

Touchstone

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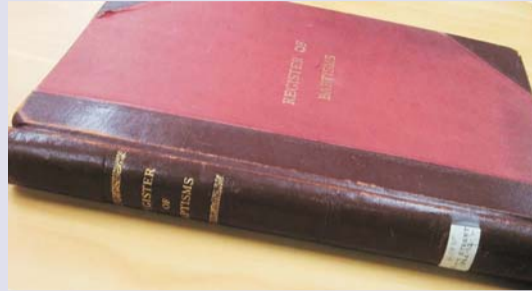
Nau mai rā, Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Bula Vinaka and Welcome!

Inside

Celebrating Our People



Repatriating Our Records



Schooling Resumes Uganda



Photo credit DJ Paine Unsplash.

Freedom? Freedom for what?

Rev. Norman E Brookes

The experts tell us we need to contain the virus whether it be Delta or Omicron so that we can buy time. Time, hopefully to raise our vaccination levels to 95 percent or above for all people, to vaccinate our children, and to deliver booster shots to the vulnerable. All this in order to keep the virus in check - to stop it running rampant throughout the whole of our society. To enable this to happen, the vast majority of experts and medical specialists agree that we need mandates and some ongoing restrictions.

There are amongst us, however, some who don't agree. They are demanding that the traffic light restrictions be removed, now! Demanding that cafes, bars and nightclubs be open for all

whether vaccinated or not. Some are opposed to mandates requiring that all teachers and all front-line medical staff be vaccinated.

We know this. We've seen the protestors. As I write, an anti-mandate convoy is clogging up streets around our Parliament buildings with many mask-less protestors vowing to stay indefinitely. We've seen the placards, with their anti-mask and anti-mandate slogans, demanding freedom, now. These are the people who don't want to wait. They say they've had enough! Their voices, though still by far a minority, are getting louder and more demanding. Their call is for freedom, now!

These demands for "freedom" led me to turn to the Bible. I wanted to see what the Bible has to say about freedom, to see if the Bible can give us any guidance as to how we as Christians should respond to this current situation.

As it happens the Bible, especially the New Testament, has quite a lot to say about freedom. According to Google,

the New Testament speaks of the word "freedom" or "free" 23 times.

Some of the most significant verses about freedom in the New Testament include:

John 8:31/32: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples: and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."

Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death."

1 Corinthians 9:19: "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant (some versions of the NT say "slave" instead of servant) to all, that I might win more of them."

And finally, Galatians 5: 13: "For you were called to freedom, brothers (and sisters). Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

I believe that there are two questions which we, as Christians, need to ask of

these and other similar New Testament verses.

1) What is this freedom from? Clearly, to be "set free" - is to be set free FROM something!

And

2) What is this freedom FOR? What are we being urged to do as Christians with the gift of freedom that Christ offers?

Let's see if we can find some answers to these questions....

Paul's letter to the Galatians is the critical document in the New Testament when it comes to the question of "freedom". In that letter Paul wrestles with the whole issue as to whether the Galatian Christians, many of whom had never been Jews, had to fulfil all the obligations of the Jewish law, the Jewish religious law in order to be truly Christian. For example, did these Gentile Christians have to be circumcised, as Jewish men were, in order to be truly Christian?

Continued on Page 2.



Freedom? Freedom for what?

From Page 1

In Paul's day there was a group of people called the Judaizers. These were the protestors, the anti-Paul people. These were the people running around with their placards, visiting Christian fellowships, stirring things up, telling the Gentiles that they weren't really Christian unless they conformed to Jewish laws and rituals. Paul's answer to that was to say, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything: the only thing that counts is faith working through love" (Gal.5:6).

The Christians in Galatia were troubled by this group. So, Paul in his letter to them says: you were "called to freedom" (Gal 5:13). Freedom from "the law of sin and death", freedom from the old Jewish rituals, freedom from slavery to the Jewish law, freedom from the old order, freedom from the pre-Christian way of doing and being. The ritual requirements of Jewish religion are no longer binding - we are set free in Christ Jesus. Now that may not mean a great deal to us today, as we are not troubled by the Jewish religious laws but it was significant for the Gentiles who became

Christian in Paul's day.

But our freedom in Christ is not just about Jewish rituals. More importantly than that, Christ comes into our lives to set us free from sin, from evil, from self-centred living. That is just as relevant for us today as it was for both the Jews and the Gentiles who became Christian in Paul's day. So, the answer to the first question is that Christian freedom is freedom from self-centred living.

Now, to the answer to the second question, what is this freedom for? In other words what are we to do with this freedom Christ gives us?

Here, I believe, Paul in Galatians again points us in the right direction. In Galatians 5:13 Paul says this:

"For you were called to freedom, brothers (and sisters). Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." Christians are people set free to love. We are set free to be compassionate, we are set free to serve.

Freedom then in the New Testament is not freedom to do my own thing, to

thumb my nose at authorities, to put my ego, my way, at the centre of my living, or to engage in rampant individualism. Freedom in the New Testament is freedom to love and serve one another.

This is where I have a major problem with some of the protestors who have taken to our streets, anti the vaccine, anti mask wearing, wanting all Covid restrictions to be lifted - now! These are the Judaizers of our day because they do not understand what Christian freedom is for! I am not against Christians protesting or marching, or making their voices heard. But for this to be Christian it needs to be a protest based on love for the vulnerable, the frail, the poor. It is not freedom simply to do our own thing, it is not an ego trip.

The restrictions and mandates, currently in place protect the vulnerable. They require of us some short-term sacrifices, but the goal is that freedom, a freedom that is safe for as many as possible, will ultimately be ours.

What does Jesus say the two greatest

commandments are: "Love God with all your heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and love your neighbour as yourself."

Christ sets us free to love our neighbour, Christ sets us free to be compassionate people. In the midst of a pandemic, one way to show that love for our neighbour is to be vaccinated, to listen to the medical experts and to follow the guidelines.

This is not a time for ego tripping, or grandstanding. This is a time for Christlike living, for doing unto others what we would have them do for us.

At the end of what is one of the greatest chapters in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 13, Paul summarises the three things that really matter. Significantly, in that chapter, "freedom", important though it may be, doesn't even get a mention.

The summary Paul gives at the end of Corinthians 13, is this:

"...and now abide three things, faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love."

Christians are people set free to love.

Working Together To Achieve Better Health Outcomes

Ehara taka toa i te toa takitahi ke'

My strength is not the strength of one, but the strength of many!

The Lower North Island Synod manages a building in Waitangirua, Porirua East that is tenanted by Maraeroa Marae Health Clinic. The organisation renewed their tenancy in December 2021 and along with the signed lease agreement, Clinic CEO Simon Phillips sent a message that says, "Thank you for your ongoing support with the work that we are providing to our families and communities in Porirua. Our Covid-19 Vaccination Clinic dispensed over 7,500 doses of vaccines from our marae. This has been achieved through the support of services like yours. We could not have done this on our own so thank you."

We report on a rental agreement that is proving to be beneficial for the local community and the Synod.

The building, known as Whare Hauora, Tuarua, is located next door to the Maraeroa Marae, Ukaipoa Hiato ki Nga hau e wha, and is used as a clinic to



Whaea Diana Peita and Matua Waata in front of the Marae.

offer a range of services to the community. Ian Harris, Property Secretary for the Lower North Island Synod says, "Although this is not directly a Methodist enterprise, as Simon notes, we are facilitating the work that they do in the high needs area of Porirua East."

Simon says, "The Hauora has had a lot of opportunities to form formal and informal relationships with many service providers and agencies across Porirua. Te Whare Hauora, Tuarua, has enabled us to awhi, manaaki, tautoko and facilitate some important hui that enable services to come together to strengthen the whaiora, their whanau and their hapori. I learnt early on in my tenure at this Hauora that the whaiora and whanau that we awhi, manaaki, and tautoko need more than we have

to offer. We need to work together as a hapori / community if we want to make a difference."

The health services mission statement is "Ka ora te whanau, ka ora te Iwi - strengthening our whanau / strengthening our community". Simon says, "Our funding is targeted to high needs' populations, primarily Maori and Pasifika, however, we include all peoples. Most whaiora and whanau who access our services are of mixed ethnicity. This is the approach we insisted with the MOH and the DHB for our Covid-19 vaccination clinic and approximately 75 percent of the people that received the vaccine at our marae were non-Maori and Pacific.

Services provided out of Whare Tuarua are aimed at people of all ages and range from GP outreach, to well-child clinics,

mental health and addiction assessment and intervention, and health promotion and literacy. Other services including traditional Maori healing (Miri Miri), acupuncture, sleep therapies, and breast feeding peer support training for mothers were running prior to the Covid-19 vaccination clinic and will be reinstated when circumstances permit.

"Whare Tuarua has become a multifunctional facility because of the location, design and amenities. It is the main centre for most of our traditional Maori practices such as our daily morning karakia, staff briefings and meetings, staff training, powhiri and hui with support services personnel, health and council officials," Simon says. "The upstairs space is used by the health promotion, education and literacy, peer support and nursing navigation services."

"Hauora Tuarua has enabled us to integrate both Maori tikanga, kaupapa and western medicine practices more spontaneously. I think that non-Maori have found this environment stimulating and safe, and are embracing the opportunities to practise Maori tikanga on a marae. I see the confidence and skills increasing in the staff and whaiora, whanau and hapori. As the health sector is being reformed, there is a strong focus on greater Maori leadership and participation to address Maori inequalities. This is a positive direction for Maori whanau and Maori services going forward."



President Rev Andrew Doubleday

Rights and Freedoms or Love and Compassion

Over the past couple of months it seems that two alternative universes have coalesced and are seeking to occupy the same physical space. They seem to operate on mutually exclusive values systems, each determined that theirs is correct, and the others are either, in one view dreadfully deceived, or in the other clearly delusional. And there seems to be no place for meaningful dialogue. Each universe is made up of people that those in the other universe thought they knew and counted as friends, and no longer recognise.

There is no longer a shared understanding of truth. While it's easy to make him the bogey man for everything that is wrong in the world, Donald Trump perfected the art of describing everything that was unfavourable to himself as 'fake news'. He did this on such a consistent basis that ultimately he not only had a significant number of people believing him, but more tragically also sowed distrust in the normally accepted organs for disseminating information. Now nobody who doesn't see things our way could possibly be believed as telling the truth. We consequently retreat to our



Andrew Doubleday.

own echo chambers and will not listen to anything that comes from outside.

What about a shared values system, then? Even within the Church? What are the basic underlying principles we endeavour to live by? 'Everyone for themselves', or 'We're all in this together?' 'Personal freedom' or 'We're our brothers' and sisters' keepers?' 'Anyone who wants to keep their life will lose it', or 'anyone who loses their life for my sake will find it? Or any kind of response to Jesus invitation to 'Take up your cross and follow me?'

It may be that these are simply the privileged and disconnected musings of an entitled pensioner with a secure income and the luxury of being able to spout off from the comfort of his suburban study. All true. It's also true that I don't wake in the middle of the night wondering how I'm going to pay my staff, or the mortgage, or my

creditors, or provide for my family, or keep the doors of my business open one week longer. It's true - I do speak from a place of privilege rather than hardship.

Yet I also speak from a place of gratitude. Gratitude for the Prime Minister and her government that have lead us through various crises over the past four plus years. And lead with such wisdom, and with an unerring moral compass for doing the right thing for the people of Aotearoa, even though it will undoubtedly prove politically costly for them in the long run. Jacinda Ardern's handling of the Mosque shootings in Christchurch reset inter-religious/cultural relations world-wide. Almost single handedly she has shifted the discourse from one of suspicion, vitriol, revenge and mutually assured destruction, to one of repentance and reconciliation. Few of us could imagine how differently this could have all turned out.

Her quick action in shutting down the country in the face of Covid has undoubtedly saved many lives. It's easy to imagine that because today we only have an official death toll of 53 lives lost, (I know, there are those who believe that the vaccine has killed thousands) that Covid really isn't a thing. Compared to other nations - Peru's death rate would translate to 32,000 dead, the UK's to nearly 12,000, Sweden's to 8125. Even Australia's death rate would take us to 945. Only

two countries have had a lower official death rate - China and Burundi.

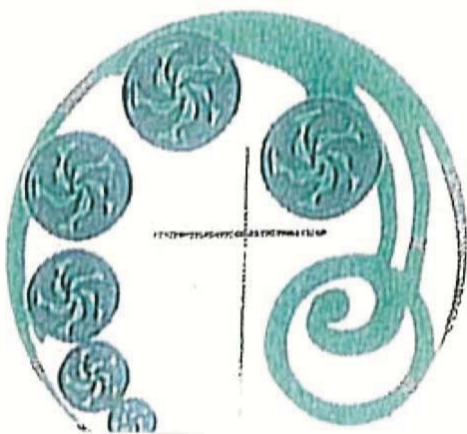
I've also appreciated the way our prime minister has carried herself. As I've listened to her, rather than hearing one who is carefully stage managed as many claim, I'm hearing a thoroughly decent human being. A much better one than I am. I would have lost my rag on many occasions. She doesn't. And that says nothing of the amount of online hate and vitriol that is directed her way.

Yet, as I hear her calm responses I'm hearing the words of Jesus ringing in my heart - "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." I did not vote for her. I wish I had.

The end is in sight, and the government is balancing opening up quickly enough to minimise social dislocation, yet slowly enough to ensure our health system is not overwhelmed. As one whose wife is in the health system and is desperate for this to be over, I have some sense of the pressures being exerted. The next three months are likely to be rough. Then, hopefully, a gradual return to a new normal.

Please friends, let's hold the course. Let's continue to exhibit the fruit of the spirit, that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control that God invites us to be the hallmarks of all our living. We will get through this. We need to do it together.

Peter Baltus Te Taha Maori Pou Whakarae



Te Taha Maori have recently announced the appointment of Peter Baltus, Ngapuhi, Ngati Whatua, Ngati Ruanui and Te Atiawa, as the new Pou Whakarae for Te Taha Maori.

Announcing the new role, Te Kani Williams, Commissioner, said, "Peter has a BCom with a major in Accounting and Marketing and is a senior executive with proven experience in international aid domestic markets, building high performing teams and successful businesses. He has worked in complex environments and thrives on the challenge of delivering results in difficult environments."

In addition to his business acumen, extensive commercial

experience and financial skills, Peter is a graduate of Te Wanaga o Takiura. Te Kani says, "This has been a long-time ambition of his, and has had a profound impact on him including his desire to continue this journey to nurture te reo and to work for a Maori-based organisation where he can blend his work experience with his passion for our language and culture to support the economic development and wellbeing of our people."

Peter started at the Te Taha Maori offices in Penrose in early February and will be working alongside Te Kani as he familiarizes himself with his new role, staff and the Rohe over the coming weeks.



All I want is to play football again

In rural India, 8 year-old Sameer loved nothing more than football. But a numbness in his left foot and a diagnosis of leprosy stole that joy from him. But there is hope.

Through The Leprosy Mission in Naini, Sameer is receiving a treatment that will cure him of this crippling disease.

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GIVE NOW



Rev Setaita Taumoepeau K Veikune,
Director of Mission Resourcing

Children didn't have a lot of rights in the first century. They were seen and not heard. We see this in Luke 18 when parents were bringing their children to be blessed by Jesus, and the disciples try and chase them away. In their opinion, the Lord had more important things to do. But Jesus was passionate about the value of children.

The proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" refers to the wraparound inputs of people in institutions of learning, government, religion, media and community which a child encounters and learns from while growing up. These wraparound inputs communicate culture and instil behaviours and expectations in a child. They provide feelings of safety and security.

The goals are to allow each child to think and feel: "I belong here. I feel safe."

The idea is that it's the responsibility of the community to nurture and educate

It Takes a Church to Raise a Child

young people, not only the responsibility of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. I like to remind my neighbours that even if they don't have sons or daughters of their own, we all benefit immensely from living in a city that has well-supported schools, parks and activities for its youth.

"It takes a village to raise a child' is true for us in the church family and community. Many of us in our diverse cultures and traditions, hold the church as our whanau, ainga and famili. The church is our marae, our centre of activities, our village.

Parenting is not for the faint of heart. It is also not something parents should attempt to do alone. Thankfully, those in the church don't have to. We are all part

initiative was around the prevention and ending of youth suicide, child and family poverty and child abuse.

The *LtCL* fund continues to support many great initiatives on a local level that are impacting children and making dreams and ideas come to fruition. Our Mission Resourcing website provides information about the funding opportunities, as well as virtual space to share your stories and projects. We urge all parishes across the Connexion, in this final year of the *LtCL* initiative, to reach out to our young people.

Conference 2022 marks the conclusion of this 10-year Connexional vision. In the coming months, we begin the process of discerning how effective the church has been in living out this vision in practical

Benzie raises relevant questions under a sub-heading "Where to from Here?" He asks, "How does this help us in ministry in the South Pacific? How does Wesley's ministry to children over 200 years ago in a relatively mono-ethnic and mono-cultural society on the other side of the world where Christianity was the norm, help us who are ministering and working in the 21st century – in a world which is vastly different in many ways and where we are ministering and working in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural context where secularism is increasingly the norm?"

Benzie then offers that the answer becomes clear in what Wesley wrote in his journal on 8 June, 1784. "God begins his work in children. Thus it has been also in Cornwall, Manchester, and

Epworth. Thus the flame spreads to those of riper years; till at length they all know him, and praise him from the least unto the greatest."

I am inspired by Benzie's further provoking questions, "What then can we learn from how Wesley implemented his belief that children are a priority in the mission of God? How can we answer such questions as - What does it mean for the church if we place children in our midst as Jesus did? What would it mean if children were to be



St Ninian's hip-hop class, fun and uplifting for all!

of an extended family - the family of God - that can play a vital role in the raising of children.

One of the foci for the work of Mission Resourcing in 2022 is our Connexional vision and 10-year theme, *Let the Children Live*. Directed by Conference 2012, the

and transformative ways. We intend for young people to be at the core of an extensive review of *LtCL*. Taiwi Children Young and Family National Coordinator Michael Lemanu says, "This review will give Te Hāhi the opportunity to reflect on the work of the past 10 years, and look toward what the next steps will be once *LtCL* wraps up as a Connexional vision this year."

Questions that need to be addressed by the Church at local levels are:

- What *LtCL* initiatives have taken place in your context?
- How effective has the Church been in response to youth suicide, child and family poverty, and child abuse?
- What are the next steps and where does Te Haahi Weteriana go from here?

In an article titled *John Wesley, Children, and the Mission of God* printed on the Aldersgate Papers, Vol.10 (September 2012), Peter Benzie discusses John Wesley's belief that children should be given high priority in the church's mission.

placed at the heart of the church rather than being segregated into their own spaces away from the rest of the church as so often happens in Christian churches? How can the church support families in fulfilling God's mission as regards children?"

He makes the profound statement, "After all, what Wesley was saying was no different to what Jesus said:

"One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him. When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, 'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.' Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them." (Mark 10:13-16, NLT).

Aldersgate Papers, Vol.10 (September 2012)



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Prayer of the West Papua Council of Churches

“On the 167th Anniversary of the Gospel Entering the Land of Papua, We Are Not Safe in Our Land”

Lord, today is the 5th February, 2022, and we Papuans are witnessing the celebration of the 167th anniversary of the Gospel Entering the Land of Papua being held by the government. However, we ask forgiveness from You Lord because we have failed to carry out our pastoral duties.

It can be seen that we Papuans are almost extinct after being part of this country for the last 60 years. Many Papuans continue to be killed through large-scale military operations and also through disease outbreaks without our voice speaking out. Today there are 60,000 refugees living in fear and uncertainty. The state does not pay attention to the fate of the refugees, they are displaced without food, shelter and health care.

They were forcibly evicted from their home villages in Nduga, Intan Jaya, Puncak Papua, Maybrat, Kiwirok in Star Mountains, and Suru suru in Yahukimo. To this day it is uncertain when they will return to their villages.

Their villages have been shut off and occupied by military forces. Instead of guaranteeing security and giving hope to refugees, remilitarization has taken place by building new district military posts in Intan Jaya, Nduga, Lany Jaya, Yalimo, Star Mountains, Tambrauw Yahukimo, and Maybrat.

We see that the military operation, the construction of the district military posts and the division of the Provinces are tactics by the Government to implement a program to transfer millions of people from outside Papua

to Papua, as promoted by Hendro Priyono, the former chairman of BIN (The State Intelligence Agency) 1.

Lord, right now the lives of Papuans are being messed with by the interests of the State, encouraged by the fervor of Racism, Fascism and injustice. The politics of domination continues, Special Autonomy is forced to continue, even though Papuans have rejected Special Autonomy. Not only that, Lord, but they also have forced the division of current provinces into 6 new provinces. Armed conflict continues to be maintained in order to ensure the seizure of our lands.

All our lands are being seized for capitalist interests and large-scale investments. Meanwhile, when Papuans call out against this, they are arrested. Papuans are almost extinct.

How can we Papuans sing God's song of praise at this year's celebrations, while we are experiencing all the suffering that we have shared? We are like the Israelites who were exiled and who wept by the river of Babylon, asking for God's help. We feel sad because this year the date of February 5th has been robbed by the State while our people are suffering in our land. The State celebrates this day to cover up State crimes against it's people, and they have lied and plundered the Papuans' right to life.

Lord, if the situation is like this, who can we complain to? We can only cry out to you, to call for the safety of our people in the Land of Papua.

Here we are Lord, see Your servants who are praying.

Jayapura, 5 February 2022.

Pendeta Beny Giyai (Moderator)
Pendeta Dorman Wandikbo (Member)
Pendeta Socrates S. Yoman (Anggota)
Pendeta Andrikus Mofu (Anggota)

Translation Welcome

To the Editor

It was pleasing to see the extended introduction, in the English language, to the report from the combined Synod of the Fijian and Rotuman churches in the article on the back page of Touchstone February 2022. The wider

English-speaking church can then learn more about the life of the Pasifika members of our multi-cultural Methodist Church of Aotearoa. A good start to the New Year!

John Thornley
Wesley Broadway, Palmerston North

Touchstone welcomes letters from all readers. Letters should be a maximum of 500 words and include the full name and postal address of the writer. Contributions can be emailed to adys@methodist.org.nz or posted to: The Editor Touchstone, PO Box 931, Christchurch 8140.

HONEST TO GOD

Ian Harris

Where Did God Go?

“Where did God go?” asked a *Time* magazine cover a few years ago, signposting an article about the decline of traditional Christianity in Europe.



Ian Harris.

It's a searching question, though not as provocative as the one *Time* posed back in 1966: “Is God dead?” If the answer then had proved to be “Yes”, of course, there would have been no ground to ask the new question decades later, which at least assumes that God is still around to go somewhere.

Dramatic as the questions are, the answer to both has to be: “It depends what you mean by God.” Here are five possible responses to that later question, all confining themselves (as does *Time*) to Christianity: other faiths and their followers would have their own take on it.

God has not gone anywhere.

Even in Europe, where church attendance has dwindled and people's general knowledge of Christianity has shrivelled, God remains in this view the creator and sustainer of the universe, the source of all that is good, and our surest hope for the future. Though people may have abandoned God in their millions, traditionalists would say, it does not follow that God has abandoned them – if he had, he would not be the Christian God. So it's business as usual ... except that everyone in the church and out of it knows it's not.

God has given up on the old established churches and is to be found among newer, less hidebound groups.

Time noted a religious vibrancy in informal gatherings, many of them small. This is especially so where people find it safe to explore their thoughts and doubts without being dumped on, where they are free to develop more intimate and reflective styles of worship and, among immigrant groups, where they can be themselves among their own people.

God has gone south.

American history and religious studies professor Philip Jenkins sees Christianity as far from moribund, but a huge shift has occurred in its presence around the world – a shift that has gone largely unnoticed in the West. There are, for example, more practising Anglicans in Nigeria than in England, and the disparity is growing. However, the kind of Christianity rooted among the billion-plus

Christians in Latin America, Asia and Africa is not as liberal or open as in much of the West. It is generally orthodox in outlook, supernatural and often pentecostal in emphasis, conservative in morality, and authoritarian in style. So God as traditionally

understood is alive and well on what were once the missionary continents. **The question is invalid: there never was “a” God (understood as a being apart from the world and humanity) to go anywhere.**

However, there will always be concepts of God (or Godness), developed in response to the deepest human experiences. These have proved enormously valuable over the centuries – and they have of necessity evolved as knowledge has expanded, society has developed, and people's worldview and life experience have changed. New times repeatedly bring forth new concepts and/or new emphases about God.

English scholar of religions Karen Armstrong, puts it this way: “Ever since the prophets of Israel started to ascribe their own feelings and experiences to God, monotheists have in some sense created a God for themselves ... Today many people seem to have lost the will to make this imaginative effort. This need not be a catastrophe. When religious ideas have lost their validity, they have usually faded away painlessly: if the human idea of God no longer works for us in the empirical age, it will be discarded.”

And, I would add, new human ideas about God can then slowly take shape. In other words, while the old theistic God has moved right out of the minds of many westerners, that spells doom for the churches only if they lack the ability – or the nerve – to think and feel their way through to a new understanding of what the word God can mean for secular people in a secular world.

One such prospect is:

God is being re-imagined in a non-realist way.

That is, for many people God is no longer understood as a real or objective being existing beyond the world and periodically intervening in it, but as a subjective, life-orienting force in human experience. “Non-realist” because while not real in the usual sense of the word, God is still very much “for real”, still capable of being re-imagined (or re-created) and experienced in our brave new world.



Bicentennial Snapshots; Stories from the Hikoi

Rev Tara Tautari, General Secretary.

A couple of weeks ago I watched the online commissioning service for Shirley Rivers, the newly appointed Director of Methodist Mission Northern. The service took place at Pitt Street Church in Auckland, under Covid protocols of a limit of 100 people, masked and vaccinated. Watching online, I saw many friends. Rex Nathan was there, welcoming everyone at the beginning of the service. Marion Hines read from the scriptures. Jan Tasker presented greetings from Auckland Synod. I saw Nan Russell and Susan Thompson sitting in the pews. For those of us watching online, we had our own instant community, including Keita Hotere, Mary Caygill and Uesifili Unasa, to name just a few.

Arapera Ngaha preached that evening. Her kauwhau was a moving and compelling moment of storytelling. If you get the opportunity to listen to her sermon, I recommend it to you. (Zoom link - <http://shirley.mmn.org.nz>, Access Passcode: mmn1234!). As Arapera preached, she recalled the names of people, Weteriana witnesses of the faith, long gone from us. She recalled the names of buildings and churches no longer standing and she took us back to her own childhood and gave us glimpses of an Auckland city and Aotearoa vastly different from that of today. All the while

she wove, taking strands of service and witness, faith and unity, reminding us of our mission as Church, before coming full circle, welcoming Shirley to our common endeavour.

There is a Māori whakataukī: Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua - 'I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past.' In this context, memory is sacred. It is carried and finds meaning in the reality of the present community, shaping its vision for the future. A recent example that comes readily to mind is the reciting of the text of Te Tiriti o Waitangi on Waitangi day during the

ecumenical service. Communal memory can also be seen in the Hebrew scriptures with the biblical command of 'Zakhor: Remember!' To remember the Sabbath, to remember the covenant, to remember the exodus from Egypt.

In the naming of names, of people and places; in the recollection of memory and experience; Arapera reminded us once again of the inherent power in the act of remembering. To recall our own Weteriana story, our own hāhi history in this whenua, Aotearoa, and to boldly lay claim to our role as visionaries. For memory and vision must go hand-in-hand

and each informs the other.

As we continue our hikoi throughout this bicentennial year, Conference has already given us some direction on the stories the Connexion will be sharing e.g the history of the bi-cultural journey and our mission origins in Aotearoa. At the same time conversations up and down the motu are taking place and each contribute to composite narratives recalling 200 years of Methodism in Aotearoa. This is an exciting year for the Church and we look forward to the richness of what we will have to offer each other.



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Dorothy Willis - Learning by Degree



Dorothy and Ana.

When Dorothy Willis, a lay preacher from Riverton, Southland, retired following 28 years as a school secretary, she decided to enrol in an online learning forum. Her e-learning journey started with an 'Introduction to Philosophy' course provided by The University of Edinburgh and delivered by Coursera, an American-based learning provider that partners with universities and organisations globally to provide a vast range of courses online.

Fast forward eight years and Dorothy has completed numerous courses and is now mentoring and engaging with e-learners around the world who share her enthusiasm for learning, attending lectures delivered by the world's best educators, from the comfort of their own home.

Dorothy says, "Coursera offers flexible, affordable, job relevant online learning for individuals and organisations. Their learning platform involves more than 200 of the world's top universities and educators. Currently there are at least 64 million learners connected to the Coursera community."

The subject options are enormous. Interest based, short term studies are usually four to six weeks long. Education is delivered via pre-recorded video lectures, reading activities, assignments, tasks and forum discussions. Beyond the basic course content, learners are offered links to additional reading resources, questionnaires and workshops. Individuals can 'learn' at a pace and level that suits, although certification requires the completion of a certain level of course requirements.

Dorothy says the flexibility regarding course commitment is appealing, along with the range and affordability of the learning opportunities on offer. "If you wish you can simply enjoy the lectures. I encourage anyone to get online and do some study. The choices are endless, you can opt in and opt out and participation costs are minimal. For many courses there is no cost to participate, unless

you require certification."

As a result of her success in completing a range of courses, in 2017 Dorothy was invited to train as a mentor for courses offered by the philosophy and psychology department of The University of Edinburgh. Working in collaboration with UK-based tutors, she provides administrative support for learners and monitors content for online forums. The 'Theory of Intellectual Humility' course she is involved with considers theory, science and practice and currently has more than 25,000 enrolments internationally. "I monitor the forum discussions daily and the weekly graded work. I watch for obvious gaps in understanding concepts and low marks in weekly requirements. I am also involved in 'Beta Testing' where I view a new course being developed and offer comment before it goes live."

In addition to her monitoring role, Dorothy maintains an interest in participating in courses, typically spending five to ten hours each week watching lectures, reading and answering quizzes. Courses she has completed include:

- Introduction to Philosophy (The University of Edinburgh)
- Science & Religion (3) (The University of Edinburgh)
- Intellectual Humility (3) Theory, Science, Practice (The University of



Edinburgh)

- Know Thyself (2) (The University of Edinburgh)
- The Bible's Prehistory, Purpose and Political Future (Emory University, Atlanta)
- How to Change the World (Wesleyan University, Connecticut)
- Song writing (Berklee College of Music, Boston)
- Moralities of Everyday Life (Yale University, Connecticut)

"Over the years I have watched Coursera develop and offer Bachelors and Masters Degrees in many subjects. It is amazing that this level of education can be completed by distance learning. The software is easy to use and the options seem to be endless. Universities are continually bringing new

options on-stream. I urge anyone to visit www.coursera.org and find a course that interests them. Location means nothing."

In addition to supporting the concept that age is no barrier to learning, at 73 years old this mentally active and busy accredited lay preacher has not let a physical disability prevent her from achieving success. Dorothy, an amputee who suffers Complex Regional Pain Syndrome as a result of a failed surgery, has been wheelchair bound for the past 22 years. She and husband Ernest, also a lay preacher, have been active in the church scene for many years. Each month they prepare a Christian Kids Pack available to, and widely used throughout Aotearoa by children unable to attend church.

C A R I N G F O R O U R P E O P L E

Contingencies on Contingencies

Trudy Downes.

The time has come. Covid-19 has landed and is visiting people and places near you.

Have you got your plan ready for who is going to walk the dog when your household is isolating, and who is going to deliver the bread or milk when you run out during isolation?

The easiest plan to make is to have your nearest and dearest as your back-up crew. They know the dog and what sort of bread you like. However, they were the ones that you had dinner with last night and now they have to isolate too. What is your contingency plan?

If you are relying on your church family to help you through, what happens if the entire parish comes down with Covid-19 at about the same time?

If there is more than one adult in your home, then ideally you want one adult well and operational at any given time as someone will need to be in charge of food

supplies, cooking, cleaning and ministering to the ill.

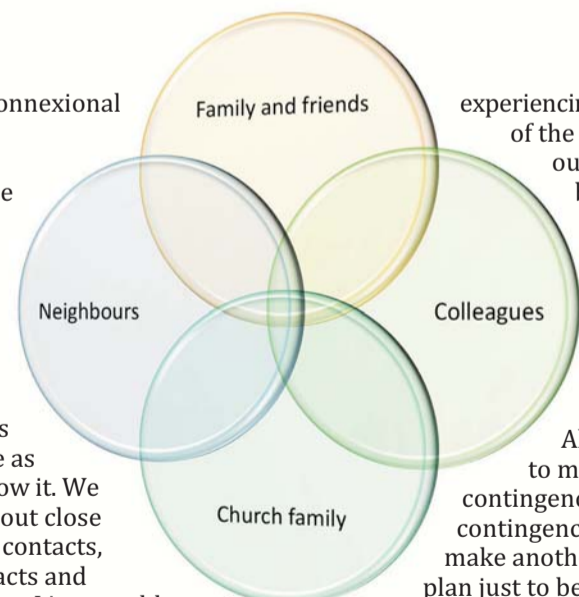
The next challenge we are facing is the effect of rolling household isolations as Covid-19 makes it past our front doors. We want to avoid everyone catching it at the same time at home, at work and at church. We need to make plans for our supplies' distribution being disturbed because there may be a shortage of truck drivers; only some work can be effectively managed at home!

To manage the risk of entire teams being side-lined with Covid-19, the Connexional Office has split the teams in half, and these new bubbles alternate working in the office each day. And yet, even as I write, someone at the Connexional Office has been identified as a close contact and has therefore left the building. The rest of the work bubble now need to minimise their contact with other people while we wait for the test results from our close-contact colleague. Contact tracing is imperative for the potential contacts of the initial close contact until the test results come in.

If the test result is positive (worst case

scenario), the Connexional Office can keep operating. However, the one unannounced visitor we had today has been contact traced to keep them informed of the potential exposure. This is the reality of life as we currently know it. We have to learn about close contacts, casual contacts, household contacts and potential contacts. Lives could depend on it!

To help us out, I have started a Covid-19 Connexional Zoom series where we can meet to discuss a Covid-19 topic, and take the opportunity to ask questions. Topics include what to do if Covid comes to your premises, Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs), business continuity, and potentially one on the impact on District Health Boards. The DHBs are now going to be



experiencing the full impact of the Omicron outbreak, and may be operating understaffed. This will be the country's weak point.

I don't have all the answers to this challenge. All I can suggest is to make a

contingency plan for your contingency plan, and then make another contingency plan just to be safe. While we are all thoroughly sick of Covid-

19, I do see light at the end of the tunnel and I am positive it is not a freight train.

Information on the Connexional Zoom series is available on our website, along with the Connexional webinar series that has started for 2022.

www.methodist.org.nz/tangata/connexional-resources/webinars/

Keep well everyone!



Thinking About the 'Other'

Rev Canon Jenny Chalmers, co-chair of UCANZ and deputy chair of the Australian Council of Christians and Jews. Jenny serves in the Waiapu Cathedral as Canon precentor and Vicar General of the Waiapu Diocese.

Last Monday I saw the movie, *Belfast*. It's a very good film which tells the story of parts of director Kenneth Branagh's childhood. One of the themes is the 'troubles' between the Catholics and the Protestants. I've always wondered why two groups who believed in pretty much the same thing, with variations, found it so difficult to live side by side, in the same neighbourhood.

The sad fact is that the 'othering' portrayed in this conflict, occurs in many other places around the world. Another example is the Tutsis and Hutus of (Christian) Rwanda, where the Belgian colonisers invented arbitrary racial characteristics and set friends,

neighbours and relatives against each other. It ended with an estimated 800,000 deaths.

As we approach Lent and Easter, we should pay attention to the 'othering' that is peculiar to Christians, that is Christian anti-Judaism, which is defined as 'things Christian' that work against the interests of Jewish people, or seek to undermine Jewish culture or religion, and/or seek to promote Christianity as a 'new Judaism'.

This 'othering,' also known as Christian anti-Semitism, has resulted in countless forced Jewish conversions, pogroms, expulsions and deaths down the ages, the most recent of course, being the between five and six million deaths of the Shoah.

Even so, Christians have a great deal of trouble recognising the particularity of Christian anti-Semitism, even in its most obvious forms.

The roots of Christian anti-Semitism lie in the passion, that is the story of the trial

and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, from the Gospel of John. We retell this story every year, every Lent, Holy Week and Easter. The readings on Good Friday, when we

concentrate on the torture and death of Jesus Christ, are the climax of six weeks of thinking, praying and reading about Christ's humiliation and death.

The Gospel tells us of a group of people called "the Jews" who are responsible for the death of Jesus (who was, of course, a Jew). "The Jews" are responsible for the death of the one whom the Johannine community, the group for whom this gospel is a statement of belief, and later, all who follow Christ, called the Messiah. Uncritical readings of this passage, have led Christians to the view that Jews, then, and somehow now, are responsible for Jesus the Messiah's death.

The truth of who is responsible for the death of Christ is something quite



different. Simply put, the Romans did it. It was a common enough death for young Jewish men, crucified on a tree. Pilate was clearly quite indifferent to the fate of

Jesus or the many other young Jewish men killed during the Roman occupation of Palestine. One of the sins of this story is the indifference of Pilate.

For two millennia, the untruth, the falsehood, the propaganda has been, that Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus our Messiah.

Thoughtful Christians know the untruth of this and seek to compare the fiction of the perpetrators of Jesus' death with an understanding of the 'othering' that occurs in our world. Avoiding 'othering' of those not like us is a life-long pursuit. 'Othering' is buried deep in our culture. But let's begin to consciously identify it, and work against it, this Easter.

Embracing the Transitions

Rev Dr Mary Caygill

One of my favourite quotations from the children's classic *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, has the following conversation between Alice and the Caterpillar.

"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar ...

"I - I hardly know Sir, just at present," Alice replied rather shyly, "at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then."

I am about 10 boxes of books away from completing the unpacking of my possessions having shifted from Auckland to Kaiapoi. In mid-January, I transitioned geographically from the largest and most ethnically diverse city in Aotearoa to the quieter, satellite city located 15-minutes from the city of Christchurch. There are many new areas to explore since I was last resident in the city of my birth. I am also negotiating the transition from a full-time to half-time ministry appointment, more intentionally preparing the groundwork for what and how retirement will be.

Every transition begins with an ending. We have to let go of the old thing before we can pick up the new one. Not just outwardly but inwardly, where we keep our connections to people and places that act as definitions of who we are. All transitions are composed of an ending, a neutral, in-between zone, and a new beginning. During each transition I have made over the already varied seasons of my life, it is the in-between zone I find most difficult, and needing the greatest degree of patience for and with myself. It's easy to fool oneself that it's possible to move seamlessly from the before to the after - the ending



straight to the new beginning. The life cycle simply doesn't work that way. Interim, waiting time is always of critical necessity and is where I most learn and grow as a person.

In his beautiful book *Benedictus a Book of Blessings*, Irish poet and writer, John O'Donohue dedicates a poem of blessing "For the Interim Time." He names and describes these very in-between times being as a familiar place that no longer looks like itself.

He writes, "Everything is withheld, and the way forward is still concealed." In essence, interim time, is disorienting. The very paths we may have walked become unfamiliar and strange to us. We can find ourselves stumbling, disoriented, feeling quite lost. We must find our way afresh in new territory, in new ways.

It is during such in-between times, a vital part of every transition, O'Donohue puts into sacred language of

blessing, the very encouragement of remaining patient and being open to the possibility of renewal, the movement towards a new season of life and faith:

As far as you can, hold your confidence.

Do not allow your confusion to squander

This call which is loosening

Your roots in false ground,

That you might come free

From all you had outgrown.

What is being transfigured here is your mind

And it is difficult and slow to become new,

The more faithfully you can endure here,

The more refined your heart will become

For your arrival in the new dawn.

One does not live by bread alone

Motekiai Fakatou reflects on Luke 4:1-13

In Luke (4) Jesus passes earthly testing by the devil, and ministry rejection by hometown people, before he entered the ministry of the kingdom of good news.

Testing people who minister for God is God's way of preparing them to minister. He wants to give them experiences in relying on Scripture and experiencing the power of his Spirit rather than on human qualification, methods, and abilities.

Prophet Isaiah foretold of the suffering servant, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishments that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed (Is 53:5).

Although Jesus is the Son of God, he was not exempt from being tested. To accomplish God's plan, Jesus was baptised in the Jordan River and anointed by the Holy Spirit. Then the Spirit led him into the wilderness, where for 40 days, the devil tempted him.

The pattern Satan used for the test draws on three significant areas of human life: physical nourishment, prosperity or possessions, and power. The devil said to him, 'if you are the son of God turn this stone to bread.' Jesus answered him, 'it is written, **one does not live by bread alone.**'

Satan began with Jesus' hunger and went on to raise doubt as to his divine Sonship. Jesus had just heard a voice from heaven calling him 'Son.' Satan suggests that he verify his Sonship by turning a stone into bread.

The problem for Jesus was to know whether the voice he now heard came from the same source as the heavenly voice. Jesus' answers came from the word of God not from his own human knowledge and abilities.

So, what does not agree with the scripture does not come from God. The essence of the temptation may have been to use miraculous power to supply bread for his own personal needs. Turning stones into bread wasn't necessarily bad. The sin was not in the act but in the reason behind it.

As we are journeying through the season of Lent, we may feel the heat, stress and strain of the wilderness but let us be reminded, that the same Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness, is the same Spirit leading us through our wilderness and this unprecedented time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Apostle Paul encourages the Christians of Ephesus that their battle is not against flesh and blood, but rulers and authorities of this dark world. To withstand their attacks, they must depend on God's strength and use every piece of his armour. Put on the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ep 6:17).

We are facing trials and temptation day by day, but let us be encouraged by our Lord Jesus Christ, who demonstrates to us that the best weapon to encounter temptation, is the Word of God. One must not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Mt 4:4).

The Word of God and the Holy Spirit which strengthen Jesus through his tests in the wilderness, will be sufficient to feed and strengthen us as we journey through this season of Lent towards Easter.



Self-Care and Self-Management of Omicron in Phase Two

Ruby Manukia-Schaumkel, Legal Advisor

On 15 February the nation moved into Omicron phase two, to slow the spread of the virus and keep the health service and communities protected as transmission spreads. Phase two reduces isolation times and contact tracing methods. People are expected to self-isolate and have a Covid test if they are experiencing symptoms. There are concerns from families that live in crowded homes that don't have proper isolation space. It is important to have an isolation plan to keep everyone safe. If someone in your household gets Covid-19, the whole household will need to isolate until everyone has fully recovered (3 days symptom-free).



Omicron spreads rapidly and everyone in the house may catch the virus. So be ready, make a plan and have a korero or talanoa about implementing the plan before your household is impacted. People need to take steps to reduce transmission, including getting a booster, wearing masks around other people and ensuring locations have the best possible ventilation.

Those who have had their booster and do not have underlying health conditions, will experience Omicron generally as a self-limiting infection. The symptoms can include gastro-intestinal upsets, a sore throat and runny nose. People need to prepare to work and/or study from home where possible and ensure that they have enough food and medications at home to last seven to ten days.

If you require care services, decide if you need to isolate together. Think about what happens with children, other dependants or shared custody arrangements.

Plan how you will minimise the spread to household members who are not unwell and find activities to keep you occupied. It is a timely reminder of the importance of looking after oneself and

each other by continuing to be vigilant with health and safety, and taking all the necessary precautions to prevent being affected by exposure to Omicron by mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing and disinfecting equipment. This message should be reinforced in synods and parishes.

Rapid Antigen Testing (RATs)

RATs are a type of test for Covid-19 that are generally taken with a front of nose swab and can be taken under supervision or by yourself. RATs are a valuable tool during the Omicron outbreak because they return results faster (in about 20 minutes) compared to a PCR test. This means PCR testing can focus on protecting our key workforce (healthcare), surveillance (at the border) and diagnostic (hospitals and acute care) settings.

There are currently 11 different types of RATs approved for use in New Zealand. The Ministry of Health will use its supply of RATs to support those that need them the most, such as priority populations and the critical workers. People should get a Covid-19 PCR test if they feel unwell.

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) Testing

The PCR test detects the presence of a virus if you have the virus at the time of the test. The test could also detect

fragments of the virus even after you are no longer infected.

Close Contact Exemption Scheme

To ensure health and critical services can continue to function, fully vaccinated workers who fall under the 'critical services' category and are an asymptomatic close contact will be eligible for access to free RATs under the Close Contact Exemption Scheme.

During phases two and three of the Omicron response, critical workers who provide a health, MIQ, emergency service or are critical workers of a registered critical service provider and who are vaccinated and asymptomatic close contacts of a Covid-19 case, are able to continue to work outside their place of residence, as long as they return a negative RAT prior to beginning their work shift during the isolation period and follow specific health protocols. Critical workers who are participating in the scheme will only be allowed to go to and from work or to collect their free RATs kits from their closest collection site. They must otherwise stay in their place of self-isolation.

People need to be more vigilant than ever before, understanding the tests and exemptions, and taking all precautions to minimise the spread of the virus.

HE WHAKAAROARO

PREFACE: KEITA HOTERE

Our most recent Minita-a-iwi from the Taranaki Rohe, Hemi Haddon recalls his public experiences of the use of the Lord's Prayer, in English and Māori. His engagements here and overseas remind us of a different time when te reo Māori was not as widely spoken as it is today. Te Pire Reo Māori (Māori Language Act 1987) has provided a vehicle for te reo to be recognised, acknowledged and used through everyday use in government institutions, in education, the courts and in the media amongst other avenues. Hemi offers his story.

TE INOI A TE ARIKI: HEMI HADDON

"Tū te pō

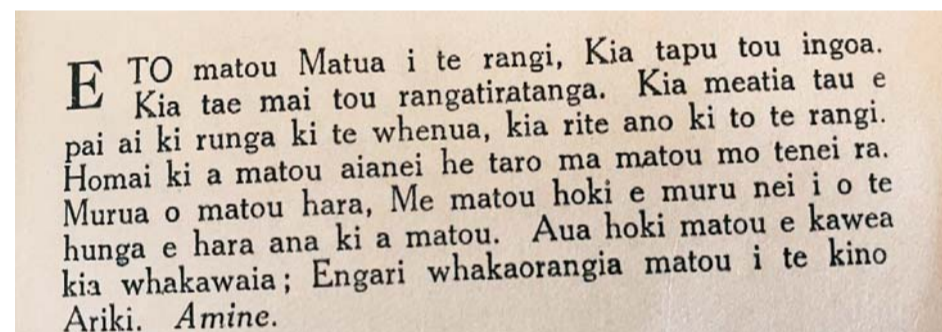
Tū te ao

Tū ka Maranga ki te whāiao

Ki Te Ao Mārama"

"The route to Maoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through a passionate,

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tōu Ingoa
Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga
Kia meatia tāu e pai ai
ki runga ki te whenua
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi
Hōmai ki a mātou aianei
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei ra
Murua ō mātou hara



Extract from a 1927 Maori Prayer Book.

subjective approach. That is more likely to lead to a goal" (Royal, 2003). As I reflect on conversations and statements made by the lecturers and those between my colleagues regarding the subject matter of, 'The Lord's Prayer' this quote by the late Māori Marsden, an Anglican priest comes to mind. I use this as a way of expressing my view that Taha Māori and Taha Pākehā are two quite different approaches when it comes to studying scripture, such as The Lord's Prayer.

The depth of meaning with the language in te reo is evident through the pronunciation, the *rangi* (the sound and rhythm) of the *kupu* (words) conducted by the *Kaikarakia*, (lay preacher) which resonates with the *wairua* (spirituality) of a skilled practitioner.

The Pākehā version of the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy Name
Thy Kingdom come
Thy will be done
on earth
as it is in heaven
Give us this day
our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses

can also be spoken with a tune/ rhythm, and is the most familiar of prayers across churches in Aotearoa, New Zealand and throughout the Christian world.

My earliest recollection of participating in the public pronouncement of the Lord's Prayer en masse was during weekly assembly at Otahuhu College in 1976. School assembly was a way of introducing formal activities such as prayer for educational purposes and to provide a structure for managing the fluency of the gathering in relation to the seating of the many students for the announcements, the current events, the notices, and the agenda of the day.

I cannot say that I remember very much from those school assemblies in terms of the messages of the day, except that we recited the Lord's Prayer and avidly

Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i o te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou
Aua hoki matou e kawea kia whakawaia
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino
Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga
te kaha me te korōria
Ake, ake, ake
Āmine.

offered our own interpretation including adlibbing with supplementary dialogue, as schoolboys and girls have done time immemorial. "Give us this day our daily bread- 'and don't forget the butter.'"

In 1978 I left school to join the New Zealand Army. It was while I served with the Army in 1979 that I first heard the Lord's Prayer recited in the te reo version by our Chaplain Padre Patua-Nathan. I recall standing (rigidly to attention) on the parade ground in Waiouru and in Burnham Camp, Canterbury and again in Dieppe Barracks, Singapore hearing "E to mātou Matua i te Rangi....".

Not knowing the reo at the time didn't matter to those of us soldiers who had no reo, it was the fact that it was in te reo and it was a karakia. The wairua had a profound effect on us.

The decades of the 1970s and early on in the 1980s was not like today in relation to the widespread availability of te reo Māori classes and wānanga. Back in that era if you were Māori, generally speaking, you were one of two groups: a native speaker of Māori or you weren't. The native speakers in my age group were limited, therefore to hear our te reo in this format filled us all with ihi, wehi, and mana.

as we forgive them
that trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil
for thine is the kingdom
the power and the glory
Forever and ever
Amen.



The Courage of Hope



Carol Barron, National Coordinator.
Source: Lifewise website

Hana* self-referred to a Family Start service when she was five months pregnant. Hana's two older children were in her sister's care but were removed by Oranga Tamariki due to her sister being a victim of domestic violence. The father of the children was in prison serving a lengthy sentence.

Hana was a victim of severe violence from the father of her children and suffers from mental health issues. She used alcohol and drugs before she became pregnant, but stopped when she found she was pregnant.

Hana had support from Probation, mental health services, and alcohol and drug counsellors. She wanted to keep this baby and said she would do whatever it takes to keep the new baby and get her older children back. Representatives from the seven

agencies providing wrap-around support attended a Family Group Conference (FGC). They supported Hana keeping the new baby noting the significant changes she had made.

A Strengthening Families hui arranged prior to the FGC, provided a robust plan to support Hana prior to and after the birth of her pēpi. The plan included Hana living in supported accommodation for three months after the birth. Oranga Tamariki were invited to the Strengthening Families hui but did not attend.

At the FGC, the Oranga Tamariki Social Worker did not look at the plan that all the services had agreed to for keeping Hana and her child safe. Despite all services reporting on the remarkable life changes Hana had made, Oranga Tamariki indicated the timeframe of these changes was not long enough and a decision to uplift at birth was made.

This is a real story of a woman who contacted a Methodist Alliance member to get support. Hana's story is representative of many others who hold

onto the thin hope of keeping their child when they have had a previous child removed.

Currently the law allows Oranga Tamariki to uplift a child where the parents have previously had children removed from their care. This law shifted the onus of proof to parents to prove they could care for their subsequent child. It took away the hope for whānau and increased their stress and feelings of helplessness.

Removal of tamariki is traumatic for both parents and their children. Parents experience profound grief and loss. Siblings are often separated and children experience attachment issues. Birth mothers who have had children removed have themselves experienced significant and multiple adverse experiences in their childhood, and over half had spent a period in and out of home care.

Removal of a child can result in unresolved trauma which can lead to problems with substance misuse, and mental health issues. The fear of having a subsequent child removed, which at present is a real possibility, compounds this grief, loss and trauma.

This law assumes that people do not have the ability to change. It removes any hope that parents have for their future and also breaches Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Currently there is a Bill before Parliament that repeals the subsequent child provision except where the parent has a conviction for murder, manslaughter, or infanticide. The Methodist Alliance supports this change to the law and you can read our submission on the MCNZ website.

An alternative option

Lifewise and Wesley Community Action provide a successful alternative to taking children into care. Mana Whānau is a six-month

intensive in-home parenting support programme that is specifically designed to keep tamariki who are at risk of moving into care, or have been removed by Oranga Tamariki, to live safely with their own whānau in their own communities. The programme is whānau-led and based on neuroscientific research. When toxic stressors are removed, parents are able to think beyond immediate issues and build new skills and capabilities. Whānau identify the stressors, as well as their goals, priorities and the pace of the work.

The programme supports strong and responsive relationships between tamariki and their whānau and builds natural whānau and community supports to ensure long-term resilience. A parent graduate of the programme reported,

"I felt so stressed and overwhelmed. My life felt out of control. I had no space to think. It all kept piling up. Sorting some of the stuff out calmed everything right down. I felt like I could take a step back from it all and start thinking again."

Graduates of the programme report that the most critical components of the programme are the staff member's faith in the whānau's ability to parent and holding that hope, even when at times the whānau or Oranga Tamariki do not.

Rev Desmond Tutu said, "Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." Mana Whānau staff provide this hope in the darkness for whānau. They have the courage to believe people can change. They stand firm in their hope for whānau when Oranga Tamariki does not have it, and even when the whānau have lost hope. This hope, support, care and love reflects the transforming love of God.

Carol Barron, National Coordinator
03 375 0512 | 027 561 9164 |

* Names were changed to protect the identity of the people in this article.



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ALLIANCE**

NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

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

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

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

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PO Box 5416, Papanui, Christchurch 8542

methodist.org.nz/methodist_alliance



HELP Prevent River Blindness



Dr Murray Sheard received his PhD in Ethics and Philosophy from the University of Auckland. He has worked in international development for over 15 years and is the Chief Executive Officer of cbm New Zealand.



Wajir and her great-aunt Mairige. Wajir's eyes are safe from River Blindness. Mairige has been blinded by River Blindness.

Millions of people living in sub-Saharan Africa are affected by a debilitating Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) called Onchocerciasis, more commonly known as River Blindness. NTDs infect more than one billion people in the world's poorest communities. The diseases thrive in impoverished, tropical regions where there is poor sanitation, unsafe drinking water, numerous insects to spread disease and little access to health services and government support.

River Blindness is caused by the bite of black river flies that infest sub-Saharan Africa where more than 99 percent of the disease occurs. Worldwide 36 million people are blind yet 75 percent of blindness is preventable or treatable.

In Nigeria, where the disease-carrying blackfly parasite is rife, an estimated 31 million people are at risk of blindness and a variety of debilitating and disfiguring skin conditions caused by River Blindness.

The parasites bloom into hundreds of thousands of baby worms that knot up together into lumps that can be felt under the skin. Those infected rub and rip at their skin, until it becomes thick and rough. They call this Elephant Skin. Even worse is Leopard Skin, where those

suffering cut deep into the affected areas with knives, hooks and sharp implements, leaving flesh scarred and mottled. The parasites eventually go for the warm, moist eyeballs, chewing through the optic nerves. Eyesight dims and fades. The blindness cannot be reversed.

Approximately 90 percent of NTDs can be treated with medicines. Pharmaceutical company Merck donates the worm-killing antibiotic Mectizan which must be administered once a year to kill the blackfly larvae. It is crucial that everyone receives their tablets on time, at least once a year. If tablets are missed, the worms in their body may become mature enough to resist Mectizan. These worms will stay in the body, causing parasites, unbearable pain and eventual blindness.

Through the generosity of cbm supporters, Mectizan antibiotics are able to be delivered by cbm-funded field workers to those at risk of being bitten by the blackfly and contracting River Blindness.

cbm, also known as Christian Blind Mission, is an international Christian development organisation, whose mission includes delivering life-changing medication, support and surgeries to those disadvantaged by poverty and disability. cbm aspires to follow the teachings of Jesus in Luke 10:27 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself." To find out more visit www.cbmnz.org.nz.

If I Were 20 Again!

Rev Dr Frank Hanson, former Executive Director of the Methodist Education Division (1978-89) and Principal of Trinity Theological College (1989 - 99) reflects on his life in ministry and how his priorities may have changed if he had his time over.

In my dotage I have been thinking what it might be like for me if I were a young person again, now preparing for the Methodist ministry. Over 65 years ago I was doing just that. I was working full-time in the Department of Justice (to get some life experience), doing some part-time lectures at Victoria University, attending Leaders, Circuit and Synod Meetings in Lower Hutt and Wellington, undertaking Lay Preacher's Training classes and some services in the Hutt Valley. I was active in Boys Brigade and Bible Class leadership and involved in sporting activities. All this was firmly set on preparing for candidature for the Methodist ministry. That was something I eventually embarked on in the Wellington Synod and then Conference in 1956, along with my contemporaries, David Mullan and Max Hornblow.

If I had my time over again I wonder what would be important to me now in my preparation? Let me set out a few thoughts of relevance for myself, not intended as a blueprint for others.

1) I would seek to become as technologically literate and competent as possible. I would have grown up with the computer, the smart phone, and other essential contemporary equipment. However I would want more than that. "Communication" has always been a basic part of the ministerial vocation whether through worship leadership and preaching, or written material, or in the variety of conversations and leadership functions that come the presbyter's way. Today's communication competence needs to be more sophisticated and creative and I would need to sharpen my skills.

2) I would try to be more knowledgeable of contemporary literature and music. During my career I read myriads of books on theology,

biblical studies, Christian education, spirituality, Christian history and Christian magazines. They were a major part of my life and the church's book allowances were incentives to spend in that direction. I don't decry their importance. But in that time I rarely picked up an important book of modern fiction or contemporary poems or aspects of world affairs. It was only with the onset of feminist and liberation theology that I began to read books by women authors. I must say that since retirement, some 20+ years ago, the proportions have shifted in the opposite direction - for which I am grateful. I wish it had started much earlier.

3) I would work diligently at learning te reo. I have had two or three abortive attempts at learning the Maori language during my lifetime. In fact I am still trying. But I'm afraid my capacity to persist has been rather weak. If I were 20 again I would have grown up surrounded by Maori language and culture. But that would not be enough. The importance of the use of Maori language is going to increase throughout our society in the future and those who deny it are looking backward and not forward. Even more importantly, I would be candidating for "a bicultural church seeking to become multicultural", as it was expressed in the 1980s.

I am sure there would be other areas where I would want to spend what time and energy I had. Perhaps I would be setting for myself some impossible "extras" given what else I would be trying to accomplish. I know too that some of these areas would be supplemented and built on in further education, including theological college. I also know that what I would feel right for me would not be right for others. I am not intending to lay these on anyone of a younger generation. It's where my thinking has taken me today. Tomorrow might be different!

But there is one thing that is not different. Although it is hard, demanding and beset with numerous frustrations, I would still imagine Christian ministry as an exciting place to be. And if I were 20 again, I would still commit to the same track - if the church would have me!



Wajir (aged 10)

River Blindness is a devastating and isolating health condition.

In Nigeria the blackflies, that swarm down by the river, bite and inject dangerous parasites into your body which bloom into hundreds of thousands of baby worms. They cause unbearable itching under the skin, moving through the body to the eyes where they slowly and painfully destroy sight. This blindness cannot be reversed.

Adults and children, like Wajir, need sight-saving Mectizan medicine to kill the parasites and help protect their eyes from the unbearable itching and life-long loss of sight caused by River Blindness.



To learn more, scan the QR code using your mobile phone camera or go to www.cbmnz.org.nz/mairige-wajir9



cbm
christian blind mission



Support your local NZMWF/APW as they help others

Tui S Salevao, President NZMWF.

Charity comes from Latin noun 'caritas' derived from the adjective 'carus' meaning 'dear' but originally meaning 'Christian love of your fellow human beings.'

In America, post-Thanksgiving they celebrate Giving Tuesday, a day created with the purpose of providing the giving season with a kick-start to help those in need and to remind people about holidays being more than just a means for commercialisation and consumerism. Celebrations include fundraising, assistance to local hospitals, blood drives,

food provision via local pantries, helping children buy books, helping animal shelters and providing food to the less fortunate. There are no rules to celebrate this day; all that matters is for you to be generous to all.

We don't need to wait for a specific day or time to make a contribution to community; it can be done at anytime and anywhere. What matters is the person's intent and motivation. Charity is a reason for happiness whether done financially, physically or by any other means. Being generous and charitable brings immense joy.

Every year NZMWF and APW get together and consider an International and

National cause to help women, children and families. Proceeds raised via fundraising are shared equally between each cause.

Our Special Projects for this year were chosen and endorsed at last year's NZMWF National Convention. Our national cause is for ATWC (Anglican Trust for Women and Children). They provide emotional and practical support in the areas of parenting skills, child behaviour, relationship issues, early childhood, education, abuse, neglect, family violence, separation, loss, grief, poverty and housing. They help parents, families and caregivers to gain the life skills they need to improve the lives and

futures of the children in their care.

We work closely with CWS and for our overseas project this year we are looking at a theme relating to Family Wellbeing for women and girls impacted by Covid-19 in the Pacific Islands. At the time of Convention, Fiji was hit badly and over time more of our Pacific nations are being affected by Covid.

NZMWF together with our sisters in APW find ways to fundraise to help these special projects. We encourage you to support your local fellowships in their fundraising efforts. We welcome any ideas you wish to share for discussion at our next Special Project for 2023 meeting.

Introducing the NZMWF National Executive

Rosalina Noa-Toilolo, National Minutes & Distributing Secretary.

It is an honour to have been chosen for the role, and I thank the NZMWF executive team and our God almighty for the opportunity.

I am the youngest and only girl of five children. My father is the late Rev Nomani Noa and my mother who I am forever grateful to have today is Manino Noa. I am 40 years old and have been married for 19 years. Together we have been blessed with three children and three fur babies (two dogs and a cat).

I am born and bred Methodist. Being brought up as the pastor's child, I was fortunate to attend and grow up in our churches, starting from Hastings Methodist, Ponsonby Methodist, Manurewa Methodist, Papatoetoe Methodist and Panmure Methodist for the last 25 years. This is where my father retired and passed away, and as a family we decided to stay and serve.

My prayer is that our loving Lord bless our NZMWF Exec team with his wisdom and guidance, to fulfil these roles and to serve the members of the NZMWF to the best of our ability, and ultimately deliver the divine plan he has for NZMWF during our term. Amen!



Rosalina Toilolo with her family. Back (l to r) Daughter Brooklyn, Rosalina holding Milo, her mother Manino and husband Vasa. Front (l to r) Sons Leniks and Peti.

Welcome to March Kidz Korna

Away with the Manger

Thank you, Christchurch West Methodist Parish for sharing your nativity story.

The children and parents at Christchurch West presented a Christmas drama, *Away with the Manger*. A photographer and reporter were keen to get the perfect photo of Mary, Joseph and Jesus for the local paper. As the Christmas characters appear one by one they are squeezed into the photo. Finally the manger with baby Jesus is pushed out of the way to make room for Father Christmas!

With the excitement and anticipation of Christmas we often let decorating the tree, wrapping the parcels, attending parties and lots of other activities crowd out Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas.



Christchurch West Methodist Parish presented a Christmas drama, *Away with the Manger*.



For your bookshelf

Thank You



Author & Illustrator: Dana Winter

Publisher: Beatnik Press

Felix discovers the wonders of nature when, lying in bed, he sees the moon

Dreamily he dances too quickly into the night and then can't get home.

He meets the night and the sun, the bees and a bear but no-one will help him. Eventually he meets the stars and moon who grant him his wish.

This is a delightful story, beautifully illustrated with an easy to read text. It would also be great to share with very young children.

Thank You Puzzle

Can you find all these words in the puzzle?

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

ANIMALS DOCTORS FAMILY FLOWERS FOOD FRIENDS
JESUS SCHOOL SUN TEACHERS TREES WATER

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



TCYFM Full Steam Ahead in 2022

Michael Lemanu, *Tauwi Children, Youth and Family Ministries - National Co-ordinator.*

With another pandemic-affected year underway, there are many exciting plans and initiatives that are in store from the TCYFM office this year. Although Omicron is making calendars float in a constant state of uncertainty, exciting and innovative resources are still being developed for children and youth ministry across Te Hāhi.

• Lent 2022

Easter Camps, on a large scale, unfortunately fall victim to Omicron this year, meaning that physical gatherings of young people from across the Connexion over the Holy Week aren't possible in the current climate. That said, we are looking to create resources and online events that can fill this void and give young people the chance to engage virtually across the church through Lent. This is a continuation of what was done last year where online verse of the week wallpapers were created in English, Samoan, Tongan and Fijian languages. For 2022, we're excited to explore the timeless message of Lent in new and refreshing ways that engage with a variety of different mediums.



• Creativity

Building on the work of our Conference Music team from Conference 2021, this year looks to be a huge year for creativity and music. We will continue to increase our Mission Resource music library database and in addition, will provide opportunities for new young music to be created in the church which will reflect the context the church finds itself in today. This has been in the pipeline for a few years now.

Plans are underway for the establishment of a network for creatives within the church - bringing together and creating platforms for young performing artists across the Connexion. Our Hāhi is blessed to have a high calibre of creatives, many of which are contributing to New Zealand and Polynesians arts at the highest level. Creating opportunities for them to feed their gifts into the life of the church is an exciting prospect.

• Let the Children Live

Let the Children Live enters its final year as a Connexional Vision in 2022. Work will begin shortly to reflect and review LtCL and its effectiveness. We will be inviting contributions from all corners of the church as we engage in this review, providing a chance to look back and highlight some of the key works that have been done. This of course while Mission Resourcing continues to provide quarterly funding for children and youth initiatives via the LtCL Grant.

• TYC Online or Hybrid Events

This year would typically have marked another Tauwi Youth Conference but Omicron has gotten in the way. Preliminary planning is beginning around what can be offered as a form of Connexional Youth leadership training. We are excited by the possibility of what can be offered as an online/hybrid form

of training for young people, especially in light of the success of Conference 2021 as an online event. Whether in person, online or in a hybrid of both, 2022 will include some opportunity for Connexional youth to gather in this new normal.

With the church also marking its bi-centennial this year, we believe there is a great opportunity to have young people and young voices involved in marking these celebrations.

• Resourcing Your Ministry

Other resources continue to be developed and uploaded to our website for your use and contribution. Blogs, devotions, prayers, music, networking and more sit on our Mission Resourcing website. We also invite contributions from people across the church.

Though Omicron continues to cast a sense of uncertainty over the year ahead, we remain committed to Connecting, Resourcing and Inspiring young people across the life and breadth of the church. As the world has slowly come to terms with the reality that Covid has presented, we remain active in our attempts to keep the church moving in its mission and purpose. So even though Omicron has done its best to disrupt, we can keep calm, trust God and keep moving.

For more info on the resources above, visit our website www.missionresourcing.org.nz/youth

A bi-monthly column exploring questions concerning faith issues.



Ask Auntie

Auntie welcomes your queries. No concern is too small, whether it is an opinion, advice or information that you are seeking.

Please email the editor with your questions. We respect your privacy.

You are welcome to choose a pen name for anonymity.

CONCERNING FAITH

Dear Auntie,

My parents expect me to go to church but why? What is the purpose of church? Jessie

Dear Jessie,

Only your parents can tell you their reasons. But, questions are important and you raise a very important one. Church youth were less bothered by your question in times past. Attending church was what their family and friends had done for generations. It was their social hub. As well as choirs and working bees, church organised dances, concerts, socials and camps, and promoted sport. Many NZ churches had their own tennis courts. Now, the wider community provides these and much more. What makes Church different from most other 'clubs' is that it isn't based on ability or age. Everyone is welcome.

The core reason for going to church is to worship God and learn how to live a godly life. Church provides rituals. Rituals give a community structure, and honour the

sacred i.e. the things that are most important. What is important, each of us needs to work out for ourselves. My definition of a godly life is, 'respecting the Divine and all creation, and doing what I can to contribute to society and help others lead fulfilling lives.' The Divine is everywhere and can be worshipped anywhere but worshipping with others can be enormously uplifting. Doing good can be done alone but greater good is achieved by working with others. It was said of the first Christian communities, "See how these Christians love one another." This is surely the most important attribute of any community. By caring for its own inclusive community, Church equips its members to serve any who are marginalised. If your church is not doing good things for you, discuss what you would like with your youth leader or minister.

Never stop questioning and be true to yourself, Auntie

Dear Auntie,

I'm a bit of a retro fan with movies and have been enjoying the 1980s Indiana Jones series. I'd like to know if the 'Holy Grail' and the lost 'Ark of the Covenant' were real things in the Bible? Max

Dear Max,

An interesting question! The answer is yes and no. The words 'Holy Grail' are not in the Bible. 'Ark of the Covenant' gets 45-65 mentions depending on the version. The Ark is described in detail (Exodus 25:10-25) and was the most sacred possession of the ancient Jews. It

housed the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments.

The Holy Grail is a fanciful name given to the cup Jesus drank from at the Last Supper, most likely a small bowl used by Jewish peasants for drinking. The Bible gives no description or information about it being passed around the table. Leonardo's famous painting of the Last Supper depicts a cup for each person. Over time, many legends have evolved around the Cup, and the Ark, imbuing both with fantastic powers. Stories and legends are meant to entertain and inspire.

Value imagination and embrace fantasy that conveys truth, Auntie



Tonga: Help is on its Way

Christian World Service Director Murray Overton expressed his thanks to supporters for the immense support for the Tonga Emergency Appeal. By mid-February donations had almost reached \$150,000.

CWS is supporting the village based Ama Takiloa women's network, through its longstanding partner Tonga Community Development Trust. The women will repair rainwater harvesting systems, plant fruit trees, replant family and community gardens, distribute water purification supplies, set up household poultry enterprises and provide community-based psychosocial support following training from the Family Centre.

"We have been so impressed by the love shown towards the people of Tonga and the commitment we all share to help them recover from the eruption, tsunami and associated trauma. Our prayers continue for Tonga. Together we can support many families get back on their feet," he says.

CWS welcomes donations to the Tonga Emergency Appeal at cws.org.nz or phone 0800 74 73 72.

Staff changes at CWS

Christian World Service said thank you and farewell to long serving International Programmes Coordinator Trish Murray who retired in February.

Jill Hawkey, on behalf of the CWS Board, acknowledged Trish's development expertise and the way she worked on the basis of true partnership, a model integral to CWS's ethos.

Former president of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, Dianne Claughton, spoke of their work together on the Special Project and their deep respect for Trish.

International partners sent multiple messages and videos, expressing their thanks and appreciation. Tamil Nadu fisherwomen, Board members of the Centre for Community Solidarity in Uganda and other partners spoke with warmth of Trish's contribution over the last 18 years.

In her message, Bimla Chandrasekaran from Ekta, working for gender justice in South India, summed up Trish's legacy.



Trish last met with the Ekta team in February 2020. Director Bimla Chandrasekaran sits beside Trish. Credit: Ekta.

"She was that kind of a person who would understand the ground realities and challenges faced by us. She was always open to our difficulties and together we were able to sort out our problems. The feedback on our reports was always very constructive and helped us to strengthen our reporting."

Rob Wayne has taken over the position of International Programmes Coordinator, and Lorraine Borrmeister and Kathlene Soo are CWS's new International Programmes Officers.

Ugandan Schools Finally Reopen



Ugandan children have spent 83 weeks out of school, the longest period in the world. A high teenage pregnancy rate and poverty have meant many have not returned. Credit CCS.

Ugandan students were delighted to return to school on 10 January. Schools had been closed for almost two years - the longest in the world. The government ran out of funds and could not distribute lessons or fund broadcasts after the first months of lockdown. The consequences have been devastating for children across the country. In August last year the government planning authority calculated 4.5 million of an estimated 15 million students would not return. Enrolment data is not yet available.

UNICEF says the loss of learning through the pandemic was "nearly insurmountable". Two years after the start of Covid more than 635 million children remain affected. Before the pandemic, 130 million girls were out of school. The numbers are likely to have increased.

In Isingiro District, where Christian World Service partner the Centre for Community Solidarity is based, the impact of the lockdown has been most severe for the families of HIV and AIDS affected children.

Director Charles Rwabambari says the students are excited to be back at school. The teachers are doing their best in poor classroom conditions with high student ratios. The students have been enrolled a year above where they were two years

ago but many have forgotten much of what they had learned. Katusiime is one student that has returned. She can be found in her year six class, breastfeeding her new baby in one arm while writing with the other. Fortunately the authorities have given permission for this 16-year-old to reenroll at her local primary school.

One of Katusiime's jobs is to walk three kilometres to collect drinkable water from the rock tank. On the way home one evening last year she was raped. She told her grandmother but she was too old and vulnerable to do anything. In time Katusiime gave birth and now she combines schooling with childcare and looking after her grandmother.

One reason students have not returned is because of poverty. During lockdown, students found low paying work or sometimes started their own businesses to meet the economic gap that has accompanied the pandemic. Their families need that income to survive now and cannot afford to pay the costs of going to school. Others have returned but cannot afford masks, shoes, books or uniforms.

"Getting girls back to school is a real challenge but necessary for the vital work of improving gender justice," says Murray Overton, National Director of CWS.

Gender justice is the focus for CWS's Summer Appeal. Donations can be made at cws.org.nz or 0800 74 73 72.

Thank you

for supporting the Tonga
Emergency Appeal for safe
water, good food and
psycho-social support



Muimui Folau 'ia Tavaketoto Fe'iloakitau Tevi clears ash after the eruption.
Credit: Fe'iloakitau Kaho Tevi.



**Christian
World Service**
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY
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REVIEWS

CINEMA

In 2001, our family enjoyed study leave in the United Kingdom. Top of the bucket list was Ireland. Arriving in Belfast by ferry, we went looking for a rental car.

The car we hired had a CD player, resulting in a search for Belfast music at a second-hand record shop. With Van Morrison turned up loud, we headed north, seeking links with ancestors and a Giant's Causeway.

Belfast the movie is filled with Van Morrison songs, from well-known favourites like *Bright Side of the Road* to new songs specially written, like *Down To Joy*. For music journalist Stuart Bailie, Van Morrison's Belfast is a "microcosmos of innocence and child-like visions" (*Trouble Songs*, 2018, 30).

Apt, given the way *Belfast*, the movie views the conflicts in Ireland through the eyes of 8-year old Buddy and his Protestant family. All the innocent Buddy wants is to talk with his dying grandfather (Ciarán Hinds) and walk to school with Catherine (Olive Tennant), a classroom crush. Instead, he must navigate life by



avoiding armed soldiers and dodging religious tribalism.

Belfast is an ode to place. Central is a scene in which Buddy's Ma (Caitríona Balfe) describes her street as a microcosmos. Every person is known, every child looked after by neighbours.

It is these bonds of community that are being torn apart by bigotry.

The perverse ways that nationalism and historical grievance can distort Christian faith is seen early in a fire and brimstone sermon. For weeks after, Buddy draws forked roads. But which, he asks his older brother (Lewis McAskie), is the narrow road?

Buddy draws with pencil and paper the existential challenge for his family. One response to violence is to fight and recruiters and troublemakers circle round Buddy and his family. Another is to flee. Buddy's Da is offered work and accommodation in England. Such is the forked road for Buddy's family and for all whose micro-cosmoses are disturbed by bigotry and violence.

Fleeing Belfast is a recurring theme in the music of Van Morrison. His *Astral Weeks* album was released around the time *Belfast* the movie was set. *Madame George* is a song about leaving, while

Review by Rev Dr Steve Taylor

Astral Weeks paints visions of another world, another time, another land. Van Morrison uses Christian texts - a home on high, a stranger in this land, going to heaven - to justify a fleeing from reality.

Fleeing this world is a temptation ever present in Christian theology. But what if the home on high that God is preparing is peace and goodwill in the here and now? What if, in the new song Van Morrison crafts for *Belfast*, faith is about coming down with joy? Such lyrics certainly harmonise with the glad tidings surrounding Christ at Christmas.

I returned to Belfast in 2018 to speak at an academic conference alongside music journalist Stuart Bailie. During my stay, I shared lunch with Presbyterian minister, Rev Steve Stockman. Together with Fr Martin Magill, a Catholic parish priest, Stockman began 4 Corners Festival. Across religious tribes, they chose to neither fight nor flee. Instead, they offered innovative events that celebrate with joy the unique places that are Belfast.

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

ON PAPER

Cranes Ever Flying

Introductions to Asian Christian History and Theology

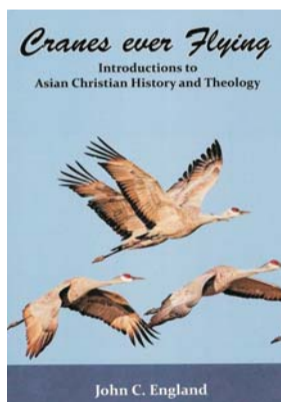
Author: John C England.
Publisher: Indian Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge, Delhi, India/Association for Theological Education Myanmar, for Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia, 2020.
337 pages.

Reviewer: Gary A Clover

Rev Dr John Carol England's insightful, small, pioneering work, *The Hidden History of Christianity in Asia - the Churches of the East Before 1500* (1998) first introduced me to the neglected history of Asia's ancient, much enculturated, "Churches of the East". *Cranes Ever Flying* is an important, much fuller, inspiring overview of Christianity in Asia that "can inform" today's faith, and help us understand the richness of its history and the variety and depth of its theology. It's also opportune as Asia's Christian minorities today face much persecution and pressure to conform to non-Christian national agendas.

Dr England has a long and respected scholarly involvement with the East Asia Christian Conference as Secretary for Education and Ministry. He has spent his life immersed in the practice, study and teaching of Christianity in Asia. In New Zealand his formative theological education was with Knox College, following two years at Trinity College in 1950-51. *Cranes* draws upon his extensive documentary sources assembled for the *Asian Journal of Theology's* "Research Guide to Asian Christian Theology", and recently re-discovered Christian material remains, inscriptions, sculptures, crosses, tombs, frescoes, paintings, buildings, ruins, coins and seals.

Asian Christianity has deep roots going back to the beginning of the Common Era. One learns that Syrian Orthodox, Eastern "Thomasite", and "Nestorian" Christians reached South India and East China in the 1st century CE. By the eighth and ninth centuries 18 Metropolitans and scores of bishoprics governed the Eastern churches which by the 11th century CE outnumbered the West's Latin and Byzantine churches combined. Also that it has preserved an older, still accessible, "exciting symbolism and language" which many of today's Methodists might appreciate: Creation is "an arrow kept in flight by the



power of God". God's name is the "Lord of Heaven" constantly present everywhere. The Holy Spirit is the "pure cool wind". Salvation is the desert's "saving dew"; or from Buddhism, "the safe raft on a sea of fire". Jesus' earthly life was "for the sake of all humankind". The relation of the earthly to the life hereafter is that of "what a mother's womb is to the child".

England's summation will be "startling" to some. It's that Western Christianity's emphasis on the salvific theology of the cross, sin, and the redemption of creation, is "not normative" Christianity. More normative is Asian Christianity's spirituality and religious consciousness centred "upon 'The Way' rather than upon the Logos; upon 'Life as a whole' rather than only works of reason", all espoused within contextual theologies embedded in national struggles for independence from Western colonialism, political oppression, and post-colonial social and cultural reconstruction. But Western Christianity has consistently disregarded the "Churches of the East" because of long-standing suspicions of Asian churches established by so-called "Nestorian heretics" who rejected the ontological mysticisms of Nicaea and Chalcedon.

Cranes, is structured in two parts. Part one is eight chapters that present a text book overview of Asian Christianity's history, theology, ecumenical inter-faith movements, and the art of the early Christians who from Persia penetrated along the silk routes to south India and Sri Lanka, and through "inner Asia" to China, Japan, then South East Asia and Java. It concludes with biographical sketches of eight innovative "Watershed theologians". Part two is an introductory selection of studies that chart "basic approaches to living our theology" centred on the "life-of-Jesus-with-others" theme.

I found reading this erudite, substantial, scholarly work heavy going. Roughly a quarter of the text in each chapter is "Endnotes", and "Select Bibliographies of works cited". The sole, fold-out map, even when magnified, remains unreadable. Nevertheless, this monograph of exquisite scholarship is highly commended. But I advise: tackle in small doses.

The Making of Biblical Womanhood

How the Subjugation of Women Became Gospel Truth

Author: Beth Allison Barr
Publisher: Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2021. 245 pages.
Reviewer: John Meredith

The February issue of *Touchstone* included a review of the book, *To be Fair* by New Zealand District Court Judge, Rosemary Riddell. Many judges in New Zealand are women, including Chief Justice Helen Winkelmann. But there was a time when a woman presiding over a court of law was unthinkable.

That women's roles were limited and predetermined was the message conveyed to Beth Allison Barr from her earliest years. She was taught that in the church and in society generally men lead and women follow; men wield authority and women obey. Why? Because the Bible teaches that this is the way God has designed creation. She was told repeatedly that marriage offered the highest fulfilment for a woman and that once married she would be expected to obey the 'household codes' in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Colossians 3: 18-4:1 and 1 Peter 2:18-3:7. Other passages from 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 were quoted to support the view that women must not teach or hold authority over men. A subordinate woman was a godly woman. This was stated to be gospel truth.

As a serious student Barr made her own study and came to believe that, rather than teaching that women must always be subservient to men, the so-called household codes were really challenging the gender hierarchy of the Roman Empire and urging Christians to uphold the worth and dignity of every human person.

Through her studies Barr was

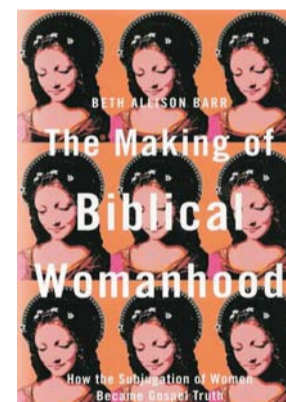
convinced that in 1 Corinthians 14:34-38 Paul was quoting the claims made by Corinthian male leaders that restricted a woman's role and required women to be silent in church. Rather than agreeing Paul countered this with cutting sarcasm as he asked in effect, 'Are you the only ones who understand God's word?' Barr saw Paul as affirming women as teachers and leaders by listing in Romans 16 the women who were his helpers. As a deacon Phoebe was invested with apostolic

authority and Junias was described as prominent among the apostles. These were not subservient roles. Barr concluded that if women have been later kept out of leadership within the Christian community including preaching and priesthood, this has not been based on biblical authority.

Comment is made on opposition to gender

neutral or inclusive language in modern Bible translations. Opponents see this as God's word being subverted by liberal feminism but Barr is convinced that inclusive language is essential if the unlimited grace of God is to be made clear.

As an associate professor of history, Barr uses her scholarship to provide glimpses of how a masculine narrative of church history and a selective interpretation of scripture without consideration of its context has led to patriarchy being grafted on to the gospel. She illustrates this from her own painful experience of conservative evangelicalism. Even if this is not something we have experienced, the book is worth reading because Barr demonstrates clearly that rather than accepting traditional beliefs, asking questions plays a key role in the search for religious truth.





Records See the 'Light of Day'

Ian Faulkner, President, Wesley Historical Society



High Street Wesleyan Chapel and Pitt Street Church baptism register 1844-1972 held Methodist Archives.

In April last year Connexional Archivist, Jo Smith, advised me that 40 or 50 years ago some Methodist records, previously held at Pitt Street Methodist Church in Auckland Central, had been placed 'on loan' with the Auckland Public Library.

The Archivist was seeking assistance in facilitating the 'repatriation' of the records to the national archive in Christchurch. None of the longstanding members of the Pitt Street congregation were able to recall the records being loaned to the Library. Those Pitt Street members asked me to view these prior

to any action being taken.

In the intervening 10 months the Library has been undergoing repairs and my request to view the records could not be granted. This changed on 16 February 2022, when a three-hour slot was allocated. I was able to view most of the records that were listed in a document stating what was held. For research purposes the originals and copies of such records as the Cradle Roll for the Auckland Wesleyan Chapel in High Street, the Register of Baptisms for the Wesleyan Chapel, High Street and for Pitt Street have an Auckland flavour. The Schedule of Pew Rents for the Wesleyan Chapel, High Street, hints

at the methods adopted to provide funds for the maintenance and extension of the complex there. Pew Rents were standard in Wesleyan chapels at the time. Today there is evidence of the charges made at Pitt Street on a plaque displayed in a side room. They are now a curiosity. Likewise the Register of Marriages recorded at the Wesleyan Native Institution, Three Kings, has an Auckland interest. Many of the names of those in that register were from other parts of the country: some referred to as students - part of the Institution's community at Three Kings.

The other documents such as the Registers of Baptisms and Marriages at the Wesleyan Missions, Hokianga and Kawhia, invoke the question of why these were lodged at Pitt Street. I'm sure that the detail concerned will be of interest to those researching whakapapa, where forebears were from or associated with these mission station sites. I was interested to see some records of the Christian marriages included space for recording any prior 'marriage' arrangements that may have been entered into by the couple, and the opportunity to list any "issue" (children); others referred to the date of the reading of Banns.

Two of the manuscript documents referenced as being lodged were not amongst those that I viewed. These were the Auckland Wesleyan Chapel, High Street / Pitt Street Wesleyan Church, Trustees Book (minutes and accounts), 1846 - 1874; and the Auckland Circuit Minute Book, 1846 - 1882. Perhaps these contained some

'confidential' material, as access to them was limited to the Auckland Regional Archivist then working from Hames House in Turner Street, Auckland City, and one other. An appended note advises that a Register of Baptisms, 1844 to 1971, had been returned to the Pitt Street Office in 1982. This is now within the national collection in Christchurch. A further note states that in 1985 ten volumes of Wesleyan registers were uplifted by the second person listed on the restricted viewers list mentioned above. Further investigation may reveal the content of these and where they are located now. They are not housed at Pitt Street.

This was a valuable visit to the Auckland Public Library to view these records. From time-to-time the Wesley Historical Society receives enquiries about family members associated with Methodist/Wesleyan churches and settlements in Aotearoa and the Pacific Islands. Where a response to these enquiries cannot be readily referenced to WHS publications, these enquires are generally referred to the Connexional Archives. These documents once held at Pitt Street will be a useful reference point to add to the Connexional Archives. Discussions with the Connexional Archivist indicate that any registers held by the Library at the moment, when they are repatriated, will be indexed and included in the Methodist Archives Wesleyan Missionary Registers Index; and copies of any index made from these registers will be given to the Auckland Library and also to Pitt Street if they request a copy.

Unsung Methodists

Rev Donald Phillipps

Public Morals or Social Action

Percy Paris 1882-1942

Around the turn of the 20th century the New Zealand Methodist Conference formally established a committee to deal with the principal social concern of the times - temperance. It called the body the 'Temperance and Morals Committee' and so it remained for 30 years, until it was accepted that the Committee's brief was too "narrow", in both senses of that word. It felt its agenda was restrictive and it also had reached the point where temperance was a social issue, not an automatic social problem.

It is instructive to read the resolution that Conference adopted in 1933 in respect to a name change - that it would give the Committee "the widest possible scope and a name that is easy to handle." Those last five words speak volumes!

In fact, the report to the 1933 Conference dealt with such disparate matters as: Bible in schools, films and posters, social services, immigration and temperance. But it also made a lengthy "Pronouncement" (a weighted word if ever there were one) on the



Percy Paris.

unemployment problem. For decades the now named Public Questions Committee strove to keep up with the pace of change within New Zealand society. And there were not too many Methodist ministers who were regarded as knowledgeable critics of society or informed advocates of social change. Just a few were prepared to stand up and be counted; Ormond Burton, one of these, has already been a subject in this series.

Another was Percy Paris, whose death in 1942, aged just 60, was deeply felt in Wellington by more than his own church community. This writer can remember the sense of shock felt within his own

family when news of the death flashed around Wellington Methodism. Percy was from a well-known Dunedin Methodist family, and he started his active involvement in Church affairs with the Mission - probably influenced by such Superintendents as William Ready and WA Sinclair. He trained at Prince Albert College and was ordained in 1906. He served in Otaki, Invercargill, Warkworth and Te Aroha for the usual three-year stints, but from 1916 his ministries were longer and were all based in the larger cities - Dominion Rd. (Auckland), Sydenham (Christchurch), Trinity (Dunedin) and Taranaki St (Wellington). He married Violet Clark at Oamaru in 1910.

For 10 years from 1924 Percy was the editor of the NZ Methodist Times. This gave him a platform for developing (Brother Juniper's and Brother Giles' columns) his radical vision of Christianity - his social gospel. His years as editor covered the beginnings and the most intense years of the Depression, and the newspaper became known for its challenge to both Church and society on behalf of the "poor, the vulnerable, and the voiceless" (as Kevin Clements puts it). For a church periodical to advocate working for both social and political change was unusual (not unique) for its time, and the pulpit at Taranaki St became

a place where Labour Members of Parliament might be heard.

He was a leading member of the Public Questions Committee (based in Wellington), and a public voice in matters relating to Christian pacifism, monetary reform (he was a believer in Social Credit), and an end to unemployed workers' camps. He was a strong advocate for the Labour Party and its vision of the welfare state. Though averse to totalitarianism (these were the years of Naziism's rise), he believed state government was essential for the redistribution of resources and overcoming poverty. Such a position these days still hardly meets with everyone's agreement!

Percy Paris went even further. His Presidential Address in 1938 was, as Kevin Clements notes, a summary of his position in all the issues referred to so far, and he gave a "theological justification for every part of Labour's proposed social security system." So much for the supposed principle that religion and politics don't mix. What would a like-minded President nowadays have to say if he were of Percy Paris's mind? As the world becomes more, rather than less, divided, it has to be a person of similar conviction and, even bravery, to stand forward and offer a rational yet spiritual alternative.



O LE TAEAO MĀ LAMA NAI TAEAO MUA

Saunia: Utumau'u Pupulu.

O le taeao na totō fa'aifo ai manū mai lagi, ina ua avea le afioga i le Peresetene, Rev Andrew Doubleday e fai ma sui o le Ekalesia Metotisi Niu Sila, e fa'apaiaina ai le Susuga ia Paulo ma le Faletua ia Faapaiaaga Ieli, e fai ma Sea o le Sinoti Samoa, Ekalesia Metotisi Niu Sila.

O le aso ua ula, o le aso ua tau tupu, ina ua lalago fa'atasi moemitiga a le tagata fa'atuatua, ma le Alofa Tunoa o le Tapa'au sili i le lagi, ua sao ai ma uli le fa'amoemoe. Ua ātu ē ai nei la le faga i pa'au, ae loloma le faga i lalau, ma ua moni ai le tatalo ma le sa'afi a le fatupese Eperu, "Lo'u agaga e, ia e fa'amanu atu ia leova, o mea uma foi o i totonu ia te a'u, ia faamanūina lona suafa pa'ia, aua ua tau i manū le fa'amoemoe o le Sinoti Samoa ona o lou Finagalo Alofa.

O le fa'amoemoe sa lupe o le Sinoti Samoa aua le fa'apa'iaina o lona ofisa fou, le Afioga i le Sea o le Sinoti, le susuga Paulo Ieli, le Fofoga o le Sinoti, le Afioga ia Toleafoa Tuimauga faapea le Teutupe o le Sinoti, le Tofa Feagaimaalii Naasona Te'o, aua tofi ma tiute ua valaauina e le Atua mo lona Finagalo.

O se sauniga sa fa'apa'iaina faatasi ai foi ma Ta'ita'i o Tupulaga, le Tamaita'i ia Sina-i-Faleū Pupulu ma le Susuga ia Corinthian Ieli, ae fa'apea foi Tausi Itumalo ma Konevina o Komiti eseese o le Sinoti.

E ui lava o sauniga e masani ai le Ekalesia fa'apea le Sinoti Samoa, ae o se sauniga na silasila ai le Sinoti Samoa i le mamalu o le Atua, e ala i le vala'auina ma le fa'aogaina o ana auauina, e fa'aauuina le misiona o le fa'aolataga na ia ulua'i tapenaina.

O se sauniga matagofie ona vaega uma aemaise o le fetalai mai o le Atua e ala i lana upu folafola na tomatauina ai le Ofisa fou ma Ta'ita'i uma o le Sinoti Samoa e le afioga i le Peresetene.

O le afioga i le Peresetene, le susuga ia Andrew Doubleday ma le Sui Peresetene ia Etuwini Talakai, na ta'ita'ina le sauniga, ona o le fa'apa'iaina lea o le Sea o le Sinoti Samoa, le susuga Paulo Ieli ma le Faletua.

O le tatalo fai fa'atasi a le Sinoti Samoa, ia fa'amanuia tele le Atua i le tula'i mai o le Susuga Paulo Ieli ma le faletua ia Faapaiaaga i le ta'ita'ina o le Sinoti Samoa, aemaise o lona ofisa, ia auomanū o latou faiva ma tiute, ma ia tapenaina fa'ale-agaga i latou uma mo le feau ma le galuega ua vala'auina ai i latou e le Atua.

Isaia 40:10 Aua e te fefe, auā ou te ia te oe; aua le fetepatepai, auā o a'u o lou Atua; ou te faamalosia oe; e moni, ou te fesoasoani ia te oe; e moni, ou te taofia oe i lo'u lima taumatau e i ai le amiotonu.

O se aso foi na pā'i lagi ai le manogi o taulaga na osiosi e le Matagaluega Taeaomua, ina ua malama i lagi lona taeao, e ala i le valaauina o Matua o le Matagaluega, e ave ma Matua o le Sinoti Samoa.

Ia manuia tele lau malaga fa'ale-fa'atuatua Sinoti Samoa i lenei tausaga 2022, ma ia apepeleina lou soifua e lo tatou Matai Sili i le lagi, mai fita o le malaga ma le faama'i.



Rev & Mrs Ieli, family and supporters for Induction.



Rev Paulo Ieli, conducting commissioning service for Sinoti Samoa leaders.



Rev Paulo & Mrs Faapaiaaga Ieli Induction as Sinoti Samoa Superintendent.



Susuga Matafa Sione, speaker on behalf of Taeaomua & families.



Rev & Mrs Ieli and family members.



Rev & Mrs Ieli and Taeaomua Church family.



Presidential Team, Ex-Sinoti Samoa Superintendent, Incoming Sinoti Samoa Superintendent.



Gauna vaka Lede. The Lent Season



Na Lotu ni Veivakatabui vua nai Talatala Qase ni Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi.

Maciu 4:1-11

The Lent season in the Christian Calendar is a time of abstinence. Ash Wednesday (02/03/22), marks the first day and signals the approach of Easter.

E da sa tekivu lako curuma tale oqo na gauna vaka Lede. E tekivu taki e na siga ka vakatokai me siga Vukelulu ni Dravusa (Ash Wednesday). E tekivu na siga bibi qo e na 02/03/22, ka na cava yani ena dromu ni siga ena siga Vakarauwai-Tabu (Holy Saturday), 16/04/22.

E 6 na Sigatabu ni vakacegu ka rawa ni da kana ka gunu tale kina vakavinaka me bula ka kaukauwa tiko na yago e nai lakolako e na loma ni 40 na siga kei na bogi. E yaco tiko nai wiliwili ni 40 oqo e na vula i tubutubu (spring) e na vakasama vaka Valagi. Na gauna vaka Viti e kovuta na Vula ni Sevu.

Na 40 talega na siga kei na bogi qo sa gauna ni vakavakarau kei na noda dikevi keda vinaka tale (lialiaci) ena noda bula ni muria na Turaga ko Jisu Karisito. E dau vakananumi talega kina vaka yalo na nona a lolo ka Masumasu tiko ko Jisu e na loma ni veikau mai Jeriko.

E dua na kena i vakarau vei ira na Lotu va Karisito e na gauna e liu (Church Tradition) o'ya me dau caka e dua na Lotu ka boro e yadredra na lewe ni Lotu ka ra vakabauti Jisu Karisito na Dravusa. E kilai nikua me Ash Wednesday ka dau cavuti vata kei na vosa ka cavuta na Kalou vei Atama, Vakatekivu 3:19 " Ni ko sa kuvu ni qele ga, Ia ko na suka tale mo kuvu ni qele"

Na veretaki nei Jisu sai vakatakilakila ni veika talega e da na rawa ni sotava e na loma ni gauna vaka Lede qo. Na veiveretaki (Temptation) e vosa ni veibolei ka rawa ni rogoci kina na veika e tovolei me vakadrukai keda se vakacacana noda veiwekani vinaka kei na Kalou.

Na temaki nei Ivi kei Atama e nona i naki na gata me rau kania kina na ka vakatabui me rawa ni rau tawase tani mai kina vua na Kalou. O'ya na "tempt" mai na "Temptation". Na "tempt" e i vakavakadewa vaka valagi ni vosa va Kiriki (Greek) na "Peirazein".

Na i balebale dina va Kiriki ni vosa na "Peirazein" o'ya na 'Test', ka sega ni 'Tempt'. Na Veivakatovolei (Test) ka sega ni Veitemaki/ Veiveretaki (Temptation). Mai na vosa ni Kalou vei Eparama me vakacabori Aisake na luvena, e vaka tovolei (test-

taki) Eparama ga kina na Kalou. Na veiveretaki ka sotava ko Jisu e na loma ni 40 na siga e sega walega ni veretaki mai na Temptation, ia e 'test-taki' se vaka tovolei kina nona kaukauwa (resistance) mai vei Setani. E da na raica na vanua e tiko mai kina na i naki ni Kalou me vakatovolea na kaukauwa nei Jisu ka vakayagataki kina na vei temaki nei Setani.

E da sa dau raica ga vakalevu na yasana ni vei temaki/veretaki me sala ki na Bula druka. Sa dodonu me da raica ni sala ni vei temaki e i naki ni Kalou me vakatovolea ka rawa laveta na bula ni noda Vakabauta mai na dua nai vakatagedegede ki na dua tale.

E qai oti toka ga nona Papitaisotaki ko Jisu mai na Joritani sa vakakauti koya na Yalotabu ki na loma ni veikau. (Maciu 4:1) Sa qai kauti Jisu cake na Yalotabu ki na veikau me dau veretaki koya kina na tevoru.

Me da na vakananu tiko ni nona vakauti Jisu qo na Yalotabu e veikau, sega me laki temaki walega, me vaka e da kila, ia me na laki vaka tovolei kina (Test).

Bible Dictionary - Test : A trial to manifest a persons real character.

E cakacaka yaco na Kalou me vaka tovolei ka vakaukauwataki Jisu ni bera nona i lakolako ni veiqaravi. Nai wiliwili na 40 e kovuta e dua na gauna yalani va-Kalou (Divine space of time). E cakacakataki e na loma ni gauna yalani oqori e dua nai tuvatuva ni Kalou ka uto ni kena vakasama na veisereki, veisaututaki kei na vei vakabulai.

Na Taro me da na taroga se sa vaka tiko e vei na noda veikilai, bula vata, ka sala vata kei na noda Kalou ?

Na gauna vaka Lede oqo sa gauna vinaka ga ni noda liaci keda tale me rawa ni da veisau. Sa gauna me da vakananumi lesu kina ki na veika lelevu sa vakayacora oti na Kalou ki na noda bula.

Mai vua na Kalou, sa dau yaco mai e na gauna qo na nona veivatakilaki, veiyalayalalati kei na nona veivakamataliataki (Revelation, Covenant, Transfiguration). E na noda yasana, sa dodonu me talave vaka kina na noda so-Kalou vaka yalo ka talai rawarawa ki na nona vosa. Me rawa kina ni da vakasavasavataki, buli vou ka vakarautaki ki na veitalai ni Bula ni vakadinadinataki Jisu Karisito e



na vei siga.

Me'u tinia, na veisau ni gauna, sa kauta vata talega mai na veisau ni Bula. E na veika bula kece, e mate ka vuca na yago makawa, ka kadre se basika e dua na bula se yago vou.

E na vakasama vaka i Volatabu, ni da ciqomi Jisu Karisito, e na takali na bula makawa ka dodonu me basika e dua na Bula vou.

Na gauna vaka Lede oqo sa gauna ni Masu kei na Lolo ka waraka na veiceguvi ni Yalotabu. E da sa vakauqeti kece kina me rawa ni da votai vata kei na veibuli vou ni Kalou e tiko kina. Me biu na bula makawa ka yaco na bula vou.

Ia kevaka sa tu vata kei Karisito e dua na tamata, sa qai buli vou, sa lako tani na veika makawa. Raica sa yaco me vou na ka kecega (2Koronica 5:17)

Emeni.

Fai 'e Felonitesi Manukia Hoko atu 'a e huhu malu'i 'a e Vahefonua

Kuo fakahā 'e he Faifekau Sea kuopau ke hoko atu 'a e polokalama huhu malu'i 'a e Vahefonua 'i he mahina ni.

Ka ko e huhu malu'i ko eni foki 'oku 'atā ki ha taha pe he kominiuti Tonga.

Na'e pēhē 'e Faifekau Kalolo Fīhaki kuopau ke fakakakato 'a e ngāue ni 'i he mahino mai 'oku kei toe 'a e fituafe tupu Tonga ke huhu malu'i, 'o fakatatau ki he fakamatala mei he Potungāue Mo'ui.

Ko e tokolahi taha 'o kitautolu Tonga 'oku te'eki huhu malu'i 'oku 'i he vāhenga Counties Manukau DHB, 'a ia

ko e 'elia mei Mangere 'o a'u ki Pukekohe.

'I ha fakamatala 'a Christopher Puli'uvea, ko e tokotaha fakatotolo ki he malu'i hotau sino mei he ngaahi vailasi, 'oku lahi pē ngaahi 'uhinga 'oku 'ikai ō ai hotau kakai 'o fakakakato honau huhu malu'i.

Kau ai e ngaahi 'uhinga ko e te'eki mahino kiate kinautolu 'a e fakamatala kakato 'a e natula 'o e huhu mo 'ene malu'i hotau sino, fakapikopiko pea mo e ngaahi 'uhinga kehe kau ai e fakalotu mo e fakafaito 'o fakasino.

Ko e fakamatala eni 'a Chris ki he polokalama ako fakatautehina 'a e kau

faifekau mo e kau setuata 'o e Vahefonua, 'a ia ne tatakī 'e he puleako 'o e kolisi ako tohitapu 'a e Siasi Metotisi, Trinity College, Faifekau Toketā Nāsili Vaka'uta.

Na'e fakahā ai foki 'e he Faifekau Sea, Kalolo Fīhaki, kuopau ke hoko atu 'a e polokalama huhu malu'i 'uluaki mo e ua pea mo e "booster" kia kinautolu 'oku te'eki kakato.

'I he ngaahi fakamatala mei he Potungāue Mo'ui ko e pēseti 'o e kakai Tonga kuo nau huhu 'uluaki mo e ua 'oku 'i he tu'unga mā'olunga. Ka ko e huhu "booster" 'oku pēseti pe 'e fāngofulu tupu 'a e kakai Tonga.

Ko e polokalama huhu malu'i he mahina ni, 'e fakahoko pe 'i he ngaahi "pop up station" pe ngaahi feitu'u kuo fokotu'u fakataimi ke fakahoko ai e ngāue ni. Talu mei Siulai 'o e ta'u kuo'osi, mo e fakahoko 'e he Vahefonua 'i he fetokoni'aki mo e ngaahi kulupu tokoni 'i he tafa'aki mo'ui lelei (health sector).

Ko e ngaahi kulupu tokoni ko eni ko e The Fono, Langimālie Health Centre, Tākanga 'o e Kau Taki Lotu mo Sione Feki mei he Potungāue Mo'ui.

Below photograph shows Youth from the Vahefonua driving a vaccination pop-up station at Lotofale'ia. Ko e 'ata ena mei Lotofale'ia he taha 'o e ngaahi polokalama huhu malu'i 'a e Vahefonua.





Koniteina tokoni 'a e Vahefonua ki Tonga

Fai 'e Felonites Manukia

Kuo tu'uta ki Tonga 'a e koniteina tokoni 'e tolu mei he Vahefonua.

'Oku 'i ai foki mo e koniteina hono fā 'e fakakakato moia ke 'ave.

Ko e ngaahi koniteina ni ko e tokoni ia mei he Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila ki he polokalama Tēkina 'i Moana 'a e Siasi Uesiliana Tau'atina 'o Tonga. Ko e polokalama ni foki 'oku tokoni ki ha ngaahi famili ne uesia he sunami 'o Sanuali 15, tautautefito ki he 'Otu Motu Ha'apai.

Na'e tānaki pa'anga mo e koloa 'ofa 'a e Vahefonua mei he'ene ngaahi peulisi mo

e fai'angalotu. Ko e ngaahi koloa ne tānaki ko e me'akai, vala, wheel chairs, walkers mo e ngaahi naunau kuki mo e ma'ume'atokoni, hangē ko e peleti mo e kulo.

Na'e pehē 'e he Faifekau Sea 'o e Vahefonua, Kalolo Fihaki, 'oku fakafiefia 'aupito e fietokoni 'a e ngaahi siasi mo e kakai 'o e Vahefonua ki he uta koniteina ki Tonga.

'Ko hono lelei 'o e 'ave 'etau tokoni ki he Siasi Uesiliana Tau'atina 'o Tonga mo 'ene polokalama Tēkina 'i Moana, he 'e a'u e tokoni ki he ngaahi famili 'oku 'ikai ha'anau famili ofi 'i muli ni - tatau ai pe ha fa'ahinga siasi 'oku nau kau ki ai, 'e kei tufa atu pe.

"Fakamalo lahi ki he ngaahi siasi 'o e

Vahefonua he 'ofa fonua, 'ofa lotu mo e anga faka-Kalisitiane 'o tokoni ki Tonga."

Ne 'i ai foki mo e ngaahi hina vai mei he siasi metotisi 'i 'Amelika, 'oku taki ai a Faifekau Tōketa Saia Tu'itahi. 'Ikai ngata ai ka na'e ai e tokoni fakapa'anga mei he Connexional 'a e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila.

Na'e fakahā 'e he Palesiteni 'o e Siasi, Faifekau Andrew Doubleday, ki he Touchstone, 'oku mahu'inga ma'u pe 'a e tokoni ki Tonga he taimi 'o e faingata'a, hangē ko e saikolone mo e sunami he ko e ngaahi famili 'a e 'Otua.

"'Oku 'i ai e 'ofa lahi kiate kinautolu kuo uesia honau ngaahi nofo'anga," ko 'ene lea ia ki he Touchstone.

"Ko tautolu 'a e siasi 'e kau he tokoni ofi, fakataha mo e ngaahi pule'anga muli,

hangē ko Nu'usila ni mo 'Aositelelia.

"Te tau lotua foki ke fakaakeake lelei 'enau mo'ui mo honau ngaahi famili mo e 'api nofo'anga.

Tukukehe 'a e kau Tonga, na'e 'i pe foki mo e ngaahi tokoni fakafu'ituitui mei he ngaahi family kehe 'o e siasi - ko e tokoni fakapa'anga mo e koloa.

Na'e a'u mai foki mo e tokoni mei he ngaahi va'a kehekehe 'o e kominiuti - kau ai 'a e The Warehouse, Sikh Gurdawara community (Takanini), Auckland Tongan Police Officers, Northcote College, Aorere College and Rutherford College.

Images show the Vahefonua Superintendent, Rev Kalolo Fihaki, and his helpers with donated supplies and food for containers to be shipped to tsunami-ravaged Tonga.

