

Touchstone

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

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Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai One Man's Miraculous Survival

Felonitesi Manukia is a member of 'AtaOngo Tonga Aotearoa, the media and communications arm of the Methodist Church's Tongan Synod, Vahefonua Tonga. He shares an exclusive interview with Touchstone based on the miraculous experience of one man who defied incredible odds to survive the Tongan tsunami.

On any given Sunday morning Lisala Folau prepares for church, but when a tsunami hit Tonga the harshly crippled man instead found himself swimming for his survival. The 57-year-old father-of-five, and devout Methodist, swam over 14km and stayed afloat at sea for more than 27 hours before reaching safe land. His only ally during his fight for life was a half metre-wide piece of plywood that spanned from his chin to his belly.

Folau was swept to sea by the treacherous tsunami that swamped the

island nation on 15 January, after an undersea volcano erupted causing black rocks and ash to rain from the sky and triggering a bombardment of vicious waves onto many parts of the country.

“Not once did I give up hope of reaching safety,” he told Touchstone in an exclusive phone interview. “It’s human nature to be scared when faced with situations that could take your life. But I held firm in my hope and my confidence grew as the hours wore on. My faith in God remained as strong as ever.”

Folau’s “miraculous” ordeal began about 6pm on Saturday evening. At about 6am the next day, when the pitch darkness subsided, he was washed ashore a reef more than 5km away from his home on 'Atatā Island.

The Pacific kingdom is now recovering from the perilous tsunami that hit the tiny country. It has so far claimed three lives and has virtually wiped out many villages and low-lying areas and outer islands.

Neighbouring countries, including New Zealand, have responded with emergency disaster surveillance, reconnaissance operations and pledges of much-needed financial aid. Tongan expatriate communities here, Australia and the United States, as well as other parts of the globe, have mobilised relief efforts to provide for the thousands of families smothered by the tragedy of nature.

Survival a miracle

The waters at 'Atatā, where Folau, was swimming for his life, are notorious for killer sharks.

“They [sharks] are well-known to be around that area but luckily I never encountered one while trying to stay afloat. My last drink and meal and drink, a cup of coffee and a light snack, was on Saturday morning around 8am. Many hours had passed since then but that was the least of my worries as my priority was getting back to safe land.”

Folau, a lay preacher and a former head steward of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga (the Methodist Church in the Kingdom), said he spent much of his time afloat praying - not because he was scared, but because his faith in God never diminished in any shape or form.

“My faith carried me through,” he said.

On social media, Tongans abroad have called his heroic efforts 'nothing short of



Lisala Folau during happier times. Photo credit Talikivakaola Folau.

a miracle'. One poster on Facebook declared that every tragedy needed a hero's story and that Folau's plight, was, just that.

A son of Folau living in Australia, Talivakaola, also took to the social media platform to share his thankfulness.

“This is one story I'll never forget. While talking to my family in Tonga my tears were constant as I was thinking of my Dad swimming around at sea after the tsunami struck.

“I was crying so hard when imagining you drinking the seawater Dad, but you're a strong-hearted man.”

Fellow Tongans have described Folau's as a “mana” or miracle in their native tongue.

A long swim home

Folau, a retired carpenter, is disabled. He uses special home-made crutches to aid his mobility and often requires assistance walking. He stayed afloat and swam from his home island via a reef and an uninhabited island to eventually reach the main island of Tongatapu, an aggregate distance of more than 14km.

He was painting his house when warnings were sounded of a probable tsunami.

“My older brother, and a nephew came to help me walk faster. The first wave swept through our lounge, so we moved to another part of the house. That's when a bigger wave struck - one that looked to me to be way more than 6 metres. Be mindful that I am crippled. I can't walk properly because it's hard for me. We were taking refuge on the side of the house that's most inland. The waves were coming in fast but we managed to dodge the first couple.”



A graphic showing Lisala Folau's tsunami journey posted by his son Talikivakaola Folau on Facebook. Credit: Talikivakaola Folau.

Continued on Page 2.



One Man's Miraculous Survival

From Page 1.

But the waves became even more fierce. Folau and a niece, 'Elisiva, climbed a tree while his brother ran to find help. Just when they thought there was respite in the waves, they hurried down but a larger wave struck.

"I felt the waves just below us, 'Elisiva and I had nothing firm to hold onto and we were swept out to the darkness of the sea," Folau said. "We were trying to stay above water, calling each other's name. It was dark and we could not see but soon I could no longer hear my niece calling but I could hear my son calling."

At that moment, Folau made a selfless decision that he believes was the right one. He did not answer his son's call -

fearful that his son would risk his own life to save him.

"In truth no son will ever abandon his father or mother, no matter what. But, thinking as a father, I maintained my silence because if I answered he would try to save me. Despite the tough conditions and rough seas, I still thought I would be able to save myself but feared for my son's life. If anyone was to die it would be me - not my son. I floated and clung tightly to a piece of plywood and got washed onto a reef at the tiny island of Toketoke."

Around 6am on Sunday morning Folau could still hear the sound of volcanic activity around him. At dawn, he saw a police rescue vessel heading to his home island of 'Atatā.

"I tried to wave them down with a piece of shirt but they didn't see me. When I saw it [the boat] heading back in the Nuku'alofa direction, I waved again but they still did not see me."

By now the rough seas had eased. Folau's next thought was to get to the small uninhabited island of Polo'a, several kilometres away. He started swimming while clinging to the piece of plywood. He estimated he left the reef around 10am and grounded at Polo'a around 6pm that evening.

"I wanted to see if anyone else was washed ashore there but there was no one."

Folau realised he had survived the tsunami and it was just a matter of

swimming around 2km to the main island of Tongatapu. His thoughts were now centred on his niece 'Elisiva who was swept away with him. Much to his joy he later learned that she, too, had survived after safely making it back to shore on their home island of 'Atatā.

Folau's final task was to swim to "mui'i Sopu" on the western flank of the capital Nuku'alofa, at Tongatapu. He reached mui'i Sopu around 10pm, having left Polo'a around 9pm.

Folau finally managed to get to a public road and was picked up by a passing motorist and taken to the driver's home. He is now resting at his sister's home in Hofoa. Many of Folau's people from 'Atatā, including his family, have been evacuated and are, too, in shelters on Tongatapu.

Long Recovery Ahead



A seaside settlement on the island of 'Eua is demolished. Photo credit Verna Tukuafu.

Felonitesi Manukia

At the time of writing, the full extent of devastation in Tonga has not been finalised.

Naval salvage teams from New Zealand and Australia are in the Pacific kingdom to assess damage and initiate rebuilding of essential services and structures vital to the island nation's recovery.

The catastrophe knocked out an undersea cable essential for efficient online communication with the rest of the world. Telephone and mobile phones are now operating, albeit with lagging and static background noise interfering at times.

The volcanic blast also produced a mammoth ash cloud that contaminated drinking water sources and prevented relief flights from landing for four days following the tsunami.

The eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai, an underwater volcano about 65km from the main island of Tongatapu, sent its ash and clouds covering enormous areas of land, and swept away people's homes and many holiday resorts in the archipelago.

Expatriates, churches in Aotearoa, as well as the wider New Zealand community, have mobilised relief efforts to help people back home in Tonga.

First Response

Within a week of the eruption, The Aotearoa Tongan Relief Committee, co-chaired by two Tongan members of parliament - Jenny Latu Salesa and 'Anahila Kanongata'a-Suisuiki - packed more than 24 containers with supplies, including drinking water and non-perishable food, for the initial shipment to Tonga.

"The response by the public has been overwhelmingly great," Kanongata'a-Suisuiki said. "Many people from other cultures have also donated supplies," added Kanongata'a-Suisuiki, herself a Methodist.

The supplies were put in drums and boxes and packed into the containers. Some were donated to be handed to the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMO) in Tonga for distribution to affected families. Others were packed by individual families destined for their loved ones in the island nation, with no freight costs attached. Further shipments of supplies are scheduled for February.



Day of Prayer for the World

Local women invite you to join the World Day of Prayer on Friday, 4 March in your community. Aotearoa New Zealand is one of the countries that started this annual event.

This year's resources were prepared by women from England, Northern Ireland and Wales with the theme, "I know the plans I have for you". The women focus on moving from darkness to light through liturgy and in the stories of three women who have found new hope.

The worship and Bible study focus on the words of Jeremiah to people in exile encouraging people attending services to find hope in the challenges and uncertainties they face, especially during the pandemic.

"In some places the World Day of Prayer is the only time women organise worship. I encourage you to join us and use the materials in other services or for private reflection," says Pauline McKay, National President.

English artist Angie Fox embroidered the poster image. She says, "I am thrilled to be chosen to represent, in art, the prayers of the women of my country. I have so many memories of organising and participating in World Day of Prayer services at home and abroad and I love the feeling of togetherness, knowing that, all over the world, the same prayers are being offered in many languages, and cultures, churches

and meeting places."

Offerings from the services will go to the Bible Society, Christian World Service and Interchurch Hospital Chaplaincy as well as costs. The Bible Society plans to assist 3,000 Indian widows with Bibles, counselling, health check-ups, vocational training and other support. CWS will fund the Human Rights Foundation in India so Dalit (formerly called untouchables) and Tribal (indigenous) women can achieve greater human rights, especially as elected local government officials.

For more information contact your local World Day of Prayer organising group or Zella at wdpnz@xtra.co.nz

Resources including materials for children and young people are available on the new website: <http://www.worlddayofprayer.co.nz/>

The World Day of Prayer is a global movement of Christian women who come together in prayer and for action in more than 170 countries. Begun in the USA and Canada in the 19th century, it became a global movement in 1927.

This poster image was embroidered by Angie Fox. The open door towards the horizon symbolises freedom. The broken chains symbolise justice. The dove and the peace lily breaking through the pavement symbolise God's peace and forgiveness. The rainbow is a symbol of God's love for the world.



Fellowship and Fashion

In June, Whanganui Trinity Methodist Women's Fellowship held a "Fun Fashion Parade" as a fundraiser. Invitations were sent to six other Whanganui Church Women's groups and more than 40 women attended.

Many of the participating models wore outfits from past significant occasions; mother-of-the-bride, going-away outfits, opportunity shop specials and yesteryear gala events.

A delicate 90-year old salmon pink silk wedding gown on display stole the show.

The hall was decorated with vintage fashion items including dresses, hats, embroidered Christening gowns and wedding dresses. Outfits modelled on the catwalk included a pair of witches britches which drew laughter and shared memories of past fashion statements and styles.



Pat Williams models a wedding dress and a going-away outfit belonging to Lynette Francois. The show included a selection of wedding and bridesmaids' dresses from the 50s and 60s.

Support for Tonga

New Zealand Church leaders have issued a joint statement offering prayers and support for all those affected by the disaster. As a signatory to that statement, Tara Tautari, General Secretary, Methodist Church of New Zealand, requests your prayerful solidarity and financial support.

Donations are welcome in one of two ways:

- 1) Our Vahefonua Tonga Synod is coordinating efforts to provide emergency supplies to Tonga. Donations can be made to

Bank: BNZ Account: Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa

Account number: 02-0800-0110726-00

Reference: Tonga - Name of church or Donor

- 2) Our ecumenical agency Christian World Service is also directing funds to the Tonga Emergency Appeal: cws.org.nz/what-we-do/emergencies/tonga-emergency/

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. (from Psalm 46)



Report from the President Rev Andrew Doubleday

It never rains, it pours - 2022 has started

William Barr, former Attorney General to President Trump, has just published a memoir on his time serving President George Bush and later, President Trump. The title is, *One Damn Thing After Another*. Life can feel a little like that at the moment.

As the year opens we've been confronted with a volcanic eruption which has significantly impacted the home islands of our largest constituency as a church - Tonga. While communications have been difficult, it appears that the damage has been extensive. Rebuilding, particularly while trying to keep Covid out, will be challenging and take some time.

At this point we can be grateful that there appears to have been little loss of life. Miraculously so. Yet Tonga, and its people among us, face significant challenges over the coming years. It seems in the Pacific it's just one thing (e.g. cyclones, floods) after another. No sooner are they starting to get back on their feet than something else happens. In Tonga's case, the economy has been hit particularly hard as it is already



Andrew Doubleday.

significantly indebted to China who have been generous in providing assistance following former crises. The situation in Tonga affects us all, as ultimately we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers. Please keep our Tongan family generously in your hearts.

And it gets better/worse. As anticipated, Aotearoa is currently at 'red' in the traffic light Covid response system. Although we have a high vaccination rate the evidence is that Omicron is extremely infectious. Not only will this likely stretch our health services, a large part of the challenge is that a significant section of the population could find itself isolating at home at the same time. This

means that our healthcare services and all industries will be affected. Supply chains will be reduced, and supermarket shelves may carry less for a while. My encouragement is to quietly stock up on essentials as you are able. This will mean that we are likely to be less of a burden on others when the pressure comes on, and may be in a position to help those in need.

And wait, there's more. At the risk of sounding like a doom merchant, internationally the planet faces new challenges. As well as the ongoing threats posed by climate change, there is the possibility of wars - one close to home and another further away. Both Russia/Ukraine and China/Taiwan have real potential to be significant war zones this year. And it's not just about their cross-border relationships, it's also about the other nations that may be drawn into any conflict.

And finally, one more place to watch in 2022 is the USA as internal pressures build in a country increasingly polarised as a significant proportion of the population seem more than willing to embrace a form of strong-man authoritarianism in order to protect what they imagine to be their privileged

way of life. I fear for their future as a nation. Given their current place of influence, the aphorism "When America sneezes, the rest of the world catches a cold" is particularly apt. In spite of deserved criticisms about American hegemony, I'm not sure many of us recognise how dependent we are upon the USA for stability across the planet.

So there it is. 2022 stretches ahead of us. What will it bring as we lead up to our Bi-centennial Conference, 200 years in Aotearoa? We cannot be sure. It may be that by November this year we will have emerged into a new period of calm and peace.

This is God's world. It's easy to forget that - particularly when it looks like the wheels are coming off.

I think it was Martyn Lloyd-Jones who wrote in 1955, as the Cold War was at its strength, that God ultimately did not allow evil to prosper. That the sweep of history consistently told that story. Even the Thousand Year Reich, fresh in his memory at the time of writing, had lasted a mere 12 years - while a cause of much grief, it failed.

Let us step with courage and confidence into 2022. This is still God's world.

Providence: A Quest for Answers in Times of Disaster

Siosifa Pole, Director Mission Resourcing

It is natural to ask questions in times of sudden crisis or disaster. We react in different ways and we tend to ask various questions instantly. We look to all aspects of what happened and ask: How did it happen?

Why did it happen? Why couldn't we prevent it? What can we do? These questions reflect our sense of frustration, worry and uncertainty. We are

longing for comfort but at the same time looking for answers to all our questions. Often, it takes a while to be comforted with the help and support of others. Not having answers to our questions increases our frustration and despair.

I suppose this was the reaction of those in Christchurch when the 22 February 2011 earthquake happened. The people of Tonga had a similar experience on 15 January 2022 when the undersea volcano at Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai erupted

and caused a tsunami, and a hail of dust and ash covering the whole of the island kingdom. Tonga has never experienced a natural calamity of this scale before and that is why people reacted differently. Tongans in Tonga and in the diaspora viewed this dramatic event from different perspectives. Some viewed it from a theological viewpoint, which claims that God was in control of what happened. Others viewed it from a scientific perspective, which was based on the research of scientists claiming it was the movement of the tectonic plates causing the eruption of the volcano, which then triggered the tsunami.

Whatever opinion individuals have in their response to this natural disaster, I would like to ponder on John Wesley's opinion on providence. In his sermon entitled "On Divine Providence," he acknowledged God as Creator of all things and also knowing all things. He strongly emphasized the omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of God but did not elaborate on the presence of evil in our world. Yet, he claims that it is the goodness and love of God that identify the divine providence in harsh situations like the tsunami that devastated the people of Tonga.

John Wesley writes, "He hath made us, not we ourselves and he cannot despise the work of his own hands. We are his children: And can a mother forget the children of her womb? Yes, she may forget; yet will not God forget us! On the contrary, he hath expressly declared, that as his "eyes are over all the earth," so he "is loving to every man and his mercy is

over all his works." Consequently, he is concerned every moment for what befalls every creature upon earth;" John Wesley insists that it is God's love and mercy that demonstrate the divine providence in desperate situations.

Providence is all about a loving and merciful God who cares for the wellbeing of all creatures and living species in the global household, even in the midst of calamity and hostility. The nature of that God was revealed in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. In the midst of his suffering and death, Jesus was still proclaiming a message of love and forgiveness. People of like-minds are invited to share their love and kindness with those who are anxious in any natural disaster, which is a true expression of divine providence.

Rev Dr Keith Rowe in his unpublished paper entitled, *Pondering Providence* remarks, "Providence becomes apparent when we allow life to be enriched by awareness of God within and beyond and allow grace to be embodied in relationships and actions that become vehicles of God's providential care for others." There are dramatic stories that people in Tonga shared in the social media, which reflect God's providential love in crucial moments of their lives when the tidal waves rolled over the land.

Surely, the people of Tonga and those who are facing similar tragedy are longing for providential care and love in their suffering. How can we participate in this providential love and care? Who would like to be part of this providential love and care?



Methodist Trust Association

Income Distribution Rates to 31 December 2021

	3 Months	12 Month Average
Income Fund	3.58%	4.56%
Growth and Income Fund	1.81%	2.11%

Income distributions for the quarter totalled \$2,140,165

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Fond memories

To the editor,

I appreciate the writing of your regular columnist, Rev Donald Phillipps, who writes under the general heading 'Unsung Methodists'.

His column in last December's edition gave me many minutes of pleasant nostalgia. I am of the age where I can fondly recall the weekly radio broadcasting of Church services. In particular I well remember the Sunday evening broadcasts of the 1960s when (having acquired my very first transistor radio!) I could listen to the broadcast service regardless of what

the rest of the household preferred.

I have been musing, that in these Covid-19 days, how very pleasant it would be for me (and others of the same age and similar limited IT skills) to be able to listen and worship, albeit in a passive way. Pleasant though the thought may be, I accept that radio broadcasting of church services is unlikely to resume. Pity.

Notes of nostalgia warm me. Thank you Donald and *Touchstone*, for the memories.

Heather Kelly, Invercargill.

With Thanks

To the editor

I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to all who sent emails, cards and letters, and made phone calls, following the death of my wife Nola on 28 November, 2021. Your sympathy and comments were

greatly appreciated during this grief-stricken time. Please regard this as a personal response. With aroha to you all. Frank Hanson.

**Frank Hanson,
Lower Hutt, Wellington**

Israel not an apartheid state

To the editor,

I know 'apartheid' when I see it. Authoritative viewpoints as late as Jacques De Maio's of 2017 are hardly "outdated" (Brian Turner, *Touchstone* December). Whereas Archbishop Tutu's, dating back before 2008, may well be. Sadly the Archbishop's anti-colonialist ideology allowed him to swallow wholesale the false Palestinian narrative his PA hosts fed him. B'Tselem (not "B'Tselm") and Human Rights Watch are ideologically anti-Zionist who unquestioningly swallow the PA's Marxist, Moscow-originated, anti-colonialist narrative. Yet the great majority of today's Palestinians, like Arafat and Erekat, who poured through the Mandate's borders, porous to all except Jews seeking to escape from pogroms, are just as much "settlers". The truth is, the many Jewish families who never left are as "indigenous" as the "Arabs" who may trace their ancestry back to Canaan. Archaeologically, genealogically and historically, Israel is the Jews' "homeland". Under international law and post-WW1 treaties, Israel holds the best claim to all its sovereignty.

The Israel I lived in is not an apartheid state. Because, though I travelled on Israeli roads protected by walls and fences from Arab bullets, bombs and stones, I shared bus seats with Arabs. I saw Arab mothers peacefully strolling with their families next to ultra-Orthodox Jews. I knew Arabs who attended Israeli schools, and received likely the best medical care in the world. I know they vote and are

represented in Israel's Parliament and government. I followed street signs in Arabic, an official language in Israel. My kibbutz went out of its way to employ Arab Israelis. None of this was true for black South Africans under apartheid. Many countries are more deserving of the apartheid label - like Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Israeli checkpoints are a nightmare. But they're there because Palestinians are sent to stab and kill Israeli civilians, as in Jerusalem on December 7. The Oslo peace process failed because Palestinian leaders, with forked tongues, talk peace in English, but in Arabic inflame deadly "resistance" to expel Israelis "From the River to the Sea", as in 1948 Jordanian forces expelled them from ancient Jerusalem. Arafat rejected all peace plans which gave Palestinians 97 percent of their demands, and more through proposed land swaps, because an Israeli state would continue. That is anathema to Islamist ideology which sees the only Jews remaining being those who would live again under Islam's medieval, humiliating dhimmi regime.

Israel has its discriminations - as do we - but this doesn't make it an "apartheid state" - any more than does our Pākehā racism. Should opponents cease applying their ideological double standards to Israel and accept that there we have a tragic, "bloody national conflict", with right and wrong on both sides, only then may we pursue a respectful dialogue.

Gary Clover, Richmond, Nelson

HONEST TO GOD

Christ Now

Four distinct views of Christ are discernible in the community today.

Within the church, most would hold Christ to be central to its dramatic narrative of sin, salvation and being reconciled to God. There are also those who readily affirm the human Jesus, but think the Christ concept has outlived its usefulness. Still others interpret the Christ as a dynamic symbol that is central to living out the vision of Jesus. A fourth, atheistic, group rejects any notion of Christ, along with the church and everything it stands for.



Ian Harris.

If the title "Christ" is used to bestow an aura of the supernatural on Jesus, or to somehow turn him into a deity, that is not helpful in the modern secular environment. It also runs counter to all that modern scholars have discovered in re-establishing Jesus' essential humanity.

The New Testament has many angles on Christ, however, including one that still holds up in our changing world. In secular experience, Christ can be affirmed above all as an archetype, a mythic symbol that contains within itself a principle, a presence and a power.

Grounded in letters which the apostle Paul wrote to the infant church nearly 2000 years ago, this Christ reaches back into the teaching and example of Jesus, yet still resonates in people's experience today - which is only to be expected, because that's how valid religious symbols and archetypes work.

It's a concept that could only have developed in the way it did as Jesus' followers drew on their vivid memories of him. But it is not the same as Jesus the man. Paul is sometimes accused of ignoring Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God and replacing it with metaphysical speculation. I see him rather as developing the Christ symbol precisely in order to help Jesus' followers live the life of that kingdom in the world as they knew it.

Pointing to Jesus as a model would obviously help, and Paul does that. Models, though, are always at one remove from those who admire them, and Paul saw the need to trigger a transforming motivation within people. This he found by developing the notion of Christ within.

Ian Harris

So he writes of "Christ dwelling in you ... and you in Christ". At one stroke, that takes the concept of Christ beyond the human Jesus, whose life was bounded by time, place and circumstance, to a

quality of spiritual experience attainable in every time and place.

That need not imply belief in a world beyond this one: it stems rather from something deep in the human psyche. So, just as Buddhists talk of the Buddha within, Christians

speak of the Christ within.

As a mythic symbol, the Christ enlarged the early Christians' experience of Jesus and challenged them to rise to a new vision of God. It has three basic elements:

- There is the principle of the Christ within, on which all else hangs. Here Christ is conceived imaginatively as the vantage-point that gives people their basic perspective on how to live well. The sense of self can be all-consuming: dethroning the self by putting Christ at the centre changes the way people see both themselves and others - not by crushing the self, but by freeing and expanding it. At the heart of the principle is love.
- As archetype, the Christ becomes a lively presence within the psyche of those who open themselves to it. This is not the presence of some supernatural entity touching them from another world, but arises from fostering awareness of "Christ dwelling in you ... and you in Christ". This is what fills out what people know about Jesus' life and teaching, in such a way as to make that life and teaching vital in their own experience. Christ's presence is experienced and expressed as grace.
- Then there is power - the power of transformation, which re-orientates a person's life so fundamentally that they feel like a new being. Once it was assumed that the power came from a spiritual world beyond humanity. Secular men and women understand it rather as being generated within, as all that the Christ image symbolises plays on their imagination and makes them want to live as if God's kingdom were already up and running.

In these ways secular people can affirm the Christ as a living myth, empowering and energising them towards lives characterised by liberation, love and grace - even towards a new level of consciousness. If that archetypal Christ is passé, then so is Christianity.

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.





Honours for Our People



Joshua and Mataiva Robertson.

We are proud to share the achievements of Joshua Robertson and Falanisesi Fusitu'a Hafoka, two Pacific leaders and lay preachers with a strong connection to the Methodist Church of NZ recognised for their services to the community in the 2022 New Year's Honours List. And a belated acknowledgement to Mataiva Robertson, an award recipient from last year's Queen's Birthday announcement.

Member Of The New Zealand Order Of Merit

Long time supporter of the Methodist church and Pasifika community Joshua Robertson - Namulau'ulu Taotua Leaoa Joshua James Potoa'e Robertson - was recognised for his services to the Pacific community.

Joshua has been a member of the Sinoti Samoa Methodist

Church of New Zealand for more than 20 years, holding various positions including Convenor of Sinoti Samoa property advisory committee and member of the business committee. He is the President of the New Zealand Lay Preachers Association and under his leadership membership numbers have increased significantly.

Joshua has been a Pacific leader in the Taranaki region since 2003. In 2009 he helped revive the Taranaki Vaimoana Pasifika Charitable Trust, which has evolved into a community trust supporting Pacific communities in sectors across justice, education, social, health, sports and Pacific language and culture. Joshua helps organise the annual Taranaki Pasifika Day Festival.

He was instrumental in organising successful Pacific contracts with Aere Tai Pacific Midland Collective to deliver Whānau Ora assistance for Pacific families. He has coordinated and helped distribute food and hygiene packs to Pasifika households and seasonal workers in the Taranaki region, working with local iwi, government agencies and non-government organisations. He co-created a Pasifika health programme for the community during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Joshua was instrumental in an application to MBIE's Regional Fund for the renovation of the New Plymouth Samoan Methodist Church and worked with the contractors to employ local Pacific workers.

Joshua's wife, Itamua Muaiao'omalo Mataiva Robertson, was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2021 for services to women, youth and the Pacific community

Mataiva was elected General Secretary of the Samoan Synod (Sinoti Samoa) of the Methodist Church of New Zealand from 2012 to 2019, the first woman to hold the role.

During this time, Mataiva set up the Social Issues Committee and, through the Puna'oa o le Soifua Manuia

Trust, has led the delivery of family violence and suicide prevention training workshops throughout the Sinoti Samoa regions. From 2016 until 2022, she was elected as World General Secretary of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW).

Mataiva was National President of the New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship from 2010 to 2012. She has worked towards the

establishment of a National Samoan Women's Centre, with a property being purchased in 2019 for this purpose. She chairs the Vaimoana Pasifika Charitable Trust in Taranaki, initiating the annual Taranaki Pasifika Day festival and helping develop the Taranaki Māori and Pasifika Trade Training Scheme. She helped organise the Samoan Methodist Youth National Education Expo in 2010, has coordinated Pasifika youth programmes, and is a member of various trusts disbursing education scholarships. Through the Response Trust based in Wellington, Mataiva has planned and travelled to Samoa to install water supply systems and provide practical techniques for disaster mitigation, setting up a plant nursery and hurricane protection systems.

Honorary Queens Service Medal



Falanisesi (Frances) Hafoka

Falanisesi Fusitu'a Hafoka has been a leader and Minister in the Tongan community since 2012. She is a Lay Preacher and Sunday School teacher with the Auckland Manukau Tongan Parish.

As an ordained Deacon of the Methodist Church New Zealand, she works tirelessly for the Tongan elderly and disabled community groups, visiting homes to ensure they are connected and that their needs are supported. Since 2012 she has been a chaplain for schools under the Church Education Commission Life Walk, providing guidance for children as well as spiritual guidance and education to members of the community, bridging and supporting an understanding of Tongan culture, language and heritage.

Falanisesi has supported visa applicants and overstayers, offering assistance with resumes and work opportunities and assisting the community with the Glen Innes Advice Bureau since 2018. She has been a teacher in New Zealand and in Tonga and has worked with various South Auckland schools. She founded the elderly Tongan group, which focused on social engagement, wellbeing, and social enterprise and to provide a platform for vulnerable groups during the Covid-19 pandemic.



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NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

Covid-19: A lived experience

Jo Kernot, a friend of Trudy Downes, lives in New South Wales where she is General Manager of a nursing agency. In December Jo's family contracted Covid-19. She shares that experience with Touchstone readers.

Three generations share our family home including, Rob my husband (56), our children Rhiannon (20), Chantelle (18) and my parents Jenny (77) and Jim (79). We were all double vaccinated but still to get booster shots. A few weeks before Christmas, Rhiannon was unwell with a cold. She tested negative during that time.

Mon 20 Dec. Rhiannon was making Christmas cakes with her grandmother and couldn't smell the ingredients! We made her get swab tested (PCR) immediately.

Tue 21 Dec. Mum was stranded at the train station, and only Rhiannon could pick her up. They spent approximately 20 minutes in the car together.

Wed 22 Dec. Rhiannon received positive test results. We followed all protocols: Rhiannon stayed in her room with a bathroom to herself, no face-to-face interactions, and we increased ventilation. Meals were delivered to an exchange table, and Rhiannon sprayed everything with disinfectant before we collected dishes, which were washed in the dishwasher.

Mum tested positive six days later. She had a slight headache and runny nose for two days and isolated in her room for seven days. Rhiannon's partner also tested positive exactly six days after he had seen her however, he was asymptomatic (no symptoms).

Thu 6 Jan. After the range of negative PCR and Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs), we were given the all-clear to leave the house.

Fri 7 Jan. Ten days after Mum's positive test, Rob and I were planning to go to the

cricket. We both had negative RATs.

Sat 8 Jan. We had a great time at the cricket, sat in the hot sun and drank a few beers.

Sun 9 Jan. I woke feeling 'off'. I put it down to too much sun and being dehydrated. About 3 pm, I developed a sore throat and took my last RAT, which was negative.

Mon 10 Jan. I woke up feeling like I had been hit by a train; headache, sore throat, fever, total body shivers, heavy head and body aches. To be safe, I stayed home and got a PCR test. Progressively I got worse. I lost my voice, and my throat was so sore I could hardly swallow.

Tue 11 Jan. Rob started to feel unwell, and my results came back positive. By 1.00pm Rob felt as bad as I had the day before, and he developed a cough. By evening, I was so unwell that I called my GP. She could only recommend managing the symptoms. Rob and I both developed diarrhoea, with Rob also vomiting. Trust me; this was not pleasant!

Wed 12 Jan. I could not swallow my saliva or tablets or drink fluids. Our health system was overwhelmed, and I could not get any help until our pharmacist arranged some liquid anaesthetic for me, which I could syringe into my throat, allowing me to swallow.

Fri 14 Jan. The terrible headache returned, improving by lunchtime.

Sat 15 Jan. I awoke after 5 hours, needing Panadol, but thankful for the most extended sleep I had since the previous Sunday. I was able to move about and eat a proper meal.

Sun 16 Jan. Rob started feeling better.

Mon 17 Jan. Almost back to normal. I still have an annoying dry cough that NSW health says can last up to one month. My voice gets a bit scratchy if I talk too much.

Rob didn't go back to work until Thursday; he is still fatigued, has a cough, and needs an inhaler most days.

Rob and I were shocked that we got so ill compared to others we knew with mild symptoms; they reported it was just like having a bad cold. We thought we were prepared for Covid after two years of living in lockdowns and talking about nothing but bloody Covid. I honestly think we were unprepared.

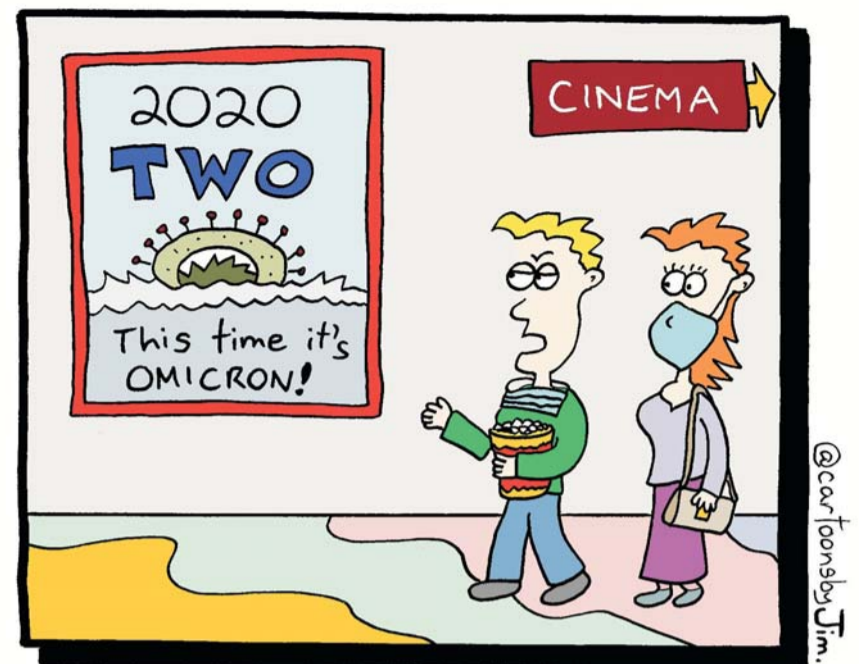
Things we wish we had:

- Panadol and Nurofen
- Dissolvable Disprin. Gargling and then swallowing gave much relief.
- A good thermometer
- Hydrolytes. Essential to stop dehydration and the ice blocks for sore throats.
- Easy-eat foods: soups (broth kind) and soft pasta.
- Lozenges and strepsils
- Disinfectant and Dettol wipes. We sprayed every time we went to the bathroom or into another area of the house.

Things we did have:

- Amazing neighbours to cheer us up and get us little things we had forgotten. Having people check in with genuine concern made a big difference to our wellbeing.
- KN95 masks for interacting with Covid-positive family members.
- Activities that helped against the mental health struggle of isolation. It's important to keep reminding people it doesn't last forever, and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

We all survived. Everyone had a maximum seven-day cycle from first symptoms to feeling better. Days 2 to 4 were the worst. Mostly we are incredibly grateful we had each other and our neighbours as support. Covid is a very isolating experience, and I can imagine that it would be frightening if you were on your own. I can only advise everyone to get prepared.



“Worst. Sequel. Ever.”



OUR PEOPLE

Lifewise Appoint New Chief Executive



Murray Reade

Lifewise Auckland is pleased to announce the appointment of Murray Reade, Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Pāoa, as its incoming Chief Executive. Murray's background incorporates leadership in community, government and innovation and he will bring a wealth of experience to Lifewise.

Rohan MacMahon, Chair of the Lifewise Trust is heartened by the appointment and is confident Murray will assist Lifewise in its continuing development.

“Murray has in-depth experience in collaboration with iwi and community for the betterment of those we serve. I am delighted that he has accepted this appointment,” says MacMahon.



Was there ever really unity in the Church?

Adrian Skelton,
UCANZ Executive Officer

An important new book, edited by two established US scholars and a younger Canadian colleague, is set to shake up our ideas about the nature of the early Jesus movement: *After Jesus Before Christianity* by Bernard Brandon Scott, Erin Vearncombe, and Hal Taussig (Harper Collins, 2021). A neat abbreviation, *AJBC*, is already being used for this book, available on Kindle – or, after a long wait, via the American Postal Service.

AJBC adopts the methodology of examining widespread evidence for “Jesus clubs” without using the anachronistic lens of a unified “Christianity”. Christianity as a term did not exist until the (Roman) Empire had taken over and defined the movement for its own purposes. We are blinded by believing that later Christianity

was the only direction in which these Jesus groups might have developed.

The brutal actions of Empire in breaking up nations and enslaving populations produced a large mass of non-Romans searching for *identity*. Jesus was a powerful symbol for some groups, who keenly adopted an allegiance to Israel in terms of following the God of Israel (claimed to be more than a local god), and reading and praying according to Israel’s traditions, which included ritual bathing.

The most common and frequent activity of these diverse groups was gathering for meals. Each group had its own rules, but common elements included songs and prayers (in the tradition of Israel) and memorialising the Israel-born teacher and leader, Jesus. These supper clubs held to a variety of practices and beliefs, which they might dispute with one another, for there was no central leadership.

Members were often slaves or others whose family situations had been broken up by Empire. Some lived in experimental family groups – outside of blood or married relationships – for mutual



support and economic sharing. The other novel feature of Jesus groups was flexible gender roles (“neither male nor female, but one in Jesus the Anointed”). Women were acceptable in leadership roles, in contrast to wider (Roman) society.

If they were so diverse – with different names such as “movement for the Saviour”, “school of the Lord” – what, if anything, kept the overall movement together? Was there a common denominator? Well, yes: it was their *resistance* to (Roman) Empire. This resistance gave people courage and maybe even kept violence at bay. They



made fun of Roman power by positing the alternative empire (or kingdom) of God’s compassion.

Caesar Augustus was contrasted with Jesus Anointed, as Lord and Saviour, and even God – all titles proclaimed by the Empire as belonging to Caesar. As well as filling out our knowledge of the fascinating first two centuries of the common era, this book reminds us of the power and potential unity of resisting the forces of oppression. It should be on every minister’s study list!

A Bird's Eye View of February's RCL Gospel Readings

Viv Whimster, Convenor, Methodist Lay Preachers' Network

Sometimes the lectionary allows us time to linger with the accounts of Jesus' early ministry as we ease our way into the busy start of a new year. This is one of those times and we are invited, through the whole of February, to meet and understand Luke's Jesus before we are directed on our Lenten journey.

Luke introduces us to the infant Jesus through his birth narratives. The child long awaited by the faithful and heralded by divine messengers, lives with the least in society. We are introduced to the adult Jesus through his baptism at the start of Epiphany, while an account of his temptation (Luke 4:1-13) is left until Lent. For now, we meet up with Jesus as he moves to Capernaum, away from the rejection he receives in Nazareth, his home community. To this point, Jesus seems to have been on his own, perhaps leaving his connection with John the Baptist. Now he seeks the company of a support team (Luke 5:1-11).

Who will he choose? Simon Peter has social standing - a house where he offers hospitality, a fishing business with boats and associates, and a personality that gives him the courage to take the lead. Despite these attributes, his toil can be completely unproductive. But with Jesus on board, his vessel becomes a launching pad for a life-giving message and storage for an unimaginably huge catch of fish -

and through this encounter he understands himself in a new and challenging way. Simon Peter, then his workmates, follow Jesus as his public ministry takes off.

We may be tempted to follow Jesus and join his team because of the benefits - sharing our resources and attracting a crowd, enjoying a successful fishing venture with plenty to eat and sell. However, we are reminded (Luke 5:12 through to 6:11 which are omitted as lectionary readings) that Jesus' ministry of healing, of noticing the vulnerable and rejected in society, upsets the status quo and starts a process of antagonism and opposition that will lead to suffering and death. No wonder Jesus needs a support team in God (6:12) and in his friends (6:13-16).

Luke then invites us to consider what it means to hear and be healed. We may join the crowd and listen to his teaching (6:17-38) and find that the things we think we value, as blessings from God even - wealth, good food, happiness, inclusion - may actually be barriers to following God. It's strange and unsettling.

The lectionary takes a leap then guides us through the miracle of feeding a crowd and Peter's recognition of Jesus' identity (9:8-36). Stern words follow, about denying ourselves and taking up our cross. Is this really the leader we want to follow? In case there's any doubt, we are afforded a glimpse of Jesus as the one chosen by God and invited? instructed? urged? to listen to him. We do, but will we be ready to follow Jesus on the journey ahead?

PUBLIC ISSUES

2022 Initiatives from the Public Issues Network

Marion Hines

Aotearoa New Zealand, along with the rest of the world, is going through a tough time with Covid at the moment. Although there are stunning examples of communities coming together for vaccine drives there has also been a disturbing lack of social cohesion during 2021.

Gone are the days of “We are one team” evident during the first lockdown in 2020. Now people's individual rights seem to have pre-eminence over the common good. What has changed?

Anecdotally there appears to be a correlation between those who are anti-vaxers and those who mistrust authority. Are we now paying the price of not listening to those without power in our society? How can we rebuild trust and confidence in our democratic way of life? What better ways are there for ensuring the voices of all are heard? How can we hold different views without judgment or vilifying the other?

What role can Te Hāhi play in our national and local life? Can we be beacons of hope for those despairing

and feeling rejected? Can we enable communities to thrive and people to be their best selves?

This year the Public Issues Network will be considering the impact of Covid on communities as well as exploring social cohesion and other key themes arising out of Conference decisions.

The Climate Justice Working Party will be developing an action plan using ideas gleaned at the Climate Justice workshop. The plan will include sharing the Climate Justice video and resources with synods and rohe. To share your suggestions or for further information, contact the committee Chair, Rev Siosifa Pole, Mission Resourcing, siosifa@missionresourcing.org.nz

The Racism in the Church and in Aotearoa Committee will be working on the Conference recommendation that the Public Issues Network facilitate conversations throughout the Connexion about how the Church can engage in anti-racism work, and take as its starting point a conversation about the history of the bicultural journey. To share your suggestions or for further information, contact the committee Chair, Rev Tara Tautari, tarat@methodist.org.nz



Church Emergency Preparedness and Readiness

Ruby Manukia-Schaumkel, Legal Advisor

It is important for Churches to think about 'emergency preparedness' given Covid-19, the Omicron outbreak, the Christchurch terror attack, and the current events in Tonga. As a starting point, faith-based organisations can start developing a 'site specific plan' for their property and an emergency response plan. Every organisation will have different needs and should adapt their plans to fit the needs of their particular site.

Disasters include natural occurrences such as floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, landslides, storms, volcanic activity, firestorms, and acts of terrorism, armed intruders and other hazards. The list is not exhaustive. Sudden and unexpected disasters can happen anywhere, anytime, including while at church. Although a church has many duties and priorities, the safety of the community should also be paramount. This means having a precise plan in case of sudden calamities. The plan needs to be organised and communicated in detail so that if something happens, everyone is prepared to act.



The more specific the plan is, the less time will be lost in the event of a disaster. The plan should provide information about a common gathering place in an emergency. There can be a first response plan that includes things like first aid, basic living necessities, food and water stored in a safe place. Cleaning up is also part of repairing any damage done to a church building. Tonga is currently in the cleaning up stage before recovery. The final step can be rehabilitating anything damaged in the building or property.

A church can also think about mitigating loss. For example, it may be necessary to choose another building to temporarily serve as the church building. Contact information for emergencies should be provided and information systems should

be backed up and kept in a separate safe place. Building blueprints are helpful when a building needs to be evacuated quickly.

Once an emergency preparedness manual is created, it is good practice to check the plan every six months and update the content with new and current information. Mandatory disaster drills should also be conducted regularly following review of the manual. This will ensure that any weaknesses in the organisation and understanding of the plans are noted and corrected.

There are resources and information available for emergency preparedness at:

www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group/

Contact your local Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) group to see if there is already a community emergency plan for your area. They can work with you to identify strengths, resources, risks and solutions to help your community get through an emergency. Local authorities are responsible for local civil defence



emergency management. They can provide emergency planning templates to suit your 'site specific plans'. No one size fits all.

People need to know what to do and where to go, when a natural disaster warning is

issued. For example, learning where the tsunami evacuation zones are for your area can save lives. To find your tsunami evacuation zones visit:

www.getready.govt.nz/emergency/tsunami/tsunami-evacuation-zones/

We are fortunate that Aotearoa New Zealand's network of DART (Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami) can assess tsunami threats. DART was invaluable in assessing the tsunami threat following the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai eruption. DART buoys are deep-ocean instruments that monitor changes in sea level. They detect tsunami by measuring changes in water pressure via sea floor sensors. Right now, they are the only accurate way we can rapidly confirm a tsunami has been generated before it reaches our coast.

For more information visit:

www.getready.govt.nz

M E T H O D I S T A L L I A N C E

Julie Roberts, Lead Grants and Giving Methodist Mission Southern

This year Methodist Mission Southern (MMS) will launch Young Women's House in Invercargill. This will be a purpose-designed residence for our teenage mums, with an average age of 17 years, who are living in unsafe and unsuitable situations.

Teenage parents are nothing new, but the support of teenage mothers is hope embodied. Hope for their future that they will continue an education to become independent, and grow into a strong, capable parent. Hope for their children, that they will know nothing but grace, love, and commitment.

MMS has been providing hope in abundance with our Youth Transition Houses. In Dunedin (YTH Ōtepōti) and Invercargill (YTH Waihōpai) caring and knowledgeable staff have successfully supported the transition of 16-19-year-old teenagers from homelessness to independent living.

In the last three years alone dedicated kaimahi have guided more than 144 rangatahi through our Youth Transition Houses, creating flourishing, resilient citizens. Success stories abound for both



houses where these young people have been given hope through opportunities to overcome the adversities they have experienced. Their new confidence, sense of self-efficacy, increased self-esteem, and vision for their future has had a positive impact on whanau and sent ripples through the community.

A new child is "a disturbing arrival of grace" (Luke 1 46-55) that I'm sure we can agree is an adjustment at any age. Young mothers need not only the type of support offered in Youth Transition Houses which is primarily that of self-care, but, at the same time, to understand

how to provide the best that they can for their new baby. This is a challenge for all parents, regardless of age or circumstance.

Although teenage pregnancies have been on the decline in New Zealand, the statistics remain high compared to other countries. The teen birth rate is particularly high amongst Māori and Pasifika teens compared with other ethnicities. Socio-economic circumstances can present significant challenges for teenage parents and teenagers who do not have awareness of, or access to, the resources that are

available to them are at greater risk of negative outcomes - for them and their babies.

It is our life's remit to "set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).

Independence and security is not much to ask for any one of us and includes the last, the lost, and the least. MMS is now ready to provide a stable, safe environment to nurture young mothers and their babies, and, when in the best interests of all concerned, to support positive interactions with the babies' fathers. Nurturing fledgling families in fact.

With our strength-based, client-led practices, MMS can prepare these teenage parents to have healthy futures. They can help these young people to develop the essential qualities that will eventually empower them to feel supported and accepted by a society that enables them to live and thrive with dignity and respect.

All of us can participate in shaping the future for these young parents who are responsible for raising our next generation. MMS will be launching a support campaign for the Young Women's House in the coming months.

If you wish to become involved, either with prayer or support, please contact MMS.

Let us give hope.



Weaving Toanga

Preface: Keita Hotere

Our reflection this month comes from Betty Brown one of our Kaikarākia in training from the Waikato Rohe. As a kairaranga (weaver) she uses her expertise and knowledge in raranga (weaving) harakeke (flax) to teach others. Betty facilitates wānanga (live-in learning situations) for the making of wahakura (baby safe sleeping devices), and brings together people of different ethnicities, and religions.

This is a powerful life-giving example of ministry that engages, equips and empowers whānau for living today. God invites us to see the joy and passion present in the appreciation of our taiao (environment).

Karakia Timatanga: Betty Brown

For more than 10 years we have worked with whānau running wānanga to create wahakura. Some mothers want baby to sleep with them in bed. In the wahakura baby can be close to Mum, but also safe in their own space. The wahakura

becomes a place of safety for the newborn and is an intervention by Māori to support the prevention of babies dying from Sudden Unexplained Deaths in Infancy (SUDI). The word 'waha' means to carry and when used in this context 'kura' means precious. I also prefer to call these taonga (gifts) pēpi moenga.

When the local District Health Board contacted me to run wānanga for teaching whānau how to make their own wahakura I agreed because I felt there was a need to provide safe sleeping devices for newborn babies. I have taught people how to weave many taonga from kono (small food baskets) to korowai (cloaks) and everything in between. But I concentrated on wahakura because there was a purpose for it, and this is a need not a want. Its purpose is to provide safety for babies, for our mokopuna (grandchildren) which is motivation for the work I do. As a mother of six children, grandmother of 27 and great grandmother to 17, this is one way I can help other whānau to provide safety for their babies.



A wahakura (baby safe sleeping device) made from harakeke (flax). Credit Image courtesy Keita Hotere.

We ran wānanga wahakura teaching young mums, grandmothers, Indian, Chinese, European - anyone interested in learning how to weave their own wahakura. The wānanga are open to the whānau to attend but for optimum results it is best to work with no more than 10 people at any

one time. We ran these wānanga over a weekend period and the attendees include students learning tikanga (traditions and customs) around weaving and harvesting flax as well as the preservation of the wahakura.

For me it is special to teach a couple how to weave a wahakura; parents working together and learning how to care for their babies using the wahakura emphasising that it is not a carrying device. We put our love into these pēpi moenga. There is a mauri (life essence) with each one created of your own hands. At the end of the wānanga the whānau

are able to take the wahakura home with them. Many of the mums who attend the wānanga do not have any experience working with flax and are so appreciative when returning home with their new wahakura. They have gained knowledge and learned a new skill. They also have something to show for their efforts. A lot of the mums hand the wahakura down in their whānau. It becomes a whānau taonga.

The preparation is the longest part of the process. For someone with no experience with flax and depending on their energy levels and aptitude for learning these new skills it might take a whole day to weave up a wahakura. Karakia is also part of the process we teach at the wānanga. Karakia Timatanga opening prayer is used every day to start the day's work. Our prayers ask God for help to make our wahakura. I encourage those present in the wānanga to offer their own prayers. This is a prayer I often use.

*E te Atua,
Ānei mātou e inoi atu nei ki a koe,
Hōmai tō ihi, tō kaha, tō wehi,
Mō tēnei taonga tuku iho,
Mai i ngā tupuna,
I roto i tēnei whānau
I mua i tā mātou wānanga wahakura.
Hei oranga mō ngā uri whakatupu*

N Z M W F

A New Year and Beginnings

Tui Salevao, President NZMWF.

A new year is a new beginning. It is like a new birth. As the year begins, we feel that we need to make changes in our life, start a new path, do new things, and say goodbye to old habits, problems, and difficulties.

Over summer we have had the opportunity to enjoy the long days with our family and friends over the festive season. For some it has been therapeutic to see loved ones again after long periods of separation

As 2022 starts the world is dealing with Covid, Delta and Omicron. We can only pray that we stay safe and ensure we all follow the necessary steps keeping us and our families safe.

We would like to reach out to our Tongan community who have family or friends in Tonga affected by the recent tragedy. We pray they are safe and well.

We also would like to remember those families who have lost a loved one over the festive season and continue to grieve the loss of those dear to them. We pray they find comfort knowing their loved ones have gained wings in our mighty kingdom.

This year NZMWF will continue to do what we do best and help those in need of support. We are starting the new year with our individual fellowships coming off from the Christmas period and working on our Special Projects for this year. Next month I will talk about our Special Projects so you have information of where contributions will be going when presented at this year's National Council.

We continue to profile our National Executive.

Introducing Juanita Salevao (Nita) NZMWF Liaison Link.

I am 28 years old, born and raised in Auckland and go to Panmure Methodist Church. I have been a part of this church since I was born.



My parents met at this church and they were blessed with two beautiful daughters, me and my younger sister Angela-Juesha who is 22 years old. My family have been and continue to be heavily involved in our church, Sinoti Samoa and the MCNZ.

Currently I am one of the youth leaders for the Samoan Auckland District youth. It is a role I hold close to my heart as my passion is working with youth. In my spare time I play the piano for church, hang out with

family, play volleyball, and enjoy time alone reading the bible.

I would love to see more of our young woman involved in NZMWF so that they carry on the roles and legacy of their mothers who have been involved within the NZMWF. I am grateful that both my grandmothers and mother

have paved the way for the next generation to follow in serving God through the Women's Fellowship. My journey of faith is led by this bible verse "Walk by Faith and not by Sight" I am looking forward to serving on this committee for the next two years.

God bless you all.

B I B L E C H A L L E N G E

Rosalie Sugrue

Epic Biblical Journeys

Summer holidays as we understand them do not feature in Bible stories. However, many Bible characters embarked on epic journeys mostly on foot. Donkeys were a possibility for some and oxen were used for pulling wagons. Only the wealthy could afford camels or horses or horse drawn conveyances. As well as incredible journeys on foot, long and dangerous sea voyages were also taken by some. The most notable sea stories being Jonah and the big fish and Paul's drama filled shipwreck at Malta. This Bible Challenge names famous Bible people; your task is to name where they went. You may like to consider who travelled alone and who had company.

Sailing from Asia to __ Paul was shipwrecked at Malta _____ E _____ Act 39:41
 Elijah from Tishbe dined with a widow and her son in _____ P _____ 1 Kg 17:9
 As a young man Moses fled from Pharaoh's court to the land of _____ I _____ Ex 2:15
 Abram travelled from Ur of the Chaldeans to the land of _____ C _____ Gen 11:31

Ruth walked with Naomi from __ to Bethlehem _____ B _____ Rth 1:22
 Forced to leave Rome, Aquila and Priscilla sailed to _____ I _____ Act 18:1-2
 Travelling rough Jacob used a stone for a pillow at _____ B _____ Gen 28: 18-19
 While in Samaria Jesus 'set his face toward...' _____ L _____ Lk 9:51-53
 Paul's first European convert was baptised at _____ I _____ Act 16:11-15
 Joshua led a successful military manoeuvre at _____ C _____ Jsh 6:1-5
 Samson carried the city gates of __ to the top of a hill _____ A _____ Jdg 16:3
 Mary and Joseph travelled from Nazareth to _____ L _____ Lk 2:3-5
 Summoned to __ Peter raised a dead woman to life _____ J _____ Act 9:36-40
 Banished from Eden Cain journeyed east to the land of _____ O _____ Gen 4:16
 A wealthy woman hosted Elisha when he passed through _____ U _____ 2 Kg 4:8
 Noah's boat grounded in the mountains of _____ R _____ Gen 8:4

The prodigal son journeyed to a far _____ N _____ Lk 15:13
 King Saul went in disguise to consult a medium at _____ E _____ 1 Sam 28:7-8
 Warned by a dream the Holy Family fled to _____ Y _____ Mtt 2:13
 Travelling preacher Apollos spoke in the synagogue at _____ S _____ Act 18:24-26

ANSWERS: Rome, Zarephath, Midian, Canaan; Moab, Corinth, Bethel, Jerusalem, Philippi, Jericho, Gaza, Bethlehem; Joppa, Nod, Shunem, Ararat, country, Endor, Egypt, Ephesus



New Lens on New Year



Michael Lemanu
Tauwiwi Children, Youth and Family
Ministries - National Coordinator

Warm greetings Touchstone readers. I pray you have had an enjoyable and refreshing holiday period and are settling into a new year. This month's contribution Young Eyes is taken from a blog I wrote for TYTANZ

(www.missionresourcing.org.nz/tytanzblog)

YOUNG EYES

I am a four-eyed individual. One day when I was young, my mum observed that I would watch TV sideways and declared that I needed glasses. I stubbornly refuted this claim - I mean, my eyes had gotten me this far in my short life.

Long story short, we went to the optometrist, did the tests and when I put on those new lenses for the first time I came to a realisation.

"Holy Heck I've been blind this whole time!"

All of a sudden, I literally saw the world in a brand-new way. Crisper, clearer,

weirdly more beautiful almost. I could now never go back to seeing things how I saw them before. My new eyes created new vision.

At the end of last year, our church gathered virtually for Methodist Conference 2021. In what I believe was one of the most interactive Conferences ever due to the advantages of technology, a common discussion point of Conference was the need for the church to look at its relationship with young people. This extended to areas such as membership and society all the way to representation at board and governance level.

It was extremely encouraging to witness and participate in these conversations. But the question remains - how do we take this talanoa and develop truly transformative action and vision from it?

Coming back to my story of the glasses, I believe it is as simple as this.

Allow the church to see itself through the eyes of our young people. Let them be the vision by which we live out the

mission of Christ here and now.

The current lenses the church sees through are out-of-focus, blurred and unclear. They once provided the church the vision it needed for the time. But they no longer cut it. It's time for a new pair of lenses. A new pair of eyes. A new vision and a new way of doing and being church in Aotearoa New Zealand.

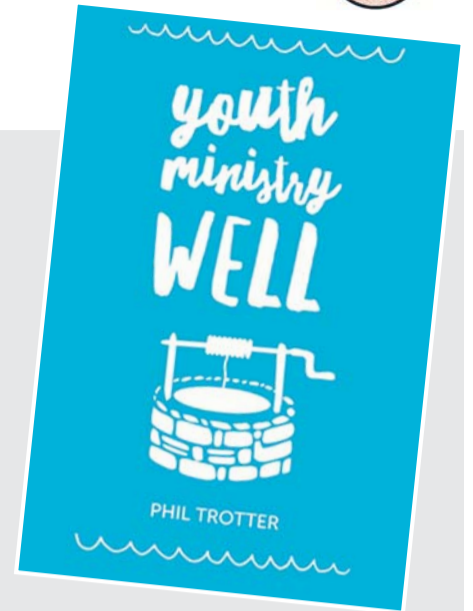
This doesn't dismiss the generations of people who have given to the church. It doesn't say current leaders are no longer relevant to where we are. Rather, it says, from the perspective of established leadership in the church - let our young people assist and shape the direction of the church together. Let us be an intergenerational and intentional church on the move.

The thing about glasses is, you constantly need to update your prescription. If I wore my very first pair of glasses from back then today, I wouldn't be able to see a thing. I've needed to change and adjust my lenses over time to have my vision be re-focused again.

For us, this would mean every incoming generation of young people who grow and develop in the life of the church would forever have a role to play in the adjustment and focus of our vision. This would empower every generation within our Hāhi to see their value and worth.

My prayer would be that this would become our vision, our perspective and our focus.

That we would be a church with young eyes.



A Manual for Youth Leaders

I encourage readers to check out a book written in 2018 by an Anglican friend of mine, Phil Trotter, called *Youth Ministry Well*. Phil's book links well to the blog and has many great insights for youth leaders, moulded to the New Zealand context. Info can be found at: www.anglicanyouth.org.nz/youthministrywell

Welcome to February Kidz Korna

Welcome to a New Year. I hope everyone had an enjoyable Christmas with their friends and families and managed to obey all the rules we have with the Covid epidemic.

I haven't heard from anyone about how they celebrated Christmas at their church so I am sharing what the children at St John's in Hamilton East, the church I attend, did. For several weeks before Christmas those who wanted to be in a Christmas play spent Sunday afternoons at the country home of one of their teachers and made a film of the Christmas story. This was shown in church the Sunday before Christmas and enjoyed by everyone.

The photo shows children from Hamilton East Parish at the stable.



What are the kids in your church up to?



For your bookshelf

Muki and Pickles

Author: Ross Murray
Publisher: Beatnik Press

Based on characters created with Ella Murray, this is a delightful book with easy-to-understand language, beautiful illustrations and humour.

Muki and pickles, two little rabbits, are out on a walk discussing their favourite cakes when they see a superb peach on a tree across a stream. How to get there poses a problem until Muki remembers he has a book that tells him how to build a raft.

Working together they build a raft. However, when they reach the other side of the stream, a squirrel is busy eating the peach. They were very philosophical about it saying never mind, we learned how to tie knots. All ends well. Arriving home they find a basket of juicy peaches on their doorstep.

An added bonus is the appendix with instructions how to tie knots and a recipe for a peach upside-down cake.



Word Quiz

A Quiz on Parables.

The answers can be found in the Gospel of Matthew
Fill in the missing words

- 1) The parable of the s ----
- 2) The parable of the m ----- seed.
- 3) The parable of the w -----
- 4) The parable of the w ----- banquet.
- 5) The parable of the hidden t -----
- 6) The parable of the w ----- in the vineyard

Answers

- 1) sower
- 2) mustard
- 3) wheat
- 4) wedding
- 5) treasure
- 6) workers

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



Tongans are working hard to clean up the ash and debris after Tonga's double disaster. Workers help clear the waterfront of Nuku'alofa. Credit Marian Kupu, Broadcom Broadcasting.

CWS appeals for Tonga

Christian World Service is appealing for Tonga after last month's devastating double disaster. The immediate concern was for basics like food, water and shelter, but Tongans will need significant help in the months ahead.

The underground volcano Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai erupted violently on January 15, part of continuing activity. It triggered a tsunami that touched much of the Pacific, including the Lau islands in Fiji.

Local partner the Tonga Community Development Trust is preparing to use its community-based networks to reach many far-flung communities as well as people with limited resources in Nuku'alofa. The Tonga Emergency Appeal will support their work in the first instance, and may provide additional funds to other groups and churches.

Three people lost their lives and more than 80 percent of Tonga's population was affected. Many parts of the country were left covered in ash, killing food crops and damaging water supplies. Homes and infrastructure have been damaged and destroyed. Communications are limited and people overseas have anxiously waited for news of their family and friends.

Director Sione Faka'osi says Tonga Trust is well-placed to help

communities to recover their water supply and livelihoods.

"The Ama Takiloa village women's groups in Ha'apai have done this before. After every cyclone, they mobilise the local people to clean up and look after each other. Members will organise support for those who need help," he says.

Tonga Community Development Trust has run training programmes and helped locals plan and prepare for disasters such as this one. In the past they have brought people together to clean up community gardens and facilities, working closely with the town officers.

CWS is appealing for funds so Tonga Trust can repair and replace rainwater tanks and sanitation, replant food crops and establish new livelihoods.

"Our prayers are very much with Tonga after such a disaster. Tongans are working hard to clean up and recover. Please support our appeal so Tonga Trust can plan to help as many families as possible recover," says Murray Overton, National Director.

New Zealand churches and church leaders have made a joint statement encouraging prayers and financial support for Tonga.

Donations to the Tonga Emergency Appeal can be made at cws.org.nz, by phoning 0800 74 73 72 or through your local church.

CWS partner demands Fair Treatment for Indian families



The community protest the brutal murder of a Dalit child at school. Six weeks on, police have yet to arrest any culprits. Credit: WDRC.

Last year Christian World Service's annual Christmas Appeal focused on the urgent need for justice in many places. Muneeswari, a Dalit mother from Tamil Nadu, India shared her story in the Appeal resources. For most of her life she has spent her days working alongside other women on the rice fields and caring for her family. Now she has a small home registered in her own name and her pay has almost tripled thanks to support from the village sangam or association.

Thanks to CWS's local partner, the Women Development Resource Centre, Muneeswari has learnt about human rights and received the assistance she is entitled to under the Indian constitution. She has grown in confidence through WDRC's training programmes for the more than 24,000 members of the women's sangam, funded with your donations to CWS.

Now Director Manohari Doss has written about a brutal attack on a young Dalit girl.

In mid-December eight-year-old Preethika never returned to class after going outside to the toilet - there are no sanitation facilities for Dalit children. At lunchtime her sister went to look for her and was

horrified to find her burnt body. She fled and told her family. The local sangam rallied support and blocked the road. The Dalit community organised protests and a two-day hunger strike, demanding the police arrest the culprit. They refuse to let their children attend school, saying it is not safe - schools across the state have been closed because of Covid-19 since January 10. The police say they are investigating but six weeks later there is no evidence of action.

WDRC is planning to make children's rights and protection its next priority.

"Our objective is for 100 percent enrolment of girls from ages five to fifteen years at school. We want to stop girl child marriage and girl child labour in this pandemic situation," says Manohari.

CWS will be focusing on justice this year.

"The death of Preethika shows why the call for justice is urgent. Our partners are deliberately and intentionally working to make communities safer. Their goal is to uphold the human rights of everybody, especially for young girls. Your donation to the Christmas Appeal is a way of showing your commitment to the world that God loves. We seek justice for everyone," says CWS National Director Murray Overton.

Donations to the Christmas Appeal fund can be made online www.cws.org.nz/, by bank deposit or by phone: 0800 74 73 72.



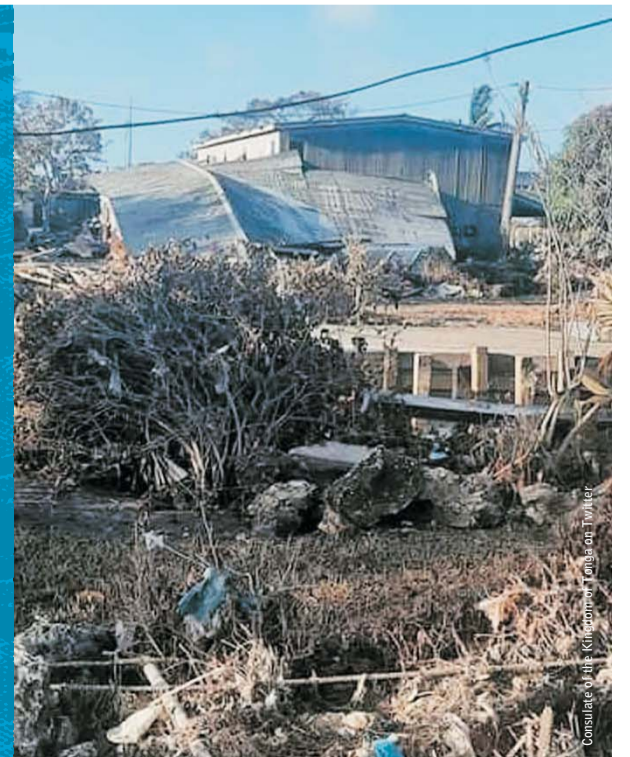
TONGA Emergency Appeal

Help people recover
Give water, food, livelihoods
Donate today



Christian World Service
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY
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Consulate of the Kingdom of Tonga on Twitter



REVIEWS

C I N E M A

As the world is ending, a meal is enjoyed. With the table set, words of gratefulness are spoken, then those gathered are blessed by a simple prayer. It's a compelling scene, a moment of slow and meditative grace, amid the biting political satire that is *Don't Look Up*.

Kate Dibiasky (Jennifer Lawrence) a Ph.D. candidate in Michigan State's astronomy department, discovers a comet. During the celebrations, her professor Dr Randall Mindy (Leonardo DiCaprio), calculates that life on earth will end for all when the comet strikes in six months and fourteen days.

Some truth is hard to share, let alone like. In a world willing to amuse itself in death, news of a comet is spun, memed, and then polarised for political purposes. Peter Isherwell (Mark Rylance), the CEO of fictional tech giant Bash Digital, markets innovative technologies at the expense of scientific collaboration. "Don't Look Up" rallies are political tools to revive the scandal-ridden career of President Orlean (Meryl Streep). Much of *Don't Look Up* runs as a smart, funny, yet depressing



mirror on our world today.

Although never mentioned, the polarisations around climate change motivates the movie. Adam McKay wanted to direct a film about the impending climate apocalypse. Hence the challenging line by Randall "We really did have everything, didn't we?" When set alongside the moving shots of whales, bees, and birds, it's a poignant reminder of the beauty of creation humans are called to till and tend (Genesis 2:15).

Amid the ironic commentary on contemporary life, *Don't Look Up* does significant theological work. The ending

contemplates two futures. One is the hope of another planet, a second Garden of Eden, in which new life can begin again. Peter Isherwell and President Orlean flee the comet on a spaceship, frozen in cryo chambers. The musical score is an original composition by composers Nicholas Britell and Bon Iver. Titled *Second Nature*, a new earth is sought, not as a refuge for all. Rather as an outworking of a Darwinian survival of the wealthiest.

A second future involves prayerful thanksgiving. Kate and Randall gather with those they love. There are echoes of thanksgiving in the meal and

Review by Rev Dr Steve Taylor

thankfulness, the North American tradition of gratitude for new and shared beginnings. In *Don't Look Up*, thanksgiving becomes an ending. Waiting for their world to die, Kate's boyfriend, Yule (Timothée Chalamet), asks to pray. Raised evangelical, finding an adult relationship with God, he speaks

"Dearest Father and almighty Creator, ask for your grace, despite our pride

Your forgiveness, despite our doubt

Most of all, Lord, we ask for your love to soothe us through these dark times

May we face whatever is to come in your divine will, with courage, in open hearts of acceptance. Amen."

Don't Look Up is a contemplation of endings. Do we try in the hope of a better world for an elite few somewhere else? Or do we gather, after we have tilled and tended the gift of this world, in quiet trust in God?

Don't Look Up is available on Netflix, rated M for mature audiences.

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.

O N P A P E R

To Be Fair - Confessions of a District Court Judge

Author: Rosemary Riddell

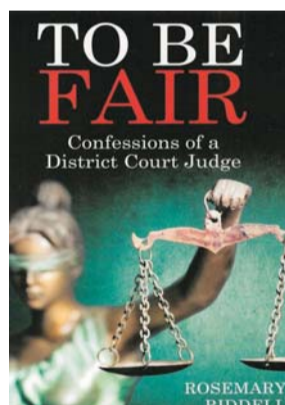
Publisher: Takapuna: Upstart Press 2021. 238 pages.

Reviewer: John Meredith

Rosemary Riddell became a lawyer at the age of 40, and was in practice for 14 years before her appointment to the bench. She served as a New Zealand District Court Judge in both the Family Court and criminal jurisdictions. In writing this book she says, "I wanted people to see that judges are not high and mighty or unreachable [but] are just people doing a rather demanding and difficult job and it is a job that keeps our feet on the ground."

From the beginning she says she made a decision she would show respect for all who appeared before her, both lawyers and defendants. She would never attempt to show superior intellect, to make jokes at the expense of other people or to make comments that would undermine other people's self-esteem. This is consistent with her conviction of the essential dignity of all people.

Riddell is very aware of loud voices clamouring for a tougher approach to those who offend against society's laws and values. A demand for longer sentences may win votes at election time but Riddell is convinced this will neither stop crime nor reduce it. She supports the concept of restorative justice that moves the focus from retribution to rehabilitation. While the law requires that people who commit premeditated or opportunistic crimes must be held accountable, Riddell states that the particularity of each offence and the circumstances of each offender must be considered carefully by the judge in sentencing.



Poverty, family violence, racial prejudice and the misuse of drugs and alcohol frequently contribute to criminal action and domestic abuse. Rather than apportioning blame she invites readers to consider how inequality contributes to the kind of society where people feel trapped by their economic circumstances and where addiction and family violence is perpetuated in learned behaviour. Convinced that being kind to each other could go a long way towards healing a fractured world she quotes Nelson

Mandela who said that if poverty and apartheid are created by human beings, human beings can also act to remove it.

In 33 short chapters Riddell covers a wide range of matters relating to a judge's work: sentencing, writing decisions, the custody tussle, the media, court etiquette, witness reliability, judicial independence and much

more. She writes with insight and engaging touches of humour.

In one chapter Riddell tells of the death of her daughter after a number of suicide attempts and drug overdoses. She says she includes personal family history because she wants readers to understand that judges not only see but may also experience the anguish of living with unbearable sadness.

Referring to the symbol of Lady Justice who is always blindfolded while holding her balanced scales, she comments that justice is blind until a judge gives it eyes. Finally, she says, as Socrates put it, a judge must hear courteously, answer wisely, consider soberly and decide impartially. In this very readable book it is made clear how Rosemary Riddell followed these precepts with respect and compassion.

Glimpses of Hope in East Timor

Author: Christine Platt.

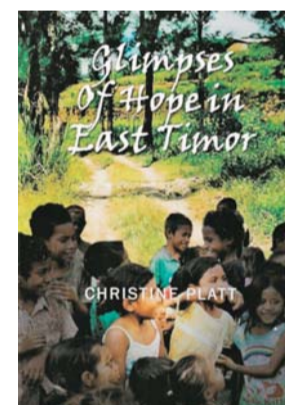
Publisher: DayStar Books, Mairangi Bay, Auckland, 2020. 107 pages.

Reviewer: Gary Clover

"At its best, travel should challenge our preconceptions and most cherished views, cause us to re-think our assumptions, shake us a bit and make us broader minded and more understanding." (Arthur Frommer, American travel writer)

These insights guided Christine Platt, UK-born author, in producing an inspirational book sharing a life of Christianity in action in French West Africa and Timor Leste. Seeking adventure through travel, Platt first worked as a UN secretarial assistant in Geneva, becoming fluent in French. In 1970, aged 25, wanting more from life, she began training as a neo-natal nurse at London's Westminster Hospital. There a colleague invited her to a local church where Christine experienced a "light bulb moment" to follow Christ. Discipled by The Navigators, she volunteered as a missionary nurse in Benin.

After 25 years, back in Britain, Christine sensed another emphatic call to follow her sister to New Zealand. In January 2001 two Gateway Church Hibiscus Coast members (formerly the Red Beach Fellowship, of Methodist origin), founded the Hibiscus Coast East Timor Appeal Trust (HETA Trust) to fund teams on short-term missions providing villagers with water and sanitation, re-building homes and schools, and establishing basic health clinics and educational support. Christine soon volunteered. With local Whangaparāoa Baptist Church members she built her own mission



team, and aged 60, first visited Timor Leste in September 2004. Between 2004 and 2018 she returned 18 times. She fell in love with the Timorese people, learning Tetun, their most widespread native language.

The majority of the 19 short chapters record Christine's role as an ESOL teacher, supporting local pastors, encouraging women's leadership, and leading worship and educational clinics in East Timor's far-flung, road-less villages and bush-clad islands.

Devastated by revolution, invasion, guerrilla warfare, and near complete destruction of infrastructure, the young nation sorely needed the material and spiritual assistance Christine's missions brought.

Chapter headings include: "When the Going Gets Tough", "Toughen Up", "Poverty Can Be Beaten", "Church on The Killing Field", and "Price Paid". This latter

records the tragic but inspiring story of four nuns who, during Indonesia's 25-year occupation, bravely faced off armed militia and were each shot in turn rather than betray the independence leaders meeting in their premises. Another tells of Emilia, a young disabled woman, who used the crochet and entrepreneurial skills Christine's team taught her to teach local women to sell their crocheted work for an independent source of income.

The book concludes with "Some Learnings". Perhaps the most important: "No matter how bad a situation, there is always hope." Altogether, this is an honest, inspiring, personal account of voluntary Christian mission in Timor Leste. It's well worth a read. My only disappointment is it comes with no illustrations or maps.



Friendship House

Jo Smith, Archivist MCNZ



Friendship House, Cambridge Terrace, Christchurch. Credit: Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives.

What was Friendship House? The simple answer is that it was one of the buildings owned by the Christchurch Central Methodist Mission in the 1960s. But it was much more than that.

In 1956 the Mission purchased a two-storey house adjacent to the Cambridge Terrace Methodist Church and moved their headquarters there from a building in Cathedral Square.

In 1958 the Mission amalgamated with the Cambridge Terrace Circuit and in

1961 purchased the house and cottage between the church building and their headquarters. This house was named Friendship House. Internal walls were removed and it was connected to the Mission headquarters by a roofed hallway.

The person providing the inspiration and drive for the Christchurch Central Methodist Mission was Rev Wilf E Falkingham. He maintained that the essential plank in the work of the mission was congregational support for social work. He said that "just as preaching and teaching are essential functions of the church, so are

fellowship and service".

Friendship House was officially opened by the chair of the District Rev H G Brown on 22 July 1962. In 1963 the Mission reported that up to 200 young people were crowding into Friendship House on Sunday nights for the Teenage Coffee Club. Rev Roy Bowden, associate minister at the Mission, was in charge of Friendship House activities. He attended the Sunday night Coffee Club and answered questions on Christian faith. Music was part of the Coffee Club experience, particularly folk music and tables were decorated with lit candles in bottles to provide the coffee lounge atmosphere.

During the week the building was used for the Darby and Joan Club for senior citizens - this club ran until 1980.

In 1968 an open house programme began. It was designed to provide a place where people could linger and relax between 10 am and 10 pm. Hobbies groups were also started and a shopper's service took place on Friday nights.

More room was needed for the work of the Mission so extensions were made to Friendship House and the Mission offices by building a frontage designed by W T Royal. It included offices, waiting room, board room and new

lower and upper lounge for Friendship House and was opened in 1969.

A snack bar in Friendship House was set up as an outreach. It was used by office workers too, not just those visiting the Mission. A square dancing group met on Friday evenings.

Weybridge was the name of the arts and crafts programme that operated from Friendship House, taking over the Coffee Club slot on Sunday nights from 1973. It included basket making, candle making, painting, pottery and photography. There was also a poets' and musicians' corner, a television and a chat circle. It cost 50 cents to attend.

Change was on the way again as the Mission merged with the Durham Street Methodist Church in 1974.

Congregational support was seen as essential for the social service work performed by the Mission.

In 1982 arson badly damaged the Cambridge Terrace Church building and it was pulled down. Adjacent properties owned by the church were also demolished and the land developed by the Methodist Trust Association who built Arthur Young House in 1984.

The Friendship House building survived the arson and social services were run from there, but the Durham Street site became the focus of social service activities. The Central Mission offices were relocated to the re-developed Aldersgate complex in 1987 and eventually the old office and Friendship House were sold.

Unsung Methodists

Rev Donald Phillipps

Another Bicentenary Walter Lawry and the Mission to the Friendly Islands - 1822/1823

There are more important things than bicentennial celebrations - and it would be wholly inappropriate to begin this 2022 selection of historical Methodist events and people without giving, firstly, serious and compassionate thought to the thousands of Tongan people whose lives have been affected by eruption and tsunami. This is being written when the full nature of the catastrophe is hardly known - but it is proper to express, as members of a family, our sorrow and our support to the people of that island kingdom with which New Zealand Methodism has been so long associated.

That association, in a somewhat indirect way, began in 1822 with the decision of Walter Lawry, then a circuit minister in Sydney, to extend the Wesleyan mission-field to the Friendly Islands. He did this largely on his own account. Walter was



Rev Walter Lawry.

a determined and able man and he did not find Samuel Leigh the most supportive of Superintendents. So he looked further afield and from the beginning of 1822 tried to find the means of transporting himself and his wife to the Islands. This was not an easy task, since there were few ships travelling in that

direction and the Friendly Islands had a bad name with the sea-farers of the South Pacific. However, Walter was determined, and a man of means, and by the middle of the year had bought a boat, the *St Michael*, partly at his own expense (£600) and set out on what was initially a trading venture. They stopped firstly in the north of New Zealand where time was spent trading.

They sighted Euea in mid-August and then Tongatapu. They were helped by immediately making contact with William Singleton, an Englishman who had lived there for many years. He presented Lawry to the Island's chief and such a positive relationship was established from the start with Palau that Lawry purchased land near the chief's residence. He landed his sheep and cows and a bull - and all the other necessities for a mission station - and within a month had

moved ashore, naming the Mission Station after Thomas Coke, the founder of Wesleyan overseas missions.

Lawry dutifully preached the Gospel, but he found it difficult to adjust to the culture of his new neighbours. Their feasts and ceremonies alarmed him - he felt he had 'reached the ends of the earth'. He was busy, of course, in many things, but he realised he would need to establish regular links with Wesleyanism in New South Wales. From this source there might come converts who would staff the ongoing mission. With Singleton's help Lawry continued to make contact with the chiefs of the Island and he described one nine-day feast which he thought resembled a harvest festival. His forward-thinking included planning for a school and a schoolmaster. The *St Michael* returned to NSW in October, promising to return in six months, and Lawry and his wife were now alone.

While Palau protected them - the Mission was, in its way, his property - there were problems with theft. His English 'agent was helpful enough', but Lawry considered his beliefs to be those 'of a savage'. The trouble for Lawry was that he was unmarried but living with a native wife, and this was totally unacceptable to an evangelical. It became clear the mission was living among the people on sufferance, because of their trading value. Lawry acknowledged they made little impact, and the first six months ended in

despondency and loneliness.

Eric Hames suggests that Lawry was not a good missionary, though he would have made an admirable director of missions. He had no gift for the language, there were no conversions; his assumption of cultural superiority was an insurmountable barrier; his wife had miscarried, and the promised arrival of supplies did not happen. The final straw was a letter from the London Committee which passed judgment on his actions in Sydney a year earlier, declaring his behaviour irregular and disobedient. It disallowed the mission to Tonga, though this had already happened. There's no point here in analysing the factors which led to the Committee's decision, but the outcome was Lawry's decision to return to Sydney, which he and his wife did in October 1823.

This brief survey is not in any sense a celebration of a new endeavour. It is, in fact, a summary of a failure. But it does represent, in a real way, the very beginning of a long relationship between Methodism and the people of Tonga. They were not forgotten, and by 1830 a new and more effective start was made, and the results of that are to be seen everywhere in Tonga today. That part of God's world, so damaged at this very moment, is an essential concern of Methodism and Methodists in Aotearoa, New Zealand. That's what we can say of Walter Lawry's dream of 1822.



'O le fa'amoemoe ua taunu'u o le La'au o le Soifua lea'

Paulo Ieli

O lea ua tini pao le uto e pei o le faiva i vai, ua sili ofe fo'i tautai matapalapala e pei ole fetalaiga i le aiga-tautai e ala i le fa'amoemoe sa lupe o nisi o le aufaigaluega; lea ua mafai ona fa'afulale aloia i o latou nu'u e tusa ai ma le Tusi Tofiga a le Ekalesia.

O le aso 15 o Ianuari o le tausaga nei, sa fa'ataunu'uina ai le sauniga o le Induction mo le fa'afulaleina o le susuga i le fa'afeagaiga ia Faletagoa'i ma le faletua ia Malaeniu ma le aiga i le Itumalo i New Plymouth. Sa fa'atumulia lea sauniga mamalu i le paia o aigagalua, tainane o le Itumalo i New Plymouth. Sa ta'ita'iina lava e le afioga i le Sea, a o le susuga ia Rev. Falaniko Mann Taito sa feagai mo le tomatauina o le ali'i faifeau ma le faletua, e ala i le lauga o le aso fa'apea le Itumalo aua le latou galuega fou. E ui lava sa fa'amalumu mai ao-pogisa i lea fa'amoemoe ona o le tu'ua o le malo i le afioga i le faletua malolo-manumalo ia Ela Isaia, peita'i sa le aveesea ai le matagofie o le fa'amoemoe mo le susuga i le Tausi Itumalo, le faletua ma le nofoaalo.

Ina ua mae'a le sauniga ona liliu ane lea o ala o le lupe i le taumafutaga na tapenaina e le Itumalo, ae taualuga i fa'aaloaloga sa liuliu ma fa'afao iai aao o le paia o aigagalua ma le susuga i le Tausi Itumalo ia Rev. Faletagoa'i ma le faletua ia Malaeniu.

O le susuga ia Faletagoa'i sa galulue muamua ma le faletua ia Malaeniu ma le nofoaalo i le aulotu i Oratia i le Itumalo Aukilani. O le Koneferenisi o le 2021 na aumai ai le Tusi-Tofiga a le Ekalesia e si'itia atu lana auauna i New Plymouth o le Tausi Itumalo.

O le aso 23 o Ianuari sa fa'ataunu'uina ai le sauniga o le Induction o le susuga ia Rev. Sioa Letalu ma le faletua ia Ruanna mo le fa'afulaleina aloia i le

Matagaluega i Manurewa. O le malumalu tapua'i i Papakura sa fa'ataunu'uina ai lenei sauniga taua. O le tama'ita'i Sea lava sa feagai ma le ta'ita'iina o le sauniga a o le Tausi Itumalo Aukilani ia Paulo Ieli sa feagai ma le upu folafola o lea afiafi. Sa molimauina e le paia o aigagalua, tainane

o sui mai Itumalo Manukau ma nisi o le aufaigaluega sa mafai ona auai.

Na taualuga fo'i lea afiafi i le taumafutaga fa'atasi ai ma fa'aaloaloga mo matua o le Sinoti ma le aufaigaluega ma faletua na tapenaina lava e le Matagaluega Manurewa.

O le susuga ia Sioa ma le faletua ia Ruanna, o lo la nu'u muamua Manurewa talu ona a'e i fanua le soifua a'oa'oina i le Kolisi Fa'afaifeau a le Ekalesia.

O le upu moni e le mafai e upu o le gagana ona talatala le taumasuasua o le agalelei o le susuga ia Faletagoa'i ma le faletua ia Malaeniu, tainane le susuga ia Sioa ma le faletua ia Ruanna fa'apea Matagaluega ma nai o latou aiga, e ala i osigataulaga e pei ona faia mo matua o le Sinoti fa'apea le aufaigaluega ma faletua. E sasala le nanamu o a outou osigataulaga, ma ua mautinoa ua fa'afofoga le lagi i le agaga fa'amalieina o le afioga i le Tama'ita'i Sea ma le fetalaiga ia Muaimalae, fa'apea le vasega o le aufaigaluega ma o latou faletua. Ioe fo'i le taofi ua mae'a tulei saunua fa'amanuia atu le afioga i le Sea e tusa ma lo outou agalelei. Fa'afetai, fa'afetai lava.

Ia sagai ane 'ai o le tai ma fa'atumuina e le Atua lo outou soifua auauna i lona tamaoaiga aua feau ma galuega amata.

Soifua



Afioga i le Sea ia Suiva'aia Te'o ma le susuga ia Falaniko Mann Taito.



O se va'aiga o le sauniga.



Nisi o le aufaigaluega ma faletua sa auai i le Sauniga o le Induction o Faletagoa'i.



Rev. Sioa ma le faletua ia Ruanna.



Tauaaoina o api o le galuega.



O le taimi na induct ai le faifeau ma le faletua.



Na Cabe kina Ulunivanua ni Kalou ena 2022

“Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?”

These are two crucial questions for 2022 as we prepare our Christian pilgrim's journey towards the mountain of our destiny. It is about faith exploration, seeking wise counsel, good management, sound judgement and earnestly seeking the divine revelation of God in that mountainous walk towards that horizon of life. We seek the wise counsel of Psalm 24 to guide us through this gigantic climb up the mountain, facing the uncertainties of its challenges.

Recently we experienced a major volcanic eruption in our Oceania moana, Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano. Our deepest sympathy to the Tongan community, to the families of the victims who have lost their lives, for the ecosystem destruction, the toxic exposure of gas from the eruptions, and the damage from tsunamis and flooding throughout the Oceania wider region.

Let us stand united in our approach and in our prayers as we offer our best help in whatever forms towards our bigger whanau in Tonga and around us in Aotearoa. It will be a mountainous struggle to recover but we are known for our big hearts and the resilient spirit as we respond to the disastrous events around us.

Keimami duavata kei kemudou na wekai keitou mai Tonga kei ira na vakaleqai na nodra bula, kei ira era vakacacani na vurevure ni nodra bula, kei ira na vakacacani na nodra vale kei na veika e bula e tu ravita ira. Sa noda masu ni na tau malua toka na liga ni veivuke ena gauna dredre era curuma tiko ko ira na wekada mai Tonga.

Same 24 e taroga tiko e dua na taro levu ni noda cabeta na noda ulunivanua ni Kalou eda qarava. “Ko cei ena cabe cake ki na ulu-ni-vanua I Jiova? Se ko cei ena tu ena noda yasana tabu? Na cabe ulunivanua e sega ni rawarawa, e tiko kina na oca, na buno, na cakacaka vakaukauwa, na sasaga vuni eso, na duavata kei na cakacaka vata, kei na veitokani ena veigauna vinaka kei na veivakauqeti ena veigauna ni drakica eso. E sega ni na rawarawa na cabe vakaiyanaqa oqo, ia e taroga tiko na daunisame vua na Kalou na taukei ni ulunivanua nai walewale kei na vukivuki ni noda veivuke na Kalou meda rawani cabe ka maroroi ena ulunivanua ni noda veivakarautaki na Kalou.

Eda vakavinavinaka vua na Kalou ni da sa mai takosova ka cabeta bula na ulunivanua ni noda veivakarautaki, veivakataudeitaki ni yabaki vou 2022. Ia e voqa tiko ena loma ni yabaki- Turaga o cei ena cabeta rawa na nomuni ulunivanua koya, se ko cei e na rawata me laki tu-vakadua kina ka rawata na veika koni gadreva ena ulunivanua oqori?

E matata vinaka na kena sau: “O koya sa liga savasava ka yalo savasava”. Sa dina ni cakacaka vinaka kei na yalo vinaka ni qaravi tavi erau dau veiwekani vakavoleka ka dau marautaka na Kalou nai vakarau ni veiqaravi vakaqo. E rau

sega ni rawa ni veibiu rawa na yalo vinaka kei na cakacaka vinaka. Ena Vakatekivu 1 e vola na daunivolavola ni matai ni ka e curuma na wasawasa titobu butobuto ni veibuli ni vuravura oqo sai koya na yalo ni Kalou ka sala-muria mai na domo ni Kalou ka basika na cakacaka mana veivaka-kurabuitaki ni noda veibuli na Kalou ena dela ni vuravura, sai koya na rarama ni Kalou me vakaraitaka na veika e buli veitaravi. Na yalo ni Kalou e curuma na buto kei na wasa levu ka salavata kei na kaukauwa ni noda vosa bula me yaco na veivakacokotaki ni Kalou ena dela ni vuravura. E rau sega ni veibiu rawa na yalo ni Kalou kei na noda vosa bula ka salamura mai na vakavotukanataki ni din akoya ena noda veibuli vou. Oqo na lewe ni noke ni vula oqo.

Ena 2022 e bibi me talevi na vosa bula ni Kalou ka me tarai cake na yalo kei nai naki ni noda veiqaravi, na lotu kei na kena vakabauta, kei na vuvale raraba kei na kenai tavi. Me davo donu toka ena loma ni tuvatuva oqo na yalo se cegu bula ni Kalou baleta e na vakavotukana ka laurai votu na liga ni veibulivou ni Kalou ena loma ni yabaki ke maroroi na savasava ni Kalou ena yalo ni tamata ka na drodrova yani na ligani ni veiqaravi na sau ni Kalou ke maroroi na savasava koya.

Nai karua ni ka e cavuta toka na daunisame sai koya na kena maroroi na yalo vinaka ni veiqaravi. Na kenai balebale oqo me kakua ni da vakatara meda vakagolea vakarawarawa na yaloda ena noda bula ni veiqaravi ena veika caca wale, ena veika e sega ni dina, na veika e vakalusi gauna, na veika e sega ni tarai cake kina na vinaka ni noda veiwekani kei na Kalou. Oqo e dua na yavu bibi ni noda cabe ki na ulunivanua ni noda veivakarautaki na Kalou. Me da nanuma nai vakaro taumada “Mo lomana na Kalou ena lomamu e taucoko, na nomu nanuma e taucoko, na nomu kaukauwa e ka vakaoti ka sega ni vakatikina, e ka e taucoko ka vakagolei kina ulunivanua ni Kalou. E vinaka talega na dina kina noda vosa, e sega na bubului vakailasu, ka veitautauaki na daunisame ni tamata dina e kilai ena noda dinata na noda vosa vua na Kalou kei ira na wekana.

Na lotu e yau levu na loma vinaka. Ni da sa loma vinaka enai tavi duidui eda vakacolati kina, e na vuavuai vinaka na vuani ni cakacaka kei na sasaga ni lotu. Oqo e rua na yau levu e dodonu me vutucoqa tu ena loma ni lotu kei na kena vakabauta. Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Aotearoa, me teivaki na savasava ni Kalou kei na dina ni noda veiqaravi me rawa ni vakacaberi keda ena ulunivanua ka veitautauaki tiko kina na daunisame. E laurai na cakacaka ni ligada ni yavutaki vinaka ena kena yalo ni veiqaravi e dina.

E levu na kena bolebole ni cabe ulunivanua ia me da vakalesui enai tukutuku dina ni sa Kalou na Tamada, Na luvena ko Jisu, kei na vuni ka e dina na Yalo ni Kalou na noda ulunivanua ni vakacegu ena gauna bolebole eda curuma tiko oqo. Na ulunivanua e taka mai kina na nodai vukevuke, na noda sasabai mai na meca, na nodai drodro ka nodai vakavakacegu.

Mai na ulunivanua e Waikato kei Waiariki ena loma ni lekutu, au sa nuitaka ni da tautauri vakamatua ena qaqa ni same oqori ka me kauti keda ka vakacabeti keda vinaka ena ulunivanua ni 2022.



Mount Taranaki 2022.



Lotu Napier/Hastings 2022. (Image courtesy of Jo Naivaokula.)



Veiwasei ni oti na vuli ni veivakavou 2022: Kirikiriroa - Hamilton.



O iratou na gone ni Valenilotu e Hamilton; Talanoa ni 2022.