is a founding member of ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together), a faith-based coalition made up of more than 140 agencies and churches working in over 120 countries.

Christian World Service is a registered charitable entity. Charities Act 2005 registration CC22288. All donations of \$5 or more are tax deductible.



On the frontline of the climate crisis, people need water.



Raising the Call for Climate Justice in the Pacific

The Pacific Conference of Churches has been relentless in voicing the cry of their peoples for climate justice.

It was one of the earliest organisations advocating for global action to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees and also in starting discussions on resettlement for those with no choice. It participates in local, regional and international negotiations to make sure Pacific voices are heard.

Climate justice is the first priority of its members, helping people to plan and prepare for more intense disasters. It meets with local communities to discuss the way forward, making sure that women's voices are heard and the people most affected have a say in their own future.



Supporting small farmers

CEPAD (the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua) works with urban and rural communities to improve their lives and livelihoods. Its agricultural specialists train local promoters in new agro-ecological techniques to share with their villages. CEPAD supplies seeds and plants from its nurseries and other materials so they have water.

The Local Development Committee supported by CEPAD brings the people together to plan for disasters like hurricanes, build small dams and organise practical help for the whole community. When disaster strikes, CEPAD may supply water or other humanitarian supplies.



Building rainwater tanks

In Uganda the Centre for Community Solidarity works through a network of 25 village associations made up of people caring for children affected by HIV and AIDS. It works in very poor communities in an area chronically short of water. Each group meets monthly, and members contribute what they can afford to a savings scheme.

When funding from Christian World Service arrives, CCS allocates the tanks to each association. Members decide who will get them by lottery. CCS orders the materials and organises the local people to build each tank. Each tank has a padlock and its contents are treated with great care for in this arid region, water is precious.



Finding Water in Palestine

Water is highly prized in much of the world and therefore a source of conflict. Although Gaza sits on an underground aquifer, much of the water is polluted or controlled by Israel. Residents are lucky if the water runs once a day and sometimes not at all when there is no electricity to run the pump.

In the West Bank Israeli authorities limit the amount of water Palestinians' can use, diverting more to the illegal settlements. The authorities have blocked access to traditional water sources and make it difficult to replace water infrastructure.

The Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees has had some success in negotiating water improvements with funds donated from overseas partners including CWS. Access to water is a human right that must be upheld.



TALK WATER

- 1 in 4 people still need access to safe drinking water.
- 1 in 3 people need basic handwashing facilities in their homes.
- 6 billion people need safe sanitation.
- The number of weather-related disasters - floods, droughts, storms and extreme temperatures - has increased by a factor of five over the past 50 years.
- Since 2000, flood-related disasters have increased by 134% and the number and duration of droughts have increased by 29%.

Let hope FLOW this Christmas

DONATE TODAY
christmasappeal.org.nz

With thanks to ACT Alliance, Centre for Community Solidarity, CEPAD, Community World Service Asia, Mark Davey, Pacific Conference of Churches and Paul Jeffrey for images.

www.christmasappeal.org.nz



The Word Became Flesh and Live Among Us – God is With Us

Motekiai Fakatou reflects on John 1:1-14

The Advent season is the beginning of the church calendar year in which, every follower of Christ is encouraged to reflect on the message of hope by John the Baptist, *"In the beginning was the Word... In Him was life, and the life was the light of all people... the Word became flesh and live among us ... full of grace and truth."* (Jn 1:1, 4, 14a).

The opening paragraph of the prologue (vs.1-5) describes the person and work of the Word in a number of brief but highly significant statements.

The first statement echoes the opening words

of Genesis, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...' (Gen 1:1). As God was in the beginning prior to the creation of the world. This implies something to be stated explicitly: that the word partakes of divinity.

The following which I called the significant statement, *"the Word made flesh and live among us... full of grace and truth,"* expresses the Word who was with God and who was God became flesh, a human being.

The human being is Jesus Christ who is eternal; the Word never had a beginning. He is personal and divine: with God, means He

enjoys intimate fellowship with the Father and made his dwelling among us.

In the Old Testament OT, dwelling, tabernacle, and glory all refer to God taking residence in the temple. Now God's Son dwells with his people in the person of Jesus Christ.

John mentioned in vs 6-8, John the Baptist. He is the reflector of the Light, preaching one single message of repentance to prepare the way for Christ. The purpose of John's ministry was to bear witness to Jesus' true identity.

According to John, Jesus' identity, *"In Him was life, and the life was the light of all people... full of grace and truth."* He is the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it vs5.

Many forms of darkness engulfed nations,

communities, churches, families, and individuals. But as we celebrate his coming this Christmas, we must take courage and seize the opportunity to declare His presence the Word is with us full of grace and truth regardless of our circumstances.

What is our darkness, challenges, and adversities we bear? Let us draw strength from his presence as He is the Word in Him was life and the life was the light of the world which hold the power to dispel any form of darkness.

May the peace of the promised child, Jesus Christ our Saviour the Word full of grace and truth, breathe joy and goodwill into our churches, communities and our families. As we celebrate Christmas we continue to face our adversities but choose to trust God's promise through Christ the Word of life.

Saying Goodbye

Rev Rob Ferguson

I've been a little preoccupied these last two months. Ever since a surgeon in green swabs sat on the end of the bed and gave me the news that I have a short time to live. Sharpens the mind that does. I began thinking about the ways to say goodbye. To whom? To what? Turns out it's to everything.

Dr Garry delivered a gift. I've begun a series of saying goodbye to people, and to the earth. What does it mean to say "Goodbye"? God be with you. Is it a blessing, a declaration of farewell? A "You go on, I'll stay here"? Does it mean something final? Does its meaning differ depending on circumstance? I've said it often without pondering its multiple meanings. Now, it has a reality it hasn't had. It's not a trite "See you later" because I might not. It's becoming a sacred ritual of thanks and departure. Goodbye.

I've had a hugely interesting number of conversations around these issues in the last few weeks. It turns out we have a variety of responses to a seemingly final goodbye. A common response is to

deny a sense of final parting from each other. We'll meet again. In God. Like The Repair Shop commonality: "Mum's looking down on us". Then there's another common point of view: death is the end, and any sense of continuing life is found in the way our DNA lives on forever in our ancestors. The common factor is the sense that we have a life after parting. The conversation would be around the form that might take.

Humans are born to be bonded to each other it seems. The idea of total separation is not comfortable for us. At the point of death then, we search for a comfort - a way to strengthen us, so that we don't simply disappear. We talk to our deceased folk; we recall our close friends. Sometimes we invoke a sense of God, sometimes we don't. One of my children and I were having a deep conversation about this recently. Her plaintive cry was, "What if I want to talk to you and I can't find you?" And there is the question. Because we want to retain a sense of continuing presence, even if we don't want to invoke God. Or even if we do.

Goodbye is both salutation and blessing. It holds within it the tension of a reluctant parting. God be with you.

Goodbye.

Nothing is Harder than Doing Nothing

Rev Dr Mary Caygill

For much of my life it's fair to say I could well be characterised as being a 'driven' person. Growing up, I often felt I was driven to achieve and emulate what older brothers and sister were doing academically and musically.

At the completion of my secondary school studies, I was accepted at the youngest age possible to begin registered general and maternity nursing studies at Christchurch Hospital. Within that profession I further developed my abilities to be goal and task oriented, to 'put my head down' and focus clearly on achieving tasks. Moving into theological training as a candidate for presbyteral ministry and on to stationed appointments within the Methodist Church of New Zealand, within the settings of parish, theological college and various leadership positions within the wider Methodist Connexion, I was able to extend and offer my energies and gifts to a multiplicity

of 'doing' tasks.

Looking back, I am clear that my 'driveness' came at a cost of not always balancing my inner developmental and spiritual needs of giving expression to my being - if you like my 'beingness'. Taking the time and growing the capacity to sit still and in the words of Thomas Merton, "be what one has become, which is what one does not know and does not need to know. ... [discovering] the 'self' that is found after other partial and exterior selves have been discarded as masks."

I have now intentionally embarked on my 'second-half' life journey where I am seeking to be mindful of the need to intentionally discover and nurture my more contemplative self, thus engaging with my 'being' and its interactions with both inner and outer worlds.

A friend recently recommended I read a book by American author Jenny Odell, an artist and writer at Stanford University, California titled *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*. (Melville House Publishing, 2019). I must confess reading is slow, not because of the material being difficult to read, rather, the points

of personal connection with the material keep causing me to pause, question and take stock. In essence her stimulating and passionate writing is a call to re-learn how we might look and pay more careful attention to the world around us and the very nature of our essential connectedness.

"Nothing is harder to do than nothing. In a world where our value is determined by our productivity, many of us find our every last minute captured, optimized, or appropriated as a financial resource by the technologies we use daily. We submit our free time to numerical evaluation, interact with algorithmic versions of each other, and build and maintain personal brands. For some, there may be a kind of engineer's satisfaction in the streamlining and networking of our entire lived experience. And yet a certain nervous feeling, of being overstimulated and unable to sustain a train of thought, lingers. Though it can be hard to grasp before it disappears behind the screen of distraction, this feeling is in fact urgent. (ix)"

You may well find as I am discovering a resonance of mind and heart. It's well worth reading on.

A prayer from the opening devotions during the business days of Conference

Deacon - Margaret Birtles

Loving God, I thank you that we have gathered at conference, together as family.

I thank you for the presence of the Holy Spirit in all our deliberations and discussions.

We go from here to our own families, our church families, and the communities in which we live.

I ask that you challenge us as church, to be open to ways to meet the needs of our communities and show your love to all those we meet. As your servants, may our ministry be one of supporting all, and showing Christ's love as we serve the needs of all people in the name of Christ.

Grant us travelling mercies as we return to our homes, and bless each one, as we await your guidance for the future.

*In Jesus name I pray,
Amen.*





My Journey Forward: Tarati Tia

Preface: Arapera Ngaha

Tarati Tia, Kaikarakia in Waikato Rohe shares her reflections on the commemorative events of Conference 2022. Although Tarati has connections to the north, this was her first visit to these places, hearing of our close Weteriana connections. She shares her gratitude for the opportunity to engage in these memorable events.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of 200 years ago, you are the same God who journeys with us today.

We share our gratitude and voice our thanks for the many blessings that you offered to our ancestors and continue to do for us.

Guide us always that you might be beside us, be ahead of us and behind us guarding us from all that might lead us astray, but always helping us to be your servants in our own communities today.

Guide us we pray.

Amen

Reflection: Tarati Tia

Day one and we've come together at the Waitangi Treaty grounds for the Waitangi pilgrimage. Humidity and rain dogged our arrival but as Methodists from across the motu converged at the reception area, expectation was high; acquaintances

renewed and new friendships, forged.

I missed the guided tour as I headed in the opposite direction, to the Museum. One of the Waitangi staff gave me a map of the grounds, and description of the terrain, and time and distance between points of interest.

I decided to wait at the café for everyone's return. I also suggested golf carts (or the like) be offered to patrons that may struggle with mobility issues or low energy levels. delicious scone (shared with local birdlife #didnotsingfortheirsupper) and ginger and kawakawa tea, looking at the tour map, I realised the café was right next to my waka Ngātokimatawhāorua. I had to get closer and take a photo with it. That made the whole trip worth it for me.

Day two had us meet at Kaeo-Kerikeri Union Parish on another humid, wet morning. Ngāti Uru welcomed us and shared historic kōrero of the first Missionaries; and sharing of the gospel i raro i te korowai o te Rangatira a Patuone. The site of the first mission (Wesleydale) is significant, marked by a fabulous stone cairn.

The play *Amazing Love / Aroha Kaiora* performed by actors, John Goudge as Samuel Leigh and Marion Prebble as



Tarati Tia at Waitangi Treaty Grounds.

Catherine Leigh was captivating; and their waiata was strongly supported by the mass Methodist audience. Ngā mihi ki a koutou katoa.

Day four saw us overlooking the Hokianga Harbour in the quiet village of Horeke, Northland. The location is uncluttered and peaceful with a history of great importance to Methodism and Aotearoa. The small church was filled to

overflowing and the unity and camaraderie between all attendees was palpable. This was true throughout all commemorative events.

Our itinerary for the Conference was full and orderly, and ensured the smooth flow of events.

College Graduation service, as I sat uncomfortably onstage in the front row alongside Sharon Waaka and Jill Tahere, I thought, had I not been attending the Conference, I would have much preferred to waive the ceremony and have the tohu sent to me through the mail. However, as I looked across at Arapera Ngaha, and Te Aroha Rountree with smiles as wide as the ocean; and thought about our ruruhi supporting from the wings ... all who saw us as Te Taha Māori representing the bi-cultural relationship, I thought, "It is not about you, Tarati. It is about all others who have put their faith and trust in you to achieve the vision to spread Christ's transforming love out in the community".

Conference 2022 has been an illuminating, inspiring and rewarding experience which will encourage and move me always. With humility and hindsight, I look forward to stepping into the challenges ahead.

"He hokinga mahara, Ka haere whakamua"

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā rā tātou katoa.

TE RŌPU WĀHINE O TE HĀHI WETERIANA • METHODIST WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Back to our Roots

Tui Salevao, NZMWF President

Wow! What better way to celebrate our church bicentennial than going to the grassroots of where it all started for us as Methodist.

The Methodist missionaries were among the earliest Europeans to come to New Zealand when Samuel Leigh and William White established the first Wesleyan mission, Wesleydale at Kaeo on the Whangaroa Harbour, on 6 June 1823.

We feel so blessed to know this history resonates with our Methodist Church. To be a part of the Conference week long celebrations was surreal. It was my first face-to-face MCNZ Conference, and I felt privileged to be amongst many wonderful people celebrating this great milestone.

The journey has not been easy, and we still battle with the bi-cultural journey and accepting change surrounding us.

It was wonderful to see the commissioning of our new President Rev Peter Taylor and Vice President Te Rito Peyroux-Semu and their theme felt so right.

The Conference members had a wealth of knowledge and I felt I needed more than five days to get my head around everything as my two year term as President for the NZMWF isn't long enough to understand. I was surrounded

by first-time attendees as well as people who have attended Conference for 40+ years.

It was great to put faces to names of those working in the Connexional Office in Christchurch and they didn't disappoint in working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure Conference went smoothly.

As a first-generation New Zealand born Samoan, I feel so proud to be part of Conference and its wealth of history and what it offers to help with our spiritual journey. It was special to witness the various services honouring our people who served the church and passed away in the last 12 months, our retirees for their tireless service to the church to our recent graduates who are starting their ministry in our Conference.

We are seeing a declining period of our members and the question is, what are we doing to encourage our young to remain?

What do we need to do to continue to support our young in their spiritual journey?

Are we allowing our young to have a voice or are we ticking the box by saying yes, but keeping them in a corner and

continuing to lead the way we see fit, even when that doesn't suit the generation of today?

When do they get to have their say? If we want to move forward, we need to hand the reins to the young, secure in the knowledge that we are still around to

guide them into the future of the Methodist Church of New Zealand, Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa.

I take this opportunity to wish our members a Merry Christmas and a blessed new year. Alofa atu from NZMWF National Executive team.



Scenes from Conference 2022.



Youth a Big Presence and Impact at Conference

Michael Lemanu, *Tauwi Children, Youth and Family Ministries - National Coordinator*

Back at Conference 2020, I wrote an article about being the young person stuck behind the organ. It was a bit 'tongue in cheek' – but an article aimed at challenging where the presence of young people was at the most important Connexional event on our church calendar.

I'm happy to report that Conference 2022 was filled with young energy and vibrancy – from participation in weekend services in dance and music, facilitating plenary sessions and discerning what might be next for the church intergenerationally, to bringing to Conference decisions that would have implications on the present and future of our Haahi and how it sees young people as a priority in the life of the church. Conference 2022 was a challenging, rewarding and ultimately shaping experience for young and old in attendance.

I want to acknowledge President Peter and Vice-President TeRito in particular, who attended our Tauwi Youth Conference earlier this year and actively participated, listened and responded to many of the issues that were raised. Meeting young people where they are is the crucial starting point.

In looking back and moving forward, Conference was able to pass some important decisions which we believe

can help us to not only keep and grow the rangatahi who call this church home, but deepen their sense of belonging and identity in our Methodist whānau. There now lies before the church a huge amount of work to be done, but work that we believe is now fully possible and within our reach to complete. Conference 2022, as difficult as it was at times, has given young people the ability to dream within the life of the church. This is a powerful thing that we are excited to see come into reality. Thanks be to God for each person, young and old, who continues to journey with young Methodists in our Haahi.

Final words from our leaders:

"Informative" – Lasi Moli, VTOA

"The discussions were a challenge to follow, but witnessing history being made was sensational and inspiring. Ka mau te wehi" – Pua Siulangapo, VTOA/CSI

"Very interesting how views start as very different and then we end up at the same place. A place of peace and understanding." – Sina Pupulu, Sinoti Samoa

"It was heavy yet instructive to reflect on the church's history, present and future aspirations. I'm glad to have witnessed improvements that were long overdue, especially in youth ministry! Mālō Sisu" – 'Amelia Takataka, Waikato Waiariki

"Attended my first Conference in 2010 in Palmerston North, and to see the youth ministry still growing in 2022 in Kerikeri tells us the Methodist Conference recognises the importance of youth voices in our churches. Dynamics for youth ministry continue to evolve, but youth



Lili, Michael and Merv operating the sound desk.

ministry principles still remain the same; young people are the church of today.

Challenge is walking together and collaborating with our elders and those before us, and recognising that our impact is made when we recognise and embrace the history of our church. Conference 2022 we are seeing fruits of labour started years before, and coming to fruition today! Keep the faith, Fakafetai ki he Eiki!" – Henry Høglund, VTOA

"A Conference full of hearty debate! Also moments of celebration,

- Hui Pōari being reinstated

- the evangelical network no longer needed for the purpose it was created for

- financial growth for our Children and Youth ministry, just to name a few!

Met some amazing young people who are proof that the church is in good hands." – Siu Williams-Lemi, CSI

"Loved learning the inside of our Church and just being able to witness such an

amazing breakthrough for our young ones." – Make Puamau, Wasewase

"Conference was drawn out, yet full of celebration and history making decisions about who we are as Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa and what we value." – Rachel Hickling, CSI

"Really good to listen to the voices of our youth during Conference, an opportunity to practice leadership, practice courage and show faith centre stage in the heart of the church; Conference.

To see young people who grew up in the Methodist church, baptised in our Methodist beliefs graduate, share their views on faith, and to see ex-vice president Edwin T proud youth member in his time and to see our very own TeRito P take centre stage in leading Conference, is a true reflection of the journey of youth ministry in the Methodist church.

What's the spirits saying to the church? Don't be afraid. Be real and let the children live." – Osaiasi Kupu, VTOA

Welcome to December Kidz Korna

WHAT IS ADVENT?

The word Advent means coming or arriving. During the December season the church calls Advent we are waiting for the birth of Jesus.

The children and their teachers at the Hamilton East Methodist Parish church are busy making a nativity film to show to the congregation later in December.

Advent is a time when we prepare for this birth and what it means. One way of doing this is to make an Advent wreath with five candles and light a candle on the Sundays leading up to Christmas. The candles have different meanings; Hope, Faith, Love and Joy. Sometimes there is a white candle in the centre. This is called the Christ Candle and is lit on Christmas Day.

How are you preparing for Christmas?

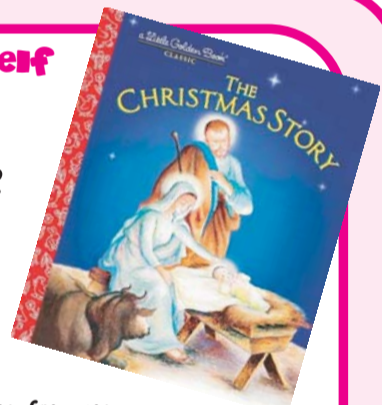


The cast for the Nativity Play film being created by children from Hamilton East.



For your bookshelf

The Christmas Story



Author: Jane Werner Watson

Illustrator: Eloise Watkin

Published by Little Golden Books

This is a beautiful and clearly illustrated story for very young children. The text follows the story as written in the Bible and is easy to read and tells the Christmas Story from the time Mary was visited by an angel to the visit of the wise men.

You can also listen to it on YouTube.

Word Search Can you find these words in the puzzle?

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

- ADVENT ANGEL CANDLES COMING FAITH HOPE
- JESUS JOY LOVE PRAY PREPARE WREATH

What are the kids in your church up to?

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



Conference 2022 Celebrates 200 Years of Methodist History in Aotearoa



Hoana Flay and Iriana Rountree at Māngungu Church.

Memorable Quotes and Comments

Touchstone captures just a few gold nuggets picked from the extensive talanoa and korero ...

■ Rev Keita Hotere during her sermon at Mangungu

"Reflecting on the past and retracing our journey; it's dangerous work. We never know what we might find."

■ Rev Tovia during the Covenant Service

"I thank God for the last three days and for the opportunity to learn a lot about who we are. There are a number of covenants we have signed. Brothers and sisters we come to this special place to celebrate the covenant that God has given us by offering Jesus Christ."

■ When torrential rain disrupted plans at Kaeo, Rev Saikolone suggested those present might visit the cairn visible from the church across sodden paddocks

"If you have gumboots, you will be okay getting there. If you have no gumboots you will be the first one there."

■ President Peter, reflecting on the vast difference between two words humility and humiliation that share the same roots; in relation to our past when the British crown sought to impose its superior culture, governance and religion on its colonies

"Just imagine what it would be like if we showed an attitude of humility - and rather than seek to impose ourselves on others - if we could find a common pathway. To change the path of humiliation to one of humility ... Following Christ who came not to be served but to serve others."

■ General Secretary Tara in passing, after a challenging facilitation session

"Wow, I am really earning my stipend today."

■ President Rev Peter Taylor thanking retirees for their enormous contribution to church, community, whenua and ministry acknowledged the pain and joy of retiring

"The laying down of a treasured burden can be hard."

■ Sui Williams-Lemi introducing the retirees

"We are all in awe of your ministries."

■ Rev Alofa Asiata when asked to share practical advice

"My message to the oldies in the audience, everyone aged 35+, believe in the rangatahi. Culture can be a real barrier to our young people. Give them some opportunities."

■ Rev Mark Gibson when asked what he would like to see going forward in church

"We need to learn to walk in this land. My Sabbath Jubilee idea is to encourage every parish to let at least one seventh of your land be regenerative with no buildings or carparks."

■ Rev Jill van de Geer When asked about the most influential people she has met in her ministry

"Maurice, my husband. He enabled me to be what I wanted and needed to be. And my children and their families. I am so proud of them and grateful for a life that I never ever imagined."

■ Rev Leigh Sundberg (via video) during an interview recorded by Michael Lemanu, when asked to comment on the greatest challenge facing church right now

"Relevancy! There are still people who just want a nice service and a piece of apple pie."

■ Vice President TeRito on the opening day of business and plenary sessions

"It has been significant over the past three days to share our learnings. Ours is a servant ministry; Go and Do. God is a verb as much as a noun. Don't Tell Me; Show Me."

■ Hoana Flay Council of Elders TTM during her opening prayer on the first day of business

"Be kind. Be loving. Be respectful. That is all I ask. And we will be the same to you."

■ Te Aroha Rountree on business opening day

"Methodism is a movement, not a denomination. We are always journeying and seeking. Our people are wayfarers and explorers. It is important to recognise the wrongs and to seek redress but it is important to keep moving forward."

■ Bachelor of Theology Graduate So'otaga Tamana P. Misikei addressing Conference

"Because we work together, does not mean we walk together. Because we walk



Alan Upson, Rev Limu Isaia, Kerry Upson, Rosalie Gwilliam and Joshua Robertson.

together, does not mean we stand together. Because we fellowship together, does not mean we worship together. My hope for the future is that we can stand in the rain and share an umbrella. ... The bi-cultural journey is the little light of Conference. Let it shine."

■ Co facilitator Corinthian Ieli discussing the future of the church, moving forward in faith and transformative memory

"We need to meet halfway. We are trying to meet you halfway but you are not meeting us halfway."

■ Rev Donald Phillipps (90) when offered a ride down the steep gravel path from Mission House to the bus on the roadside below

DP "Is the bus departing now?"

"No, in about 10 minutes."

DP "In that case I will happily walk and I will pop over to see the cemetery on my way."



TeRito Peyroux-Semu and Michael Lemanu.

■ Rev Donald Phillipps during his book launch

"I was carried into the Methodist Church before I was born, I will be carried into the Methodist Church when I die and I have been committed to the Methodist Church every day of my life."

"John Wesley did not found a church, he founded a movement for reform. I see that as our future. That we may be a source of challenge, action, change and even perhaps a threat. We are a church within a secular state. ... John Wesley was part of a long tradition that starts with

scripture. He was part of a new world of learning ... We belong to the past but we must be leaders into the future."

■ Rev Dr Mary Caygill Trinity Methodist Theological College graduation address

"Personally, I am delighted that your graduation is here at Methodist Conference as it showcases the taonga of Trinity Methodist Theological College – 178 years of presence and development, in response to the challenges and demands that church and society have thrown up thus influencing the forms and shaping of the theological programmes offered to best educate, resource, and form people for ministry."

"... I hope you have been disturbed – creatively so – by your new learnings and explorations. I hope you have developed a hunger for more, a hunger to keep exploring, a hunger to keep learning, and to find fresh innovative and relevant ways to connect biblical and theological narrative to ever present diverse living narratives of individuals, communities, the narratives of the local and the global, the narratives calling out with great urgency from God's created earth."

■ Sharon Hollis, President Uniting Church Australia, addressing Conference

"Thank you to the people of this land who welcomed all of us on Saturday. It is a joy and privilege to be a guest at the Conference."

There is much in the life of Te Hāhi Weteriana that I both admire and am challenged by. The most significant for me is your bi-cultural journey and the way that you seek to honour the sovereignty of Te Taha Māori and allow them to be self-determining. We in the Uniting Church can learn much from this as we seek to honour the sovereignty of the First Peoples in the life of the Uniting Church and find ways to strengthen their capacity for self-determination."

■ Hoana Flay presenting the Council of Elders recommendations

"The business days have been far too long. We need to consider the wellbeing of our elders. Adding one more day for business is better than one less kaumatua during Conference."

"The Bicultural Journey is not just a journey. It is a relationship."

■ Deacon Margaret Birtles at the Service of Affirmation

"The Bible should end with a comma, not a full stop. The story is not finished."



Reweaving the Strands of Justice

Gillian Southey, CWS

The Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) is encouraging communities to Reweave the Ecological Mat and address critical issues facing Pacific peoples.

In late October PCC General Secretary Rev James Bhagwan, and Programmes Manager Frances Namoumou, spoke to a small but attentive audience at Aldersgate, Otautahi Christchurch and to others online.

James began by talking about the task of weaving, drawing on the ways communities work together to make mats, sails or bilum bags as familiar objects across the region. The mat he said is therefore a symbol of our lives woven together.

"I refer here to the sacred threads that bind us together in deep relationship with the land and the sea, in spirituality, and with others," he said.

The Greek word oikos can be translated as the household of God or the whole inhabited earth. It is the shared root word of economics, ecology and ecumenism, describing 'the sacred thread or fibre guiding people in faith, culture and development.

By looking at what is happening in our world, we can see that this thread is broken and needs to be repaired. People are facing immense change and living

with intergenerational trauma, James added.

"The Pacific Conference of Churches continues to call on its partner churches and their communities to sing the Lord's song in strange lands and in strange times - as messages of hope and resilience. For some, strange lands may refer to the prospect of relocation, or lands that have become strange by rapid social change or changes in climate, of migration and critical issues around governance," he said.

Frances says weaving happens in communities. In 2009 PCC made the Moana Declaration, outlining its shared commitment to regional concerns like the relocation of peoples because of climate change.

In 2007 the people of Vunidogoloa asked PCC if they could still be church if they had to move their village to another place - for them church and community were bound to their land. The people did not want to move. After seven years one of which was spent in prayer and fasting they reluctantly agreed because they had no choice. Frances noted the people provided the timber for their new homes, even though they had not produced emissions. "Where is the justice in that?" she said.

An important part of the community process is talanoa or conversation around the kava bowl in the village. In seven years of talanoa these communities

became authors of their own stories not victims of the ecological crisis. For Frances it is important that affected communities find their own solutions and can share their expertise with others, making them champions.

Frances said women are always on the frontline of climate change but may not get the resources or support they need. Donors do not necessarily have a tick box for justice she added.

"Reweaving for us is part of a deconstruction and decolonisation process. Not just a political decolonisation, but a decolonisation of ourselves, the way we look at our church, and the way we look at culture and identity. It is taking ownership of the narratives that we hear in our Pacific. We tell our own stories about our Pacific, not repeat the stories that others tell about what we think or who they think we are. And in that sense, Pacific communities can have agency," James concluded.

Next year PCC plans to engage with its indigenous members: Te Runanga Whakawhanaunga I Nga Hahi, the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church.

"Christian World Service is excited by the vision of PCC which balances the prophetic, pastoral and practical. The visit has strengthened our long-term



"When we talk about justice, we are not talking about abstract concepts defined by the United Nations, or any other organisation. We are talking about the lived experience of our people," says Rev James Bhagwan General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches pictured with Programmes Manager Frances Namoumou.

partnership with PCC and offers new opportunities for working more closely together, says Murray Overton National Director.

An edited version of the transcript is available at cws.org.nz or by contacting Jordyn: cws@cws.org.nz.

PCC is one of five partners featured in this year's Christmas Appeal: Let Hope Flow this Christmas.

PANGA I TE PAIPERA • BIBLE CHALLENGE

The World's Best Known Story

Rosalie Sugrue

Christmas is the most widely celebrated festival in the world. Billions of people, from all faiths and none, recognise some Christmas symbols relate to a holy story: angels, a bright star, shepherds, three men on camels, and a baby in a manger. Those who know the story can't always find the text they want. I offer some quick tips. Only two gospels mention the birth of Christ. Each tells a different story from a different perspective. For Matthew's Gospel think M - Male and Magi: angel visits Joseph, wise men (Magi) visit King Herod. For Luke think L - Ladies and Lowly: angel visits Mary, Mary visits Elizabeth (Liz), Lowly shepherds leave Lambs and visit a Lowly stable. The clues to this Bible Challenge are quiz questions. Suggestion: Before checking reference guess which gospel. If doing this puzzle with a partner or group have one person read the questions, others give the answers.

- Which Caesar instigated his world census? _____ **T** _____ Lk 2:1
- Who said, "Let us go to Bethlehem"? _____ **H** _____ Lk 2:15
- Who said, Blessed are you among women _____ **E** _____ Lk 1:41-42

- What were the shepherds doing in the fields? _____ **W** _____ Lk 2:8
- What name did Zechariah write? _____ **O** _____ Lk 1:63
- What word was used to describe Elizabeth? _____ **R** _____ Lk 1:7
- Who said, "Glory to God in the highest heaven"? _____ **L** _____ Lk 2: 13-14
- Bethlehem was also called the city of? _____ **D** _____ Lk 2:4
- What city did the wise men visit? _____ **S** _____ Mt 2:1

- Who said, "Do not be afraid Mary"? _____ **B** _____ Lk 1:26-30
- Elizabeth stayed hidden for how many months? _____ **E** _____ Lk 1:24
- Who was described as a 'just' man? _____ **S** _____ Mt 1:19
- What title did one genealogy gives Jesus? _____ **T** _____ Mt 1:16

- The wise men were looking for a new born what? _____ **K** _____ Mt 2:1-2
- The second gift from the Magi was _____ **N** _____ Mt 2:11
- Who was King of Judea? _____ **O** _____ Mt 2:1
- What kind of tablet did Zechariah have? _____ **W** _____ Lk 1:63
- What did Mary use for her baby's bed? _____ **N** _____ Lk 2:12

- What is the only animal in the Bible's nativity stories? _____ **S** _____ Lk 2:8
- What direction did the wise men come from? _____ **T** _____ Mt 2:1
- Who came to see Elizabeth's baby? _____ **O** _____ Lk 1:58
- What did the wise men follow? _____ **R** _____ Mt 2:9
- What country did the Holy Family go to? _____ **Y** _____ Mt 2:14

Answers: Augustus, shepherds, Elizabeth, watching, John, barren, angels, David, Jerusalem; Gabriel, five, Joseph, Christ; King, frankincense; Herod, writing, manger, sheep, East, neighbours, star, Egypt.

Three Cheers for Rosalie!

This is the final Bible Challenge contributed by long time loyal contributor Rosalie Sugrue. Rosalie has had a life-long association with the Methodist Church of New Zealand and has made an enormous contribution to Christian ministry.

Beyond the wisdom and advice she has shared with *Touchstone* readers over many years and in addition to the Bible Challenge, Rosalie responded to questions of faith sent by young people in the bi-monthly Ask Aunty column. In her personal capacity as an enthusiastic and talented lay preacher and in her reach as author of many books, Rosalie has tirelessly spread the message of love and faith in her unique, passionate, animated and joyful way.

I thank Rosalie for the contribution she has made to *Touchstone* and for her warmth, compassion and zest for life that has been a source of inspiration to me.



Rosalie Sugrue travelled to Kerikeri for Conference along with her family. Back in Auckland they put on a special birthday celebration dinner where she was presented with a wide brim hat embellished with objects symbolic of her character, followed by a This is your Life video that included interviews with people from her past.



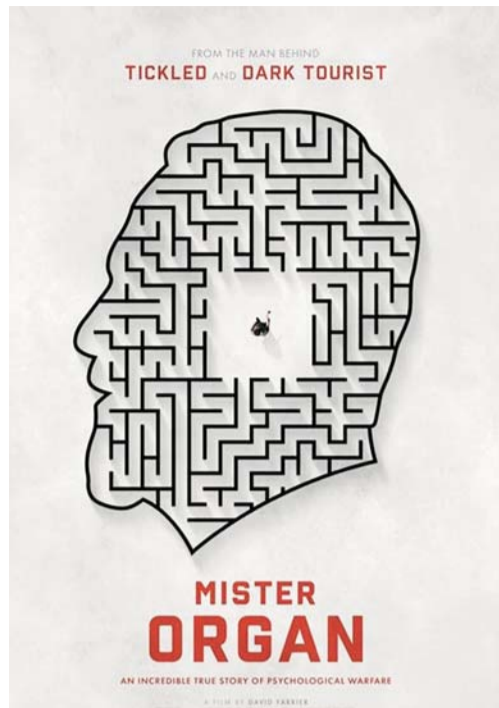
CINEMA

Watching *Mister Organ* feels like the first verse of *Bohemian Rhapsody* on repeat. "Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy? Caught in a landslide, No escape from reality."

Funded by New Zealand On Air, *Mister Organ* has two main characters. David Farrier is a journalist and documentary maker, probing a landslide of fantasy. Michael Organ is a Ponsonby car clamper and antique dealer. Together they offer a disturbing meander that at times offers what appears to be a landslide of fantasy, with little escape from reality.

Truth really is stranger than fantasy. In 2016, Farrier wrote a *Spinoff* story about Bashford Antiques, who were demanding cash to unclamp cars parked after-hours on their property. Sensing a story, David pursued the identity and motivations of the clamper, the man known as Michael Organ.

Watching *Mister Organ* is like watching someone tug on a single dropped thread, causing an entire precious jersey to unravel before one's eyes. Except in *Mister Organ*, what unravels are human lives. Farrier collects story after story of



people describing the impact of Michael Organ on their lives.

These heart-breaking accounts are threaded between Farrier's own encounters with Organ. At times, both seem obsessed with each other. When Bashford Antiques closes, Farrier

takes a left-behind sign. Organ sues for theft, taking Farrier to court. Organ later phones Farrier, claiming to have been given a key to his house. Farrier begins to door knock Organ's family. Is this real life? Or is this reality TV, Farrier acting and Organ enjoying the attention?

Farrier has made a career as a highly-skilled infotainer. First were seven years as an entertainment reporter with *3 News*. Next, Farrier starred in his own *Netflix* documentary, *Dark Tourist*, visiting obscure and variously haunted tourist places.

podcaster, exploring conspiracy theories in *Armchaired and Dangerous* and editing an online newsletter called *Webworm*. Through *Webworm*, Farrier brought allegations of abuse at Arise Church, cataloguing story after story of emotional and physical distress.

What to make theologically of this Ponsonby car clamping rhapsody? God language is certainly present. In a closing eulogy, one of Organ's victims describes

an evil spirit and begs God for freedom.

The backdrop to this scene is poignant, the interview recorded at Kingseat Hospital, a former psychiatric hospital haunted by story after story of distress. The location is a sombre reminder of the tender fragility of body, mind and spirit.

English mystic Julian of Norwich declared that in single objects we witness "all that is made." In every single moment of life, we are to marvel at the love of God.

Watching *Mister Organ* left me pondering not Julian's optimism in God's presence but the *via negativa* of God's absence. Can there be a void in which single reality becomes destructive fantasy in which we glimpse hell as the absence of love? "You pay a soul tax for every minute you spend with him," mutters Farrier, trying to make sense of his encounters with Organ. Using Farrier's own words, watching *Mister Organ* certainly extracts a 136-minute "soul tax."

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is the author of "First Expressions" (2019) and writes widely in theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

ON PAPER

Leading a Department:

Developing the Character and Competency to Lead a Ministry

Author: Mac Lake
Publisher: 100 Movements
Publishing: February 2022. 255 pages.

Reviewer: Peter Taylor

Leading a Department is the third in a series of books written by Mac Lake with a common theme. I have not read the other books, *Leading Others* and *Leading Leaders*, but imagine them to be arranged in a similar way and have a similar style.

I have to say at the outset that the style of this book does not suit my way of learning very well; perhaps partly this is because of its American origin and partly because it has a business model approach which does not fit my more casual approach. Having said that I became aware that this might be my weakness, not a weakness of the book.

This is a workbook more than a textbook and is arranged in seven modules which are meant to be undertaken by individuals in approximately two weeks each and (most importantly) with the guidance of a trainer. There is a section at the back especially for the trainer so this could make it a worthwhile course for those who have a regular supervisor (trainer).

Each module has two goals. One is to develop the character of the trainee, with aspects such as self-awareness and authenticity, and the other is to improve competency in being able to lead a 'department', such as time management and leading meetings. Perhaps the term

'department' needs unpacking. Mac imagines a group (paid and/or volunteers) who each have a role to play in a local church. He visualises a large church with, say, six paid staff meeting together weekly. Although this is not our context, I think you do not need much imagination to apply this course in te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, the

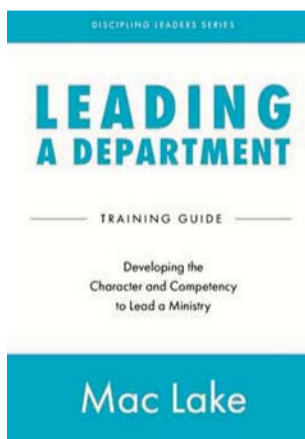
'department' being a board, a connexional office, a synod or even a parish.

The modules are well laid out and structured with plenty of room for responses in boxes provided. They presuppose a level of self-reflection which may not come easily to some but I cannot imagine the book would be of

much use without that reflection. The old book of mine, *A Spiritual Check-Up* by William Sangster, has at its start "It can be read quickly in less than 10 minutes. But if that is all you do, you will have wasted the 10 minutes..."; this book is similar though it takes longer to read.

Although the setting is in a church, most, if not all, the character traits and competencies to be developed would apply in a secular setting or a semi-secular one like a mission board.

If you like a methodical step-by-step approach to growth and development this could be a valuable book for you. Even if this is not your approach there will be gems to be picked up along the way to make you re-think how you can lead others more effectively.



Called by Love:

A happy heretic celebrates his journey with Jesus

Author: David Brown
Published: Self-published, 2022
Reviewer: Adrian Skelton

This is a book of honest reflections by a Churches of Christ minister, completed shortly before his death in May this year. While he includes some autobiography and Church history as context, *Called by Love* is really an apologia (although David would never use that word) inspired by the Martin Luther sentiment, "Here I stand, I can do no other."

While David seems to have made a steady journey from evangelical to social gospel liberal, his parent denomination (now known as Christian Churches NZ) has not.

"... (T)he Associated Churches of Christ... have a slogan 'No creed but Christ'. I liked that slogan. Unfortunately, they have spent a lot of time, (and still do,) arguing over doctrine."

The doctrine of the atonement (one of the Five Fundamentals of Faith adopted by evangelical churches) is discussed at length in user-friendly terms: "How then do I view the death of Jesus?" The virgin birth and resurrection are both interpreted by David as experienced "now in my life".

Margus Borg is enlisted to tease out what has become distorted in the Church. David accepts Borg's distinction between two visions of Christianity: the distorted one emphasising the 'next world' and what to believe to get there (!) and the other emphasising God's passion for the transformation of this world. This means that the Church is first of all a serving Church.

"... (S)piritual experience... only comes when we are involved in serving people as Jesus served."

It is clear to the writer that "there needs to be a reformation, bigger than Martin Luther's reformation, where a new servant Church is

established... A profound reformation is needed." As for the question, Should the Church survive? it seems to be a close call but, "as a group of followers of Jesus, in-tune with Jesus, ... (it) is greatly needed."

For David, Jesus is essentially the person of compassion, and it has been his role to follow Jesus in a ministry that has included a Friday night drop-in, industrial chaplaincy (including to a brewery), and pastoral encounters where God-talk is way in the background. Of his chaplaincy work at a fire station, he says, "here amongst the banter ...is holy ground."

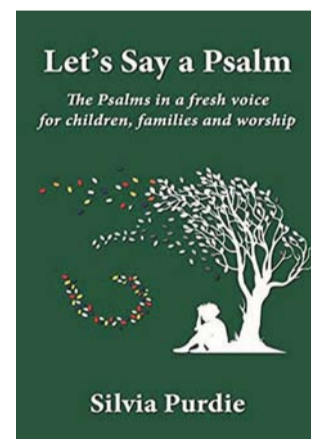
A few extended quotations in the central chapter hint at his progressive reading: Hans Kung, a lot of Jack Spong, Richard Rohr. The Endnotes also indicate the influence of Richard Holloway: six out of a total of 35 footnotes reference the former Bishop of Edinburgh.

David Brown died of a cancer caused by exposure to

asbestos as a plumber in the 1960s. There is no self-pity, nor is there any attempt or need for him to opine on life-after-death: "I have for a long time rejected the notion of being a Christian to get to heaven..." There have been frustrations (with the Church) but also "a sense of accomplishment".

This easy-to-read book, consciously abstaining from theological jargon, would make a suitable basis for a house-group study to benefit those also seeking to follow Jesus in times that are much different from what they were for the Church.

Called by Love: A happy heretic celebrates his journey with Jesus can be purchased by emailing happyhereticnz@gmail.com, with your name and address. You will be emailed with purchasing details. The purchase price is \$25 (including a \$5 donation towards the Dunedin Night Shelter) plus \$5 postage & packaging.





AMAZING LOVE / AROHA KAIORA

By G.M. Allen *The amazing story of Rev. Samuel Leigh and his wife Catherine*

Amidst many highlights in a Conference dedicated to the celebration of 200 years of Methodism in Aotearoa, a stand-out was the performance of a play *Amazing Love* at the Kaeo Kerikeri Union Parish Church Cornerstone, following the Wesley Historical Society AGM and dinner on Friday evening. Written and directed by Geoff Allen, the shared experiences and love of Rev Samuel Leigh and his wife Catherine was bought to life by the words, songs and performances of talented actors Marion Prebble and John Goudge.

Described in promotional material as “a tale of dreams, tikanga, war, fundraising, ship-wrecks and Jesus down-under” the outstanding play included rousing input from an enthusiastic audience who sang along to well-known traditional Wesleyan hymns. The performance at the Kerikeri church was the finale in a season that premiered in Auckland at the Pitt Street Theatre earlier in November with six performances over two weekends.

Touchstone invited Geoff, author, playwright and kaiarahi at Pitt Street Theatre, to share the story behind the evolution of the play.

Q) What inspired and motivated you to write the play?

A) The moment is clear in my mind. When I first heard



Marion Prebble and John Goudge as Catherine and Samuel Leigh.

of the 200th, I said to (Dr) Helen Laurenson at the end of a Pitt Street service, “We should create a play about it. Hobbs, he'd make a good story.”

Helen replied, “It's not Hobbs, it's Leigh.”

“Who's Leigh?” I said.

So began months of research.

Q) What was the timeline for the production?

I began researching two years ago. A trip to Kaeo. A quaint display made for us at the local museum. Anzac Day meetings with locals. Hurried conversations about tikanga and protocol. An emotional kōrero with Allen Heta of Ngāti Uru. A trip to the cairn, karakia and the promise I would do my best.

We stayed on the edge of Whangaroa and we could see and feel the past all around. The job was to sift through the depictions of events. Some had Leigh as

a hero, some as a difficult moody man. All sang the praises of Catherine. I have tried not to have villains or heroes from either culture, but humans - doing the best they could. It was a bloody and confusing time. The Leigh's arrived in the middle of the tribal wars and Leigh was too sick to bring much change.

The key thing I discovered was that Ngāti Uru do not feel they have been treated well. That Kua wareware i te taha Pākeha i te iwi tuatahi ki pōwhiri i te hāhi weteriana ki Aotearoa. That being the first to welcome Methodists has been forgotten. That they still hold that kawenata with Te Hāhi Weteriana dear. I hope my play will whakatūtata i ngā iwi katoa (bring all together).

We started rehearsing late September at John Goudge's studio in Oratia.

Q) How did you select the actors and production crew?

A) John Goudge (Samuel Leigh) is my brother-in-law and he is a very good composer and actor. John made the soundscape for the show. Marion (Catherine Leigh) is an actress I know well. We worked together last summer on an outdoor show. She has very good pronunciation of te reo.

My wife Rev Robyn Allen Goudge helped with the hymns and our son Aidan was the technician.

Marion Hines was our patron and supporter. The WHS, Pitt Street Church and Ian Faulkner helped fund the project along with a grant from the PAC fund.

Unsung Methodists

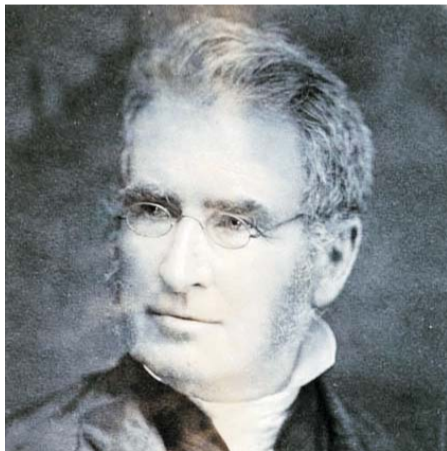
Rev Donald Phillipps

Being a Pioneer

When John Hobbs died no missionary in Aotearoa could match his length of service as a Wesleyan minister. As we celebrate the bicentenary of Methodism in this country, it seems right and proper that John Hobbs should be the one to represent that brave band of practical idealists who came to spread the Gospel here.

His was never a straightforward ministry. What he had set his mind on about the time he turned 20 was not, in fact, achieved for another five years when he was at last ordained at the District Meeting in Sydney in 1828. His disagreements with brethren dogged him for the next decade and more. And then, not long after, the mission to the tangata whenua to which he had been committed for so long, largely ceased to operate. There he was in the Hokianga, in 1855, 'on the edges' of a church that was now more interested in creating a variety of English Methodism among the settlers coming to this country in ever-increasing numbers.

The claims of his family meant it made more sense for him to be in Auckland, and for a year he was given the largely honorific title of Governor of Three Kings College when it also was about to fall into disuse. And then for 30 years he lived the life of a patriarch in Auckland, faithful as ever in his commitment to Methodism



Credit: Rev J Hobbs
NZ Methodist Ministers Portrait Collection
Mrs Jane Hobbs
Morley's History of Methodism in New Zealand.

but through disability and deafness, increasingly an onlooker. A last memory of him, shared with this writer by someone there at the time, was of an aged man, sitting in high pulpit in Pitt St church, listening as best he could to the latest preacher through his memorable ear-trumpet. And so he died, loved and honoured to the very end.

John, the son of Richard and Elizabeth Hobbs, was born in Kent on 22 February 1800. His father was an agricultural implement-maker and Wesleyan local preacher. John was apprenticed to him as carpenter, joiner and blacksmith. The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand states he “began to study for the University” but that seems highly improbable. He became a local preacher as a young man, offered for ministry in 1822 and was, instead, accepted as an “artisan for foreign

John Hobbs 1800 - 1883

service”. He came to Tasmania in November and worked there as a carpenter; then to Sydney where he was accepted by Nathanael Turner as mechanic for the NZ Mission. He never lost his skills as a mechanic. He arrived here per the Brampton in August 1823 and was received on trial as an assistant missionary at the 1824 Conference.

He went with his colleagues and their families to Sydney in early 1827 after the destruction of the Kaeo Mission and assisted in circuit work while awaiting advice from England. He was ordained by the District Meeting, Sydney in 1827 and received into Full Connexion at the 1828 Conference. The mission staff returned to NZ at the end of October. After William White's arrival as Chairman, relationships declined and John and family - he married Jane Broggreff in Sydney in 1827 - went to Tonga for six years from 1832. He returned to the Hokianga in 1838 and spent 17 years there until his removal to Auckland and virtual retirement until he died there on 24 June 1883.

John Hobbs' life has been well recorded. The major biography is that of T.M.I. Williment: John Hobbs 1800-1883. Wesleyan Missionary to the Ngapuhi Tribe of Northern New Zealand (Wellington, 1985); and she also provided the entry in the DNZB (Vol.1, p.195). The details of the life are all there but the author, for whatever reason, scarcely offers a judgment on the man or his ministry. It was T.G.M. Spooner, Brother

John: The life of the Rev. John Hobbs (Auckland, 1955) - just 54 pages, compared with Williment's 264 - who offers some more considered personal reflections. Spooner's comments are both highly favourable and full of admiration but are tempered with an awareness that he was very often a difficult and 'censorious' colleague. Gary Clover's Collision, Compromise and Conversion during the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission 1827- 1855 without question sets the standard so far as research is concerned. He, too, is more than ready to praise this man of faith, of commitment to the ideals of early 19th century missions and of practical bent, and who was also blessed with linguistic skill both to promote the use of te reo in printed form, and assist in the early years of systematic translation of English texts into Māori.

This contribution has been made with 200 years of Methodist history in mind - a record of both success and failure. We used to sing a hymn that began, “Let us now praise famous men ...” - but mercifully rarely if ever these days. The uncritical acceptance of what a person of his or her times thought and did is no longer possible. Their record, however, is rarely one of utter negativity and we do ourselves no credit if we hide behind the supposed mistakes of the past while doing no better, and for no better reason, than they. John Hobbs, and those of his ilk - and their wives especially - deserve our respect, at least. That is where we might start rethinking our future into the third century of our mission.



O LE FAAMOEMOE UA TAUNUU O LE LA'AU LEA O LE SOIFUA



Aso Gafua 30 Me na Launch ai le Polokalame e Ignite CEO & Sea o le Sinoti I Otara.



Tamaitai o Manukau itumalo sauni I le faauuga

O lagona ia na o'o ifo I finagalo ma faamoemoe o le au fa'au'u e to'a 82 o le falelua a Aukilani ma Manukau ina ua taunuu mai I le afaifi o le Aso Tofi, aso 3 Novema 2022 I le Malumalu o St Pauls Otara. Na matua faatumulia lea afaifi I le faamoemoe o le Sinoti e pei ona tauata'iina mai e nisi o tama ma tina o Itumalo ia mo le ono masina.

I le Sea e uiga I lenei Polokalame a le Kolisi o Ignite, na matua talisapaia e le toatele o tama ma tina, peitai ane ua nao le toa 82 na mafai ona latou faaaauaina I le tini, ona o galuega ua le talafeagai ai ma nisi. O le isi foi ua iai nisi ua alu alu le faamoemoe, ua le mafai ona toe auai ane ona ua le fetau foi fuafuaga a aiga ma fanau aoga. O nisi foi ua leai ni taavale e auala ane ai, po ua malaga foi nisi ua le mafai ai ona faaaauaina lenei polokalame matagofie.

Na launch lenei Polokalame I St Pauls Otara I le aso Gafua 30 Me, na auai uma lava e o le a latou iai mai Birkenhead, Waterview, Taeaomua, Henderson faapea Otara, Mangere Central, Papatoetoe, ma Mangere East. E ono masina o faia lenei Polokalame, o le vaiaso atoa I ona aso taitasi I taimi eseese e fai ai I lea falesa ma lea falesa. Nao le toatolu lava faiaoga na feoi I le aoaoina o lenei Polokalame, o Debbie, Aaifou Murray ma Aloese Lefono. O ni faiaoga mataala ma faamaoni I o latou tiute pei ona valaauina ai.

I le amataga o lenei Polokalame na taitaiina le Sauniga e le afaifi I le Sea, susuga ia Paulo Ieli, ae na osi feagaiga ma le Kolisi o Ignite e ala I le CEO na iai I le



Faiaoga Aaifou Murray & Aloese Lefono.

taimi lena o Graham, faapea foi ona auai atu le sui mai le ofisa o le Minisita o tagata atumotu le tamaitai ia Lemauga Lidia Sosene. Ae ina ua maea nei le taumafai ma ua tini foi le faamoemoe, na faapena ona toe faafoi le viiga I le Atua ona o nei masina e ono na gapatia ai le mamalu o tama ma tina, o le afaifaluega ma faletua na auai, ma na taitaiina foi lea Sauniga Lotu e le afaifi I le Sea, susuga ia Paulo Ieli, na auai foi le afaifi I le Minisita o tagata atumotu ia Aupito Sio William ma o ia foi na faia le Saunoaga Faapito I lea afaifi ma momoli le faafetai ma le faamalo aua ua a'e manuia faiva o tama ma tina faau'u. Ina ua maea le Sauniga ma le tufaga Tusi Pasi faapea ma Laptop I le au fa'au'u I le Malumalu, ona faaiu ai lea I le Hall a Otara aua se aiga tele lava na saunia e le au faauu mai Matagaluega ma Aulotu. Na faaiu I faiga meaalofo a Ignite I lena foi afaifi, aemaise o le tuuina atu lea o nai seleni aua falesa na faaogaina mo le nei Polokalame. O se faamoemoe mataina, ma mamalu ina ua alu atu le solo umi a le 'au faaiu aso' - saunoa le afaifi I le Sea I lana faamalo ma lana faalaeiau....

'Oute mafaia mea uma I le faatasi mai o le Alii ia te a'u'.... 'Ua le 'ole lea....'



Faletua ia Asotasi, Faapaiaga, Leofao & Peruana.



Alii ma tamaitai faauu o Birkenhead.



Alii ma tamaitai o Henderson lena ua laina mai sauni le solo I totonu o le falesa mo le faauuga.



NA KONIFEREDI NI I LOTU WESELE E AOTEAROA 18TH KINA 23 NI VULA KO NOVEBA



The Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma delegate with the President of Methodist Church of Fiji Rev Ili Vunisawai and his wife. Left to right: Rev Sikeli Cawanikawai (Wellington), Rev Joeli Ducivaki (Central Auckland Parish), Rev Alifereti Uludole (Fiji Auckland Parish), Mrs Vunisawai and Rev Vunisawai, Superintendent Rev Alipate Livani (Waikato/Wairiki) and Suli Naulivou (Fiji Auckland Parish).

What is God telling us? Na cava e tukuna tiko na Kalou vei keda? Oqo edua na taro e tarogi voli ena Koniferedi, me ra sauma na lewe ni vakabauta vata ena Te Waihi Wheteriana O Aotearoa ena vula oqo. E qaravi na Koniferedi e Kerikeri se na Vanua vaka Tai Tekorau baleta ena kena vakananumi ni cabe ni Lotu Vakarisito ena Vanua oqo ena 1814. E kauta mai na matai ni lawalawa o Rev Samuel Marsden kina vanua o Bay of Islands era dau soqoni kina na dauqoli kei ira na dauveivoli. E sa kilai tu na vanua ni kua me Russel Islands ka toka e tai o Paihia. Oqo na baravi vaka Waitangi e mai toqai kina na nodra veidinadinati na Waitangi Treaty.

Ia, na Lotu Wesele e kauta mai o Rev Samuel Leigh ena 1822 ka vakabalebale tiko kina na Koniferedi ena yabaki oqo ni oti e 200 na yabaki. E tekivutaki nona sasaga o Rev Leight ena 1819, kina soqosoqo ni kau Lotu Wesele mai Peretani me mai tauyavutaki ena dua na soqosoqo e Aotearoa. Ena 1823, e rau mai veivuke ena kena tauyavu na Lotu Wesele o Rev Willian White (edua na matai) kei Rev Nathaniel Turner (dauteitei). E vuku ni kila cakacaka oqo e veivuke sara vakalevu ena kena tarai

na Vale keina tei na kakana ka susugi na manumanu. Sa tauyavutaki edua nai tikotiko ni Lotu mai Whangarei. Ia, ena vuku ni veivaluvaluiti o ira na taukei ni Vanua ena ma ni toso kina nai tikotiko oqo.

E mai levu talega na tiko yavavala baleta ni sega ira veikila vosavosa keina tovo, ia oqo e qai veivuke kina edua na daunidroini e tikovata keira na Maori o Augustus Earlie, eqai vakamatataka na nodra vosa keina tovo ni vanua. Ena ciqociqo oqo eratou sa qai tovolea me toso na veiqaravi ki Mangugu ka siro sobu mai ki Tamaki Makau Rau (Okaladi) ki Waikato.

Ena toso oqo, sa vakilai kina na tubu na Lotu Wesele me sa roboti Niu Siladi e kece. E tekivutaki na Koniferedi ena Siga Lotulevu kina Veisiko ki Waitangi Museum keina Vale nei Govenor Hobson ka sainitaki kina Waitangi Treaty. Vakasakiti ena noda raica na nodra biu vakaivola na Vulagi edua na Veidinadinati me rawa ni ra tawa Vanua kina. Ia, e vakatavi vakalevu kina na Lotu, ena sasaga me ra vakalotutaki ka vakararamataki ena vuli ka.

Ia na sasaga oqo, e dau laurai ni mai tawani na Vanua keina kenai Yau. Ia, ena gauna ni veisau oqo, eda sa raica kina na veivakatorocaketaki sa mai yaco ka kauta vata na rarama ni vuli keina lavo.

E mai toka na keitou maliwa o Qase Levu mai Viti o Revi Ili Vunisawai. Ena nona Vosa ni veikidavaki e tautanaki ira na Gone ni Vuli Lotu Wesele ni Lotu eke me ra dau maroroi ka tuberi lesu ena nodra dui vakabauta. Oqori keitou sa nanuma toka nai Talatala ni vei



The Presidents of NZ Methodist Church, Rev Peter Taylor and Fiji Methodist Church, Rev Ili Vunisawai meet at the Kerikeri Methodist Conference.

Tabacakacaka, me sa tiki tiko ni noda veitokoni keina veikauwaitaki vakaveiwekani.

Oqori sa koto kina na nodai tavi na vei Tabacakacaka, ena nodra ciqomi ka sureti mai ena loma ni nodai soqosoqo Lotu kece. Mai na Matasiga se Soqosoqo Lotu, me ra sa tekivu maroroi ka ciqomi vakarawarawa. Ena nona cakavuli voli na Qase Levu mai Viti, ka cavuta vakamatata tiko ni Vola Tabu, NA LOLOMA GA. Ni sa sega na loloma sa sega na Kalou. Eda sa tu yani ena veilecayaki, Tu taudua keina dokadoka. Sa tekivu basika mai na Vosa o "AU". Noqu qo, noqu qo, noqu qo....Sa tiko kina via via levu kina vakadonui koya vakataki koya. Na 2 Timoci 3 : 1 - 5. E cavuta vakamatata koto, na na kenai wali e tiko ena 2 Timoci 3 : 1 - 5 - Na Vosa ga ni Kalou me laulautiko. Kua ni vakalomavinaka tale edua "NA KALOU GA' Vinaka cake mo sega ni taleitaki ia ena lau me rawa kina na veisau ka kune bula kina o ira na wekada.

Eda sa cabeta tale edua na Gauna Eda

Wasea kina na Loloma ni Kalou vei na wekada, NA GAUNA E SUCU MAI KINA NA KARISITO. Nai solisoli ni Kalou vei keda, ena vuku ni nona loloma ga, sega ni noda cakacaka kaukauwa se vinaka. Oqori kina na veiwekani, au nanuma me sa mai tinia ena vuku ni loloma oqo, meda sa sega ni cavuti vakatebenigusu ia me caka, qaravi ka tamusuki.

E vuku nio veiqaravi ena loma Wasewase, mai Talatala Qase Rev Alipate Livani, Talatala Qase Vakacegu Rev Peni Tikoinaka, Veitacini Vakai Talatala Rev Alifereti Uludole, Rev Sikeli Cawanikawai kei na nomuni dauniveioqaravi Rev Joeli Ducivaki keitou sa vakanuinui vinaka ni Siga ni Sugu keina Tawase ni yabaki. Me sa dua na yakavi ni Werewere, Teitei, tatamusuki ni sa vuavua vinaka ka katoa.

Me noda vata tiko na loloma ni Kalou, veimaroroi nei Jisu Karisito keina veituberi ni Yalo Tabu ena noda bula ni kua ka Tawamudu.



Fakamantu ta'u 200 e lotu Metotisi 'i Aotearoa

Fai 'e Felonitisi Manukia

Na'e fakahoko e fakamanatu he Konifelenisi 'o e māhina kuo 'osi 'i Northland, 'a e ta'u e 200 'a e hake 'a e lotu Metotisi 'i he fonua ni.

Ko 'eni 'a e tautapa lotu kamata 'a Faifekau Arapera Ngaha ke kamata 'aki e ngaahi ouau fakamanatu, kamata 'i Waitangi pea hoko ai ki he ki'i kolo ko Kaeo, 'a ia na'e fokotu'u ai e 'uluaki misiona 'a e siasi 'i Aotearoa.

"Ko e 'Otua koe he ta'u 'e 200 kuohili, 'oku kei tatau pe 'a e 'Afiona he fononga'anga 'o e 'aho ni.

'Oku mau fakafeta'i he tāpuaki na'a ke faka'inasi 'aki 'emau kau taki he mu'aki misiona pea kei hokohoko tāpuaki ai pe mo kimautolu he ngaahi 'aho ni.

Tataki ma'u pe kimautolu – mei homau tafa'aki, mu'omu'a 'iate kimautolu pea tokoni mai ke 'oua te mau hē hala kuo ke tofa ma'a kimautolu. Pea ke mau laka 'o taau ko e kau sevāniti kimautolu 'a e 'Afiona ma'a ho'o kakai.

Ko 'emau tautapa ia 'i ho huafa. 'Emeni.

'Aho 'uluaki

Na'e fakataha 'a e kau fakafofonga Konifelenisi ki he kelekele tapu 'o Waitangi, 'a ē na'e fakahoko ai 'a e Talite 'i he vā 'o e Kuini Pilitānia pea mo e kau taki Maori.

Neongo 'a e 'uho'uha e 'aho ka na'e fakamāfana pea fakalata 'a hono polokalama mo e ouau.

Na'e tataki 'e kau ngāue 'o e mesiume 'iloa 'o Waitangi ha tua (tour) fakahinohino mo fakamatala'i e hisitōlia mo e naunau



Outgoing Vice President 'Etuini Talakai and fellow Conference member Rev Vaikoloa Kilikiti. (credit: Vaiolupe Talakai).

'o e Talite – 'ikai ngata pe 'i hono ngaahi lelei ka ko e ngaahi 'isiu na'e tokehekehe ai e kau Pālangi mo e tangata whenua 'o e fonua ni.

Ko e ngaahi tokehekehe 'e ni'ihi kuo solova mai he kau taki 'o e pule'anga Nu'usila ni he ta'u 'e ua ngeau kuo maliu atu, ka ko e ngaahi 'isiu 'e ni'ihi 'oku kei fai pe tipeiti ki ai mo e kakai Maori.

'Aho hono ua

Ko e 'aho eni na'e fakatahataha ai 'a e kau fakafofonga ki he kolo ko Kaeo. Na'e talitali lelei kimautolu 'e he faifekau mo e kaingalotu 'o Kaeo-Kerikeri Union Parish.

Na'e toe 'uha pe mo e 'aho ko 'eni, kae kei lava lelei pe 'a e ngaahi polokalama mo hono mahu'inga. Pea fakakakato 'e he kau taki Maori 'o kelekele ni 'o fakahoko e ngaahi talanoa ki he hisitōlia 'o 'uluaki fale misiona 'a e siasi Metotisi 'i he fonua



Conference members from Christchurch Tongan Parish, Tevita Mose Nai and Rev Finau Halaleva.

ni – ko hono hingoa ko Wesleydale.

Na'e fakanofu 'a e Palesiteni fo'ou, Faifekau Peter Taylor, pea mo e Tokoni Palesiteni, Terito, ka e hoko a Faifekau Andrew Doubleday ko e Palesiteni Mālōlō, mo 'Etuini Talakai ko e Tokoni Palesiteni Mālōlō.

Na'e fakamālō 'a e Konifelenisi 'i he hounga'ia 'i he'ena faifatongia mo taki e siasi he ta'u 'e ua kuo maliu atu.

'I he po'uli hifo 'o e 'aho ko ia, na'e fakahoko e faiva tulama he falelotu 'o Kerikeri. Ko e tulama ko 'eni kia Faifekau Samuel Leigh mo hono hoa ko Catherine Leigh – na'a na kau he fuofua misinale Metotisi ngāue mai ki he fonua ni.

'Aho hono tolu

Ka na'e kamata 'a e 'aho 'aki 'a e malanga na'e fakahoko falelotu 'i Horeke, 'i Taulanga ko Hokianga, Northland. Neongo 'a e si'isi'i e ki'i falelotu ka na'e

fakamāfana mo fakalaumālie 'a hono ouau.

'I he houa efiāfi 'a e 'aho ni, Sāpate, na'e fakahoko 'a e malanga faka'eiki mo e tānaki tu'unga 'a e kolisi Trinity Theological College.

'Aho hono fa & nima

Fakahoko he 'aho ni e ngaahi fakataha mo e lipooti e ngaahi sinoti, kōmiti mo e poate 'a e Konifelenisi.

'Aho hono ono

Fakamā'opo'opo e ngaahi lipooti pea tāpuni e Konifelenisi 'o e 2022. Ko e Konifelenisi 'o e ta'u kaha'u, 2023, 'e fakahoko pe he ngaluope he Zoom, pea ko e Konifelenisi 'o e 2024 'e fai ki Wellington.

Ko e tu'utu'uni 'a e Konifelenisi 'e fakahoko fakata'u ka 'e fakahilita'u 'a e Konifelenisi fakatahataha, pea Zoom he ta'u hoko.

All photo credits: Methodist Church of NZ



Vahefonua members during business session time.



Members of the Vahefonua Tonga 'o Aotearoa Choir.



Vahefonua Tonga singing for Conference.



Some Vahefonua members of Conference.



Business session during Conference.



Kātoanga tānaki tu'unga 'a e 'apiako - Trinity College 2022

Fai 'e Felonitesi Manukia

Na'e fakahoko 'i he māhina kuo 'osi 'a e tānaki tu'unga 'a e 'apiako teolosia 'a e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila, 'oku 'iloa ko Trinity Theological College, Ko e tānaki tu'unga ko 'enī na'e fakakakato 'i he Sāpate, 'aho 20 'o Nōvema, lolotonga 'a e Konifelenisi 'a e siasi na'e fakahoko ki Kerikeri, Northland, pea na'e ui ai 'a e kau Tonga 'e toko 27 ki he faka'ilonga ako mei he kolisí .

Ko e toko tolu ai: ko Sione Teisina Koloa, Sione Tesimale mo Paula Moala, na'e ma'u mata'itohi ko e Bachelor of Theology - ko e fuofua kau ako 'eni, fakataha mo e matāpule Ha'amoā, kuo ma'u e mata'itohi ni mei Trinity.

Pea ko e toko 24 - ko e kau ako Siamelie - na'e ui ki he ma'u faka'ilonga LTh (Licentiate in Theology).

Ko e Puleako foki 'o Trinity ko e tangata'eiki Faifekau Toketā Nāsili Vaka'uta.

Lolotonga 'a e ouau tānaki tu'unga 'i he Turner Centre, Kerikeri, na'e me'a 'a Dr Vaka'uta 'o pehē na'e a'u 'a e kau ako 'e toko 4 ki he mata'itohi teolosia, ki ha tu'unga ma'olunga 'aupito.

Ko e Siamelie, ko e polokalama ako 'a e Vahefonua Tonga 'o Aotearoa 'a e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila 'i he ngāue fakataha (partnership) mo e 'apiako Trinity Theological College.

Pea ko e kau tiuta ki he polokalama Siamelie ko Dr Vaka'uta, Faifekau 'Alipate 'Uhila, Faifekau Laiseni Liava'a, Faifekau Goll Fan Manukia, Faifekau Kalo Kaisa pea mo e tangata'eiki Faifekau Sea 'o Tai Tokerau (Northland) Kulimoe'anga Fisi'iahi.

'I he fakamatala 'a e Kou'otineita e Polokalama Siamelie (Siamelie Programme Co-ordinator), Sandra Tesimale, ko e ako Siamelie 'oku ma'u ai 'a e faka'ilonga ako level 4 mo e 5, fakatatau ki he fakahinohino ngāue 'a e Potungāue Ako 'a e fonua ni (NZQA framework).

"Ko e faingamālie lelei 'eni ki hotau kakai Tonga 'oku fie 'ilo mo hohoi ke fakalahi 'enau 'ilo ki he Tohitapu, Vete Tohitapu, 'Efika, Lotukalafi, Tauhi kakai, Hisitōlia 'o e Siasi, pehē ki he ngaahi ouau mo e angafai 'o e lotu, tautefitio ki he malanga," ko e lau ia 'a Sandra.

"'E 'aonga foki mo e ako ni kia kinautolu 'oku fiehoko atu ki ha ako faka Lotukalafi mā'olunga ange, pea mo kinautolu 'oku nau loto ke fakalaka kimu'a 'enau 'ilo mo e fai fatongia.

"'Ikai ngata pe he heni, ka 'oku kau e ako ni ko e tokoni ki he langa hake 'a e mo'ui fakafo'ituitui 'a e tokotaha ako."

Ko e ako ni 'oku fakahoko 'i he



Sandra Tesimale, Siamelie Programme Co-ordinator (credit: Sandra Tesimale).

ngaluope (online), pea 'i he lea faka-Tonga.

"Pea 'oku 'atāki he tokotaha kotoa pe - fefine pe tangata - mei he ngaahi tokāteline kehekehe," ko e fakamatala ia 'a Sandra.

"'I he ngaahi ako kuo maliu atu na'e kau mai e kau ako mei he Siasi Metotisi, Siasi Uēsiliaua Tau'ataina 'o Tonga, Siasi Tonga Hou'eiki pea mo e Tokaikolo.

"'Oku 'ikai fakangatangata 'a e ako ni ki ha feitu'u pe 'e taha 'i Nu'usila ni.

'I he ngaahi ako kuo maliu atu na'e kau mai e kau ako mei Dargaville, Warkworth, Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Gisborne, Wellington, Christchurch pea mo Oamaru."

Na'e kau mai foki mo e fefine Tonga lolotonga nofo muli 'i Filipaini, 'i 'ēsia tonga-hahake (South East Asia). Ko e ta'u ka hoko mai 'e faka'atā ke kau mai 'a Tonga mo 'Aositelelia.

"Ko e toko 24 na'e lava 'enau feinga ako he ta'u ni, mei he Siamelie 2022," ko Sandra ia.

"Na'e foaki 'enau setifikeiti 'i he Tufunga Malanga pea mo e Fakataukei ki he Ako Lotukalafi (LTh).

"Ko e mōmeniti fakafiefia 'eni ma'ae tokotaha ako kae pehē ki honau ngaahi famili mo e maheni.

"Ko e Polokalama Ako Siamelie ko e faingamālie lelei ia ma'a hotau kominiutí Tonga."

Ko e kau ma'u pale makehe 'o e ta'u ni ko Victoria Sefesi (nofo Manila, Philippines - Tu'ukimu'a 'o e Siamelie 2022), Katalina Veituna (nofo Oamaru - 'uluaki he leseni 'e 3), Momotā Sefesi (Peulisi 'o Tokaima'ananga, Otara - 'uluaki he leseni 'e 1), 'Elenoa Selina Lavaka Manukia (kaingalotu Pulela'a, New Lynn - 'uluaki he leseni 'Efika) pea mo Fekita Moeata Pulupuna Halaleva (hoa 'o e Faifekau 'o e Peulisi Kosipeli, Christchurch - 'uluaki he leseni Malanga mo e Angafai).

'I ha talanoa 'o e taha kau ako ne lava he polokalama Siamelie 'o e ta'u ni, ko Tevita Tofu 'Otutaha (mei he Lolo 'a Halaevalu) na'a ne pehē 'oku mātu'aki fiefia 'i he ikuna kuo fai.

"Neu tuku taimi ki he ako mo e feinga



2022 Licentiate in Theology graduates L: Victoria Sefesi (top student), R: Katalina Veituna (1st in three subjects), at Waitangi during Conference (credit: Valeti Finau).



2022 Bachelor of Theology graduate Sione Koloa with his happy aunty Ma'ili Katoa (credit: Sione Koloa).

ni pea ko 'ene lava ko 'eni kuo u fiefia ai mo hoku fāmili he na'e fai e lotu ki ai."

Na'e 'i he ouau tānaki tu'unga foki 'a e toko laungeau - 'a ia ko e Palesiteni mo e Tokoni Palesiteni 'o e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila, fine'eiki Sekelitali Lahi 'o e Siasi hou'eiki mēmipa 'o e Konifelenisi kakato, pea pehē ki he kau hiva 'a e Vahefonua Tonga 'o Aotearoa, fāmili mo e maheni 'o e kau ikuna he ako.

Na'a nau folau mei he tapa kehekehe 'o e fonua ni, Tonga, 'Aositelelia mo Filipaini.

Ko e hanga ki he kaha'u, 'oku 'amanaki 'a e 'apiako Trinity ki ha fa'ahi ta'u fakakoloa he Ta'u Fo'ou.

'Oku fakaafe atu 'a Trinity Theological ki ha taha 'oku fie kau ki he polokalama ako mata'itohi Bachelor of Theology pe mo e ako LTh he polokalama Siamelie 'o e ta'u 2023.

Vakai ki he uepisaiti (website) 'a e kolisi: www.trinitycollege.ac.nz. 'Oku kamata 'a e ngāue ke fakahū e kau ako ki he 2023 'i he māhina katu'u, Sanuali.



2022 Licentiate in Theology graduate Fekita Halaleva (credit: Fekita Halaleva).