

# Touchstone

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

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

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Farewell to Wendy Keir



Commemorating Easter



WCA embarking on green initiatives



# RED, WHITE and BRASS hits the big screen

In terms of New Zealand “feel good” movies *Red, White and Brass* has been labelled as one of the best to hit our cinemas in recent times. As Felonitesi Manukia writes exclusively for *Touchstone*, its humble beginnings were driven by Methodists.

Halaifonua Finau admits he knew absolutely nothing about making a movie when he embarked on what was seemingly impossible.

But the 38-year-old original writer and co-producer of the just-released movie always had faith in God and his wonderful upbringing by his parents in the Wellington Methodist Church.

“My job was the WHAT and the WHY? The HOW is God’s job,” he told *Touchstone* on the eve of the movie’s premiere in Auckland before it hit cinemas nationally.

“I’m very blessed, when I made the film I didn’t think that it would turn into this.

“I never really anticipated it would create this kind of buzz.

“The HOW, that’s God’s job, I didn’t have to worry about the how am I gonna make a movie, or who’s gonna support me or who’s gonna fund the film, how am I gonna get the money to make the film,” the committed Methodist says.

Halaifonua says God played a big hand in the making of the movie, the people who came to help and the experts that delivered the product. His faith never wavered.

The movie was inspired by a true story and names on the production team includes famous Kiwi and Hollywood filmmaker Taika Waititi, as executive producer.

The storyline describes the extraordinary effort by a group of Tongan Methodist youths in Wellington to attend the France vs Tonga match played in the city during the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

“Maka, a Tongan superfan, will do whatever it takes to get tickets to the Tonga vs France Rugby World Cup game – even if it means promising to deliver a brass band for the pre-match



Image taken during the filming of *Red, White and Brass*. Credit: Halaifonua Finau, writer & co-producer.

entertainment. Only problem is, the band doesn’t exist and Maka has four weeks to make one,” says the New Zealand Film Commission synopsis of *Red, White and Brass*.

The Taulanga Ū brass band was formed from scratch in an effort to get inside the stadium to perform in front of thousands of people and millions of television viewers throughout the world, and then watch their beloved Tongan ‘Ikale Tahi team play.

“I’m not a qualified film producer in terms of cinema. I never went to film school or anything like that but I always wanted to become a film producer to tell the story that I want to tell,” Halaifonua says.

“I never saw anyone doing what I wanted to portray – you know being born in New Zealand and growing up in this country.

“I was doing acting and stuff, but it wasn’t

the stuff I felt represented me. I think a lot of us [born here in New Zealand], we go to church, we grow up in the church, we grow up in the Tongan world, we have to live in two different worlds at the same time.

“The Tonganess in me is what makes me unique as a writer and a producer.”

The movie has won rave reviews and acclaim by media organisations including the *New Zealand Herald*, *The Spinoff* and *stuff.co.nz*. The *Red, White and Brass* world premiere was held in Wellington on March 21.

Halaifonua hopes it will send good vibes to overseas viewers.

At first, the father-of-two, did not know where to start when he set out to write the Taulanga Ū brass band story.

“I needed to write but I wasn’t a writer. So, I talked to my friend and I told him

about the idea of my church brass band,” Halaifonua recalls.

“Yeah it’s a little bit like [the movie] *Cool Runnings* but this time it’s Tongans instead of Jamaicans and trumpets instead of sleds on snow ... I kinda just carried on from there, the more I was going down that path the more it was revealing itself. It was something pretty special.”

Halaifonua says he has always been a positive thinker and pursues whatever he sets his mind on.

“I try, when I set my goals, to keep a positive mind state - attracting and putting out what you want, and manifesting the things you want, your dreams and goals and combining that with the power of prayer is an unbeatable combination,” Halaifonua says.

*Continued on Page 2*



# RED, WHITE and BRASS hits the big screen

**From Page 1**

"I'm a Christian and grew up in the Methodist Church, I have my flaws and I have my mistakes and my shortfalls but if you ever needed to see the power of prayer, it's this film of a Tongan guy that never went to school and never dreamed of writing a story or anything that Taika Waititi is executive producer of his first feature film."

Halaifonua's father, Rev Tevita Finau, who plays Rev Pita and father of the main character Maka in the movie, was the presbyter for the Wellington Tongan Methodist congregation during the Rugby World Cup in 2011.

"Because of our brass band, the whole congregation ended up in

the stadium to watch the game," Rev Finau said. "It was most enjoyable because we also beat France that day."

Halaifonua remembers his father and mother Valeti pushing for the church brass band to succeed, even when it was clear that there were no instruments for the group.

It was Rev Finau who first floated the idea to form a brass band. "We definitely weren't a brass band at that time, we didn't have instruments and anything like that," Halaifonua says.

"But there was a guy from Tonga, 'Elonge Niu, here [in Wellington] to further his music studies. He knew how to play the instruments."



Image taken during the filming of Red, White and Brass. Credit: Halaifonua Finau, writer & co-producer.

The talented Tongan student gave the group a crash course in music and brass "and the rest is history."

Halaifonua says he chose the main character name Maka, which means rock in Tongan,

because he always aspired to be a rock in his culture, faith and community.

After light refreshments, the official part of the Auckland premiere began with a prayer by the Vahefonua Tonga 'o

Aotearoa synod superintendent, Rev Kalolo Fihaki.

The Taulanga Ū band still play every Sunday at the Wesley Church, Taranaki St, Wellington. New members have joined to continue the legacy.

**EDITOR'S NOTE**



Ady Shannon.

Over the past year we have regularly invited *Touchstone* readers to consider reading each issue online to mitigate the impacts of increasing printing and distribution costs, combined with dwindling cash reserves. Methodist Conference last year affirmed the Publishing

**Board's proposal to introduce a subscription model of \$1.50 (+ GST if applicable) per copy, effective from July 2023. This will offset some of our production costs and - perhaps even more importantly - bring us a step closer to achieving our goal of producing zero waste.**

Given the administration costs involved in managing this new subscription model, we will only send papers to those parishes / organisations that commit to a minimum of five copies per month, for 11 issues per annum.

I realise that not all readers will be happy with this decision, however MCNZ is to my knowledge the only church in Aotearoa still producing and distributing a free monthly publication. We have resisted requesting financial support from our readers for as long as possible.

As MPB Chair, Rev Kathryn Walters, wrote in a letter sent out with this issue of *Touchstone*, "We hung in there as long as we could and still believe that this newspaper adds value to the Church, to its people and the wider community. We hope that you do too."

I hope you will continue to find inspiration in the articles shared in *Touchstone*, and that you will find a way to access the content, either by sharing copies of the paper, or links to the online platforms.

On the theme of inspiration, this evening a group of us from the Connexional Office are looking forward to attending the movie *Red White and Brass* in Christchurch. New MPB member Felonitesi Manukia - a former journalist with the *NZ Herald*, Siaolo volunteer, and member Vahefonua and Auckland Methodist Tongan parish - captured the spirit and passion behind what is being hailed as 'a gem of a movie that will inspire generations to come'. It's a great story.

*I wish all our readers a blessed Easter.*

## MCNZ Rallies for Cyclone Relief

**As communities throughout the North Island get stuck into cleaning-up after the devastation of recent floods and weather events, parishes, and individuals throughout the motu have been making special efforts and generous donations to help support disaster recovery.**

Members of the Hawkes Bay Fijian Methodist congregation were extremely grateful for an immediate donation from MCNZ Church Trusts to help their brothers and sisters, along with RSE and forestry workers in the region affected by the cyclone.

A special morning tea at the Connexional Office in March involving staff, friends of the Church and representatives from local businesses raised more than \$1,000 for the President's Cyclone Appeal.

At the time of printing, donations to the MCNZ President's Cyclone Appeal have exceeded \$42,000.

MCNZ welcomes donations to the appeal via internet banking to:

**Account Name:** Methodist Church of NZ, Administration Division

**Account Number:** 02-0800-0766004-03

**Reference:** Cyclone Appeal

**Code:** Parish/individual's name

After Easter the balance of funds will be distributed to Mayoral Relief Funds in those areas most impacted.



Members of the Hawkes Bay Fijian Methodist congregation prepare to distribute supplies purchased with money donated by MCNZ.



Siaola in Auckland were also given an immediate grant from MCNZ Church Trusts and dispatched truckloads of food and emergency resources to communities throughout the North Island. RSE workers in Hastings were grateful for new gumboots as part of the support package from Siaola and Vahefonua. Credit Felonitesi Manukia.



## MCNZ Farewells a Loyal Friend and Colleague



Wendy Keir and Tara Tautari.

**On 28 February, whanau, friends and colleagues past and present gathered at the Connexional Office for a special farewell morning tea for Wendy Keir. Following 12 years of committed service, Wendy is retiring from her position as personal assistant to the General Secretary.**

A day earlier MCNZ General Secretary, Rev Tara Tautari, sent out a message that captured the essence of Wendy's skill, loyalty and dedication: "We are thankful for Wendy's contribution to the work of the Methodist Church of New Zealand and we will miss her presence with us. Wendy's skills and talents helped shape much of the work of the Connexional

Office and her gift for forging strong relationships with members throughout the country has been a blessing for the whole Church. We give our heartfelt thanks and ask God's blessings for her as she embarks on a new pathway for the future."

Former General Secretaries, Rev Jill van de Geer and Rev David Bush, were amongst the guests gathered and each shared personal testimony of the friendship they had enjoyed with Wendy. David recounted her tumultuous start to working at MCNZ. Just three weeks in, her induction was interrupted by a major earthquake that destroyed the Christchurch workplace. For the next five years Wendy and David worked from a bedroom in a suburban house that provided temporary space for the displaced Connexional Office team. "Given the challenging circumstances, it would have been very reasonable of her to say, 'This is not what I signed up for.' That was just one of many challenges she has faced over the years. She has been a faithful, diligent personal assistant and a really good friend," David said.

Jill reiterated the many invaluable skills that Wendy has shared, adding trust and friendliness to the list of special attributes. "She has the greatest integrity of anyone I have ever known."

Daughters Ange and Kelly paid tribute to their mother, who has always been an inspiring role model: fiercely determined, independent and totally supportive of all their endeavours. Kelly also thanked

MCNZ for supporting her mum through the years. Synod Superintendent, Rev Kathryn Walters, also spoke briefly, acknowledging Wendy's awesome personality and wealth of church knowledge. "You have been a joy to work alongside and you have always kept me safe and sane during Conference."

In a final email message to Connexional contacts Wendy wrote, "It is hard to say goodbye. I have loved my time working at the Connexional Office with the amazing team we have here and also with

the wider Church where I have met and worked with a great many wonderful people. ... thank you, thank you, thank you, for your friendship and for being such a special group of people to work with. I will miss you!"

Over recent months Wendy has shared her extensive church knowledge with Connexional Office receptionist Lucille Havenga who has stepped into the PA role. Lucille can be contacted on 03 366 6049, ext. 827 or [lucilleh@methodist.org.nz](mailto:lucilleh@methodist.org.nz).

## Plaudits for Retired Presbyter at his 100th Birthday

*Stanley Goudge*

**Peter Stead was born in Lawrence, Central Otago on 26 February 1923. One hundred years on friends and family came together in North Auckland to celebrate his birthday and his remarkable contribution to church, family and community.**

Auckland Methodist supernumeraries, Rev Barry Jones and Rev Mervyn Dine, joined others at St Chad's Anglican Church for a well-attended party after Sunday morning worship where they presented Peter with a birthday card from his supernumerary colleagues in the Auckland and Manukau Districts.

Later in the afternoon friends and family gathered at his home in Kumeu, Auckland to continue the celebrations. Many references were made to Peter's contribution to community and family, and his love for his wife Ngaio, daughters Stephanie, Rachel and Paula, his four grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Peter celebrated his 21st birthday during the Battle of Monte Cassino in Italy in February 1944. Within a couple of years of returning from the war, he candidated for the ministry.



Peter in the company of two of his younger colleagues, Barry Jones and Mervyn Dine.

Peter was Methodist District Superintendent in the Waikato and the Manawatu, and President in 1976. His preaching was insightful and challenging, his pastoral care noteworthy and his character modelled after his Lord and Master. There is no perfect minister but many have said Peter Stead got closer than most.

### FOOTNOTE

*Following the death of Rev Michael Jackson Campbell in March, Peter has now become Father of The Conference, a title given to the Presbyter whose name appears on the top of the Chronological List and Record of Years of Service in the Conference Yearbook.*

## Archivists Stepping Aside



Katherine and Jan cut the celebration cake. Image Katherine Doig.

**In early March long-standing archives volunteers Katherine Gillard and Jan Kotlowski retired. Archivists Katherine Doig and Jennie Hood organised a morning tea function in recognition of the enormous contribution Jan and Katherine have made to collections since they stepped in to help sort boxes stored at a Wairakei Road warehouse 10 years ago.**

Jan and Katherine came to volunteer when archives had just moved to the warehouse. The facilities were quite primitive, heating was limited and there was very little space to work on the collections. Collapsible tables and the tops of plan cabinets were used as work surfaces.

Jan was working as an archivist at Ara at the time. When the institute was closed for three months, she decided to offer her expertise in the community for a professional development day. one-day turned into a 10-year commitment of one day per week. Katherine, also an experienced archivist, started working on the enormous backlog of uncatalogued personal papers and historical records, bringing the PPHR collection created

by Rev Rugby Pratt in the 1920s up to the 2020s.

Although Jo Smith (recently retired long time MCNZ archivist) was not able to attend the event, she extended her thanks and best wishes to the pair in an email message, acknowledging the cheerful attitude of Jan and Katherine and their willingness to pitch in wherever their expertise was required.

"All the volunteers helped with the shelf sort when we moved to Langdons Road and I would particularly like to thank Jan and Katherine for their help with this physically demanding work".

Katherine is looking forward to spending time with her husband Philip. Jan, who continues to work 20 hours a week at Ara, is looking forward to having more spare time in her life. She has not ruled out returning one Tuesday in the future. For how long is anyone's guess.



## H

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NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA



President's Report - President Rev Peter Taylor

## Hope Rising from the Ashes

**Fawkes, the phoenix bird, features in the Harry Potter books. When Harry first meets Fawkes, disaster strikes: the bird dies and bursts into flames. However, Harry is reassured that this is normal and from the ashes emerges a phoenix chick - Fawkes reborn.**

'From disaster comes rebirth' is a common theme in Christian experience for individuals and communities. This year I have visited Baring Square (Ashburton), Christchurch North, Aldersgate (also known as Durham St), Crossway Community and Woodend churches, as well as the Connexional Office, all affected by the earthquakes in Canterbury in 2010-11. In each case there was either a complete new build or significant modification. I was impressed by high quality and useful buildings but also recognised the difficult journeys in achieving the outcomes. Some congregations were



Peter Taylor.

shocked to lose their churches, found temporary homes (often moving multiple times) and negotiated for years with builders, architects, the Connexion and their local synod, often with setbacks and disagreements before the final results were achieved. But what results!

In early February I revisited Kerikeri, admiring their new premises and facilities. Later that month I attended a

meeting regarding the Methodist presence in Timaru, un-related to earthquakes, in which very creative ideas for our Methodist properties were discussed.

In each case from what could have been understood as purely 'disaster', there emerged (or for Timaru will emerge) from the ashes a phoenix church, with renewed premises and also renewed vision and hope.

"This is all very well," you might say, "but we cannot afford to rebuild or restructure our church." Fair enough. But does this mean you have no hope?

At the last Council of Conference meeting, TeRito and I talked about humility, humour and hope. Humility recognises that we do not, and cannot, know all the answers and whilst wrestling with our situations and understandings of God we have to live with uncertainty. Humour recognises the absurdity of our faith and our situation (e.g. How could one man's death affect all humanity? How dare we

think that a small group of Methodists can change communities?). Hope bases itself on waiting for God alone, not our buildings, programmes, cleverness or resources. However, waiting does not mean doing nothing; instead it actively seeks and explores God's will.

Without hope churches will continue to decline, budgets shrink and buildings close. With hope there is possibility, room for God to energise and redirect. Unlike Harry Potter there are no magic wands, and hope almost always will bring heartache and a troublesome journey - ask those from the churches above - but it is the only way forward.

Hope does not need a new building or lots of money. However bleak the present situation seems (even is), God has not abandoned the church and never will. Like Israel in Babylonian exile let us wait "for the new thing God is going to do" (Isaiah 43.19). Only in this active waiting with hope can Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa rise from the ashes, like Fawkes the phoenix.

### MISSION RESOURCING



## Holy Week

Rev Setaita T Taumoepeau K Veikune,  
Director Mission Resourcing.

**Holy Week marks the high point in the Christian Year. At the end of our Lenten pilgrimage, we slow down to walk day by day in the footsteps of Jesus as he confronts the powers of sin, evil, and death.**

On Palm Sunday we process with our palms and incense and songs. We celebrate Jesus triumphantly riding into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. People lined the streets yelling 'hosanna' and waving palm branches, greeting the messiah who they believed had come to save them.

On Holy Monday we remember Jesus' throwing all the money changers and vendors out of the Temple. The Temple in Jerusalem was the centre of worship for the Jews, and they were required to present money and animals for sacrifice to the priests when they visited. This desecration angered Jesus so much that he turned over the tables of the money changers and ran all the animal vendors out.

On Holy Tuesday, Jesus spent most of the day on the Mount Of Olives, where he preached what we now know as the 'Sermon on the Mount', telling crowds of people what the Kingdom would be like and how we could join Him.

On Wednesday we remember Judas Iscariot, a zealot, who thought he was doing the right thing by agreeing to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

On Maundy Thursday, Jesus shared a common meal with his disciples - this has become the celebration we call Eucharist or Holy Communion.

Many churches hold feet washings, to commemorate that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. Jesus reminds us that we

are to love each other as he loved us.

After the meal, Jesus went to the Garden at Gethsemane to pray. He asks the disciples to stay and pray with him, but they all fall asleep. Jesus is left to pray by himself for strength for what is to come, abandoned by his own disciples.

Judas then identified Jesus for the Roman guards with a kiss and He was taken away by the soldiers.

On Good Friday, Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman governor, and sentenced to death. He was then forced to walk to the Hill of Golgotha, carrying the cross on which he will be crucified.

Jesus was nailed to the cross around noon on Good Friday and died after three hours. The Bible says (Matthew 27:45-52) that when Jesus died, the world turned black, which scientists think was a solar eclipse in the middle of the day.

Jesus' body is taken down from the cross and buried in an unused tomb.

Holy Saturday ends the season of Lent, for Easter Sunday is a celebration of new life! Holy Saturday is a day of waiting for the resurrection on Easter Sunday.

The word 'Easter' comes from the German 'ostern', meaning the direction from which the sun rises, celebrating the spring sun, when all things return to life again.

We have left the penitential season of Lent and are revelling in the fact that with the death and resurrection of Jesus, we all have new and eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. John 3:16

So this Holy Week, we invite Te Haahi Weteriana to think about each of the days and what preparation we can make to be ready for the festive celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

Happy blessed Easter!



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## LETTERS

## Healing the Human Spirit Wairua

What is the Church's role and purpose in the issue of tackling family and sexual harm?

Will the Church formulate and present a Christian viewpoint and potential solution?

Within the lead article in *Touchstone*, February 2023, I could grasp the vision of The Hon. Marama Davidson in her role as Minister for Prevention of Family Violence and Sexual Violence. I appreciate the logistics of information gathering and formulating outcomes to set a path for a 25-year national strategy and action plan to eliminate these issues by 2050.

Nevertheless, I ask. "What about the wairua (spirit) of those being referred to as being 'harmed' by Family Violence and Sexual Violence." There is no mention of the human spirit (wairua) either within the quotes from the Minister or other contributors mentioned.

Dr Clare Healy spoke of her work teaching clinicians and medical professionals how to recognise and address sexual harm and abuse with patients, which requires specialised training. "This is not taught or talked about at medical school."

It would seem to me that the adversarial type of practice in the Court system continues because, in the same way, the Judicial system does not have an understanding of the effects of trauma on the body, soul and spirit as it is probably 'not taught or talked about at Law School'.

Harvard University, Athletic and Psychology groups have completed studies on Spirituality-Medicine which would lead to the assumption that the spirit exists and functions

## Inclusive Church

Last Sunday I listened to a reflection titled 'Speak the Truth in Love.' It highlighted last year's mandates protest with the message don't accept what you are told; 'use your God-given intelligence' to seek the truth. Last year I did just that. I visited the occupation and received a warm welcome. I went with eyes to see and ears to hear. I walked around the entire complex with my camera looking for unpleasant slogans, signs of vandalism, advocacy of violence and rubbish littering the grounds and didn't find any.

I saw slogans speaking of love, expressing sorrow, invitations to pray and on an entry gatepost this notice: WELCOME Come in peace; Alcohol-Free; Kids Friendly; Respect All; Stand Strong; Spread Love; Be Free. Did you see these things on news items you watched? I listened to speeches and talked with protesters including elderly campers. A father with two young sons offered me his just-poured coffee. I asked if he was camping. He was at a hotel and had brought his children because the issues are so important. He was

within a human being.

The article quoted 'even where the body is healed, the damage to heart and head is long term for those having experienced the trauma.' There is still no mention of the spirit within human beings, our Christian belief is that we are tri-partite beings i.e. made up of body, soul and spirit. Healing needs to take place in every aspect; leaving one out does not complete the process.

Family violence and sexual violence are part of the generational inheritance of those harmed; as well as those who harm them. Our spiritual inheritance comes via our family tree. Many different events and traumas in our ancestors' lives pass down the generations in just the same way as physical characteristics and blood types. Medical science and research are beginning to recognise that trauma changes cell structure, and over time can change our DNA. Genetic-based disorders and diseases continue to be identified.

The application of Biblical principles and wisdom provides healing for those involved and influences the impact on the wider family unit. There is a need to "apply the axe to the root of the tree" (Matthew 3:10). The root of the problem needs to be addressed and cut out even as the provision of support and advocacy for victims and survivors continues.

If a genuine solution is wanted for these cycles of violence to stop for all people to "move from darkness to light," listening and incorporating all perspectives and methods is essential.

**Patricia Large NZSRN (Retired)  
Hamilton.**

sorry they weren't camping - such a good atmosphere he said.

All medications have potential side effects. Coronaviruses are not prevented by vaccines. Masks cannot stop coronaviruses, but mask micro-fibres can lodge in the lungs. The best prevention is ventilation and hygiene and many studies support the theory that vitamins C and D that can lessen severity, but few corporates make money out of open windows, soap and water. Readily available vitamins are not owned by drug companies. Underlying conditions activated by covid vaccines include heart, respiratory, and cancers. How many people do you know who have died with unexpected rapidness in the past year?

For a church to refuse entry to those who exercise choice over penetration of their bodies is not my idea of inclusive, unconditional love. I will always support the marginalised and advocate that all voices be heard without bias.

**Rosalie Sugrue, Paraparaumu**

## HONEST TO GOD

Ian Harris

## Cyclones, Floods and Quakes

Part 2 of a 2-part article.

**As communities ravaged by Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle and devastated by Turkey's earthquakes battle to re-establish their lives, the question that haunts people of many faiths lingers on: Where was God in these disasters?**



Ian Harris.

Religious faith is not a prerequisite for this response, of course. Anyone can be part of it. But for Christians there is one qualitative difference: they will see Christ in each of the victims, recalling Jesus' words that "inasmuch as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

Christians will also experience God in the suffering - not as its cause, which would make God devilish, but because suffering is one of many aspects of life where Godness can be experienced. The central symbol of Christian faith, the cross, shows that: Jesus' crucifixion was agonising, but through it, Christians would say, they experience God. In other words, God was not aloof from Jesus' suffering, but right in the midst of it as the transforming power that turned the Roman gallows into a symbol of love at the centre of all being.

So also in the natural disasters that have just caused such enormous suffering and grief. Yet God does not stand outside the suffering: Godness is to be found right in the midst of it. It can be discerned in the bravery of those who struggled to save lives as cities collapsed and the floods swirled; in the resilience of spirit as people lift themselves out of despair and turn to rebuilding their lives; in outsiders identifying, as far as they can, with their plight by mucking in to help, feeding their neighbours, opening their homes, showing caring and support; in fronting up to the questions of meaning raised by disaster, rather than shrugging them off or burying them in pious platitudes.

In short, God is present incognito wherever love breaks through to transcend this and any other tragedy, and wherever healing transforms hurt into hope. That can be affirmed not only by those for whom God is objectively real but also and especially by those for whom the word "God" is a symbol for the power of love to transform every nook and cranny of human experience.

American Rabbi, Michael Lerner, of the Jewish Renewal movement, echoes that when he suggests God should be seen not as "the all-powerful being that determines every moment of creation", but as "the force of healing and transformation in the universe, . . . the part of creation aspiring toward love, kindness, generosity, peace and social justice".

Where was God in these disasters? That's where.

It is a good question, because it assumes that God was somewhere and not nowhere. Just where, however, will hinge on what people understand by "God". Those who think of God as a supernatural being apart from humanity, all-powerful, all-loving, the ultimate cause of all that is, will draw their own conclusions within that framework. To others, such a concept only raises further questions.

Fortunately, that is not the only model available to secular people in a secular world. There is "another way of seeing" which seems to me more helpful in breaking open the core insights of the Christian tradition for people today. This way does not see purpose behind everything that happens. It makes room for chance, randomness and vulnerability - not just in disasters on the scale of earthquakes and floods, but also in the more familiar accidents and illnesses that kill some and spare others every day.

These are all part of the shadow-side of the way things are. The apostle Paul speaks of it as the "futility" to which creation is subject, of creation's "bondage to decay". No worthwhile religion or philosophy can ignore it. There seems nevertheless to be a basic impulse in people to look for meaning even in their experience of randomness; and far from ruling out any idea of God or Godness, acceptance of this reality opens up new possibilities. This time, however, it is not the meaning that explains events or finds some hidden purpose in them. It is the meaning people create through their response.

The first and obvious response is to engage with the scores of thousands caught up in them. Engagement means standing with the victims, offering practical help and opening up the possibility of a future in their aftermath. Governments around the world do this by sending relief personnel, money and supplies. Millions of ordinary people give generously to disaster funds.



# Zero Waste - Rekindle the Vā of Papatūānuku



Wesley Community Action staff carrying out a waste audit on office refuse. So far, they have completed audits at four of Wesley's seven sites.

Rev Siosifa Pole

**Rev Mark Gibson in his article, *Like the Waves we Rise High, Touchstone February 2023*, reminds us that for our church to rise high above the detrimental impact of climate change, we must collaborate and make a collective effort to implement zero waste in our community. His theme was a portion of a song that echoes the demand for teamwork to achieve the theme of 'Rekindle the Vā of Papatūānuku.' Mark says, "The song is a soaring anthem for resilience and solidarity in the face of environmental destruction and rising sea levels." We have to work together to heal the damage that our human activities have imposed on the creation.**

The word 'rekindle' is translated in Tongan to 'hunuaki'; a word that is used when the fire is dying, and more firewood is required. It is an effort to reignite and revive the power of the fire to keep on burning and never die. It means more wood must be added for the fire to be strong and maintain its flame. All the wood contributes to the fire and the accomplishment of its purpose whether to cook food or to warm people. This living experience can be an analogy for the importance of our collective effort to strive for zero waste in our community. It is with everyone's contribution we achieve the goal of zero waste. Is it possible? How can we achieve this goal?

Genesis 1: 29-31, says, "God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good."

From the words of the scriptures, there are four important aspects that we need to consider. Firstly, God's creation was looking good in the first place. Secondly, humans were given the responsibility to be good stewards. Thirdly, God's creation can regrow and reproduce. Fourthly, there is food for every creature, big and small. As stewards of God's creation, we must work collectively as co-creators with God in regrowing the trees by sowing the seeds that they have produced, and caring for every creature with the assurance that they have access to food for their sustenance. If we can follow closely to this original design of our food production, we can potentially reach our aim of achieving zero waste.

Rev Dr Betsan Martin in her article, *Touchstone* October 2020, alluded to this theological notion by suggesting that we should promote a circular economy to address climate justice. She writes, "A circular economy is to live within the means of the planet and for all to have sufficient life, health and fulfilment. This includes scope for community-centred lives and culture and spirituality and creativity." Betsan's opinion on circular economy reminds us of the notion of vā. It means that for us to have community-centred lives and culture and spirituality and creativity, we must respect and sustain our vā with Papatūānuku by protecting our natural environment from exploitation and abuse. We may achieve that if we start to practice recycling, reusing, and reducing the waste we produce.

I'm not suggesting anything new. There are individuals, communities, and churches that are already practising recycling, reusing, reducing, and replanting. One example is Hamilton East Methodist Parish which started a project of minimizing waste in their community, some years ago. They stationed bins in their church hall for reusing, recycling, and replanting and asked their members to donate goods in the bins to be used for their specific purposes. I'm sure other parishes and organisations are doing projects and we need to share their initiatives to encourage others to participate.

## The Church as Sanctuary

*"God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble" Psalm 46:1*

Rev Norman Brookes

**In normal times our homes are our sanctuaries, our places of refuge, places where we can hide from the storms of life. Places where we can and often do find healing and help. That's how it often is, and that's how it should be. But what about when it's not - when our home comes crashing down around us, or is washed away in a flood, or is destroyed by a falling tree or a hurtling boulder the size of a car? What then, to whom shall we go, whither shall we flee?**

The word "sanctuary" has been used in several ways in the history of the church. Some Christian denominations use it to speak of the area in a church building that surrounds the communion table. Others use it to describe the whole worship centre or church building. In earlier times King Solomon's temple had a "sanctuary", the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant resided. More recently Jewish synagogues have called their main prayer room "the sanctuary".

There is another meaning which has a long history amongst people of faith and that is to speak of a church building, or a particular area or even a city, as a place of refuge, safety, deliverance and hope. In the Hebrew bible, in Joshua 20:7-9, we read of the establishment of six cities of refuge or sanctuary. These were places to which a person falsely accused of murder might go to explain their case and be given shelter until the case was resolved. Much later, in medieval England, beginning in the 4th century (CE) many church buildings were designated as places of sanctuary or refuge. During the Wars of the Roses in the 15th century, after battles, those on the losing side would rush to find sanctuary in the nearest church until it was safe to leave it. The Queen of Edward IV, another Elizabeth, did just that, taking her young daughters with her and finding sanctuary in Westminster Abbey until her husband was restored to the throne in 1471. Until the 17th century churches in England licensed to do so provided legal protection to those seeking refuge in their midst. King James I abolished the legal aspects thus weakening the protection provided. However, many churches

still saw themselves as places of refuge or sanctuary even though this no longer had legal standing.

In the 21st century many churches in the United States and elsewhere have been at the forefront of providing sanctuary to refugees and immigrants. Here in Aotearoa New Zealand a number of Methodist and other churches have worked alongside refugee families helping them to settle. This significant work can be seen as a sign of Christ's compassion reaching out to those whose lives have been threatened in other jurisdictions.

The issue before us now, in the light of the huge damage done to this country by Cyclone Gabrielle, is how can we as Christian congregations offer sanctuary to those who have lost their homes, their livelihoods and in some cases their beloved family members? In some respects, it may be too late to ask that question but it is not too late to learn from this experience. It is not too late to remind ourselves of our calling to be people of compassion and for our places, our churches, to be known as places of hope, healing and compassion in our wider communities. Cyclone Gabrielle is neither the first and nor will it be the last devastating natural disaster to afflict our country. The question is: can we take steps to be more responsive, more effective and more compassionate when the next calamity emerges?

Methodism has been blessed with many fine buildings and these are often strategically placed. We have at our disposal churches and halls equipped with kitchens, toilet blocks and safe spaces. We are stewards of these places, charged not only with their maintenance but with their use as part of our mission as people of faith. My dream is that in the future we can offer these buildings to the wider community as sanctuaries. In the meantime let us work to equip our buildings with whatever might be necessary to make them effective sanctuaries, places of refuge. Let us commit ourselves to ensuring that every church hall is equipped with a number of mattresses, adequate heating, cooking utensils, tables and chairs, defibrillators, all things that in an emergency can make a huge difference to those enduring calamity and hardship, and needing warmth, a welcome and practical support.

**Let this be a vital part of our response to our Lord's word: "Do unto others what we would have them do for us." And let us do it all in the name of Christ.**

# A Survivor Shares Her Experience



**Trudy Downes, MCNZ Care Taker, gives readers an insight into the impact of the recent disasters from the perspective of her niece Hine, who lives in Napier and works in an essential national health service role. When they met recently, Hine shared how it was for her during and after Cyclone Gabrielle passed through. Hine's concern is that many people's mental well-being is under threat from experiencing so many 'events'. Those people will need help, but do we have the mental health resources to respond?**

Everybody affected by the recent weather events has a story. This is part of Hine's story.

## Mental health post a natural disaster

*By Hineiwahakarata Hale*

They say there are three survival mode responses: fight, flight and freeze. At different times over the past few weeks, my mind has clicked into all three.

Which was it when I was kept up all night by rain, waves and wind that felt ready to blow me and my home away, only to wake up and not be able to contact anyone, no matter how many kind strangers' cellphones I tried? Which was it when we realised we were trapped? Cut off entirely from the rest of the country for who knew how long. Which was it the evening of day four, when authorities told us to stay indoors due to a dangerous individual a few streets over? That night I stopped walking anywhere alone.

Maybe anxiety with purpose and reasoning is just survival.

On February 14, I woke up to find water had seeped under my doors and found a way to run into the interior kitchen wall in my tiny house on Napier hill. Other than that, all seemed well. By 7.00 am, I was on my roof clearing gutters and trying to contact my workplace. That's when the power went out. It had already been relatively quiet, but now the situation felt eerie. What happens when your safe space is taken away from you?

I decided to look for my brother and a working phone, knowing neither was far.

Walking the streets of Napier hill with the rising sun was anything but normal this time. Lampposts lay across roads and footpaths, entire

trees pushed onto roofs, their limbs blocking gutters and driveways. Many strangers pulled over to ask if I had a working phone or needed a lift. All this strangeness indicated that the situation might be worse than I had thought. Anxiety was high.

I returned home, unsuccessful in finding a working phone or my brother, so I topped up the cat's food bowls and packed a bag; phone charger, clothes, food and water. I wasn't mentally prepared to leave my safe space but was physically ready to get off the hill and prepared not to return for a few days. It took most of the morning to get to the flats of Napier, maneuvering around trees and landslides most of the trek. I made it to Marewa, the neighbourhood of some longtime family friends, and found the creeks that run through it were bloated but not flooding. The odd eel was on the grass and a few big uprooted willows, but nothing I hadn't seen before. Maybe it wasn't that bad?

My friends welcomed me with open arms, a hot coffee and a spare bed. I knew I had made the right choice. I was exhausted mentally and emotionally, the ebbs and flows of anxiety throughout the morning had taken its toll, and I knew the coming days would be just as draining. I felt the thing I was going to need most moving forward was community, and now I had that. I suddenly remembered I was a working woman, and now close enough to work to go and check it out. As the sounds of helicopters and emergency service sirens filled the city, I rocked up at work in my gumboots.

For many people in Napier at this time, work may have been the last thing on their minds. For me, it was a must because I was seeking some normalcy.

I'm part of a team that helps make personalised health treatments for patients nationwide; we mostly make chemotherapy. Missing a single treatment is detrimental not only to the patient's health but also to the patient's bank accounts, mental health, and more. All of this means my workplace was as prepared as possible; generators had kicked on, and anyone who could get there was doing so by any means necessary.

I had become a qualified medical compounder only the week before. Suddenly, with the lack of staff, I was head down and manufacturing syringes and IV bags. We went hard that day, knowing work had to be done, though not sure how we would transport our products out of town. It wasn't until the last few treatments were being made that we received confirmation from some amazing pilots that they could get treatments to patients in Hastings and Waikato.

Job well done!

After that, days became numbers, day one, day two, day three ... and also rather routine. Work, home to eat dinner by candlelight, cards, wine, sleep, repeat. My new housemates were kindly popping up the hill to feed the cat between looking after elderly neighbours. I was using my workplace as a hub to contact anyone we needed to, charge phones and power banks and make plans to help our extended community.

By day three Spark got service back, and I got to hear my sister's voice for the first time since G-Day; day three was also the first time I cried. I hadn't thought about it much till then, but I finally admitted to her and myself that I was scared. As the days rolled on, we were slowly discovering the extent of the devastation. I had two friends missing from Eskdale, and I was still trying to contact many more friends and whānau scattered throughout Hawke's Bay.

My mental and emotional regulation was a mess, and I wasn't the only one. When I managed to find my best friend and bring him into our community, he hadn't eaten in almost two days. After listening to his harrowing story of rescuing old ladies from homes and push biking the length of Napier after being evacuated, it wasn't hard to see why nourishment hadn't been his priority.

Three weeks on, and I still don't think we know what to prioritise. Adrenal fatigue has hit this city so hard you can almost feel it in the air. I had the privilege of getting out of town for a couple of days, only to find myself bawling upon reentry. I didn't want to come back; the pain, the sadness, and the scarring of the sea and the land are still so overwhelming.

The helicopters have subsided, but the odd Unimog on the road, apple or onion at the beach or eroded hillside serves as a stark reminder of how much we have to do. My ability to feel safe walking alone and find the light in situations has been stripped away. Scrolling through social media didn't help but nor has the lack of discussion over our population's mental health in the coming months, and even years.

For now, we have worked out how to help each other with shovels and smiles, but moving forward, do we even have the mental and emotional tools needed to help ourselves?

***In sharing our stories, we reestablish ourselves, support each other, and (hopefully) work our way back to balance and equilibrium.***

***Please reach out if you need to share your story. It is OK if you are not OK.***  
<https://www.methodist.org.nz/tangata/wellness-and-safety/mental-well-being/>





Rev Andrew Doubleday, UCANZ Ministry Facilitator

## A couple of months in, and I am finding my way through the structure and processes of UCANZ and the ecumenical relationships between the partner churches.

What is front and centre at the moment is the upcoming Biennial UCANZ forum where part of our business is appointing a new Standing Committee with its officers for the next two years. This year the forum is set down for Crossway Community Church, Christchurch. Crossway, under the leadership of Rev Joohong Kim, is our newest Cooperating Venture, in our newest Church buildings. The forum is scheduled to start at 7pm on Friday 28 and finish on Sunday the 30 April.

Our theme this time around is 'Resourcing the Future'. Our guest speaker is Dr Peter Lineham. We're drawing on his expertise as one of this country's preeminent historians and a key driver in the National Church Life Survey. In separate offerings Peter will

## Moving Forward



Uniting Congregations  
OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

be addressing three questions:

1. Where we are today - the state of the Church.
2. The cultural milieu - the challenges we face.
3. Lessons from history - how we might move forward.

We are also planning a 'resources fair' where enthusiasts get to promote their passion for such tools as Alpha, NCD etc.

It is appropriate that we are having our forum hosted by Crossway in Christchurch. As a CV Crossway is one of our success stories. It started as an LEP (Local Ecumenical Project) where two congregations - Shirley Methodist and St

Columba Presbyterian - decided to move in and live together. A kind of 'de facto' relationship. While they worshipped together, and shared one minister, they maintained separate financial systems and decision-making structures. Ultimately, some seven years later they decided to 'marry', and formed a union church, settling on a site and building a new complex in partnership with the Baptist Union. The congregation moved seven times after the earthquakes, and continued to grow with each shift, where the average age has come down and the cultural diversity expanded significantly.

I'm bemused by the avowed reluctance of a number of our ecumenical partner denominations to enter into any more CV

arrangements. Given the denominational struggle to maintain Christian witness and ministry in so many parts of the country, we need to be looking to the model as the seed bed of a way forward - something that can be strengthened and encouraged, and allowed to find its own unique way of being an expression of the body of Christ in whatever community it finds itself. Given the challenges that the partner churches all face, perhaps it is time we saw CVs as a laboratory, as an opportunity to give them greater freedom in trying new ways of being the church.

We could be fruitfully exploring ways together of allowing greater freedom and autonomy for our CVs, and seeing in them an opportunity for experimenting with ways in which we can break free from some of the strictures of the past, and of our denominational polity. These at one time enriched our lives yet threaten to consign us to irrelevance as anachronistic practices continue to limit our capacity to engage the world as it is. At the very least let's allow ourselves to hold up a mirror and have a conversation about what we see of who we are.

## Unconditional Love

Rev Dr Susan Thompson

### I've now been working as chaplain at Tamahere Eventide Home and Village for over two years and every day is an opportunity to be surprised.

One of our lovely residents recently died. Janet was living with advanced dementia so the things she could do were very limited. She no longer knew lots of people, she was confused in her speech and she struggled to walk. But she had a beautiful caring nature - her long career included time as a palliative care nurse - and she retained her light.

During the last days of her life, she drew people to her. The door of her room was wide open and our other residents visited her and her family. Some offered simple words of love and support; others just stood quietly, bringing a sense of loving presence. They came every day, drawn by a powerful need to be there.

It was hugely moving to see and a reminder of how our residents can continue to surprise us. We hear a lot about the things people living with dementia have lost - memories, cognitive abilities, emotional control - and those losses are tragic and hard, especially for families and those who know them best.

However, those of us who work alongside them daily have the privilege of seeing what they have retained. We

get to see the connections they make with each other and with us, the depth of their love and kindness and their continuing wisdom. These things remain when other abilities seem to be lost.

It also occurred to me that this situation happened because Janet's family enabled it. They'd been regular visitors to the unit and felt very comfortable with our residents. They knew them all and accepted them as they are. They weren't afraid of them. So they left the door of the room open and welcomed everyone who came.

They did those things because they are generous loving people, but also I think because of the welcome they found at Tamahere. Janet was a lesbian; she wasn't our first gay resident but she and her wife were probably our first gay couple. Our staff and other residents accepted them and their relationship completely. They were still so in love and Janet came to life whenever she saw Robyn.

Entering residential care is always a special risk for those of us from the rainbow community. We can't be certain that we and our loved ones will be treated with respect and acceptance. I'm proud of the welcome our staff and residents offered Janet and her family. The love they gave was returned by Janet's family who then received it back again in abundant surprising measure: aroha atu, aroha mai, aroha atu. Thanks be to God.

Motekiai Fakatou reflects on John 20:1-18

## The Empty Tomb - Resurrected Saviour

### If we pay attention to the glamorous commercial projection of Easter and the empty tomb events, often we are distracted by the usual denunciation of the good news of the resurrected Saviour.

However, as followers of the resurrected Saviour, Jesus Christ, we must remember the message that came through the graveyard worker, the angel of the Lord. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, and the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came, and rolled back the stone and sat on it v2.

The significance of rolling back the stone is not for Jesus to come out from the tomb like Lazarus, but for his disciples, Mary, and everyone, to go in and see the tomb is empty and the Lord has already been raised from death to life.

The guards trembled from fear and became like dead men. But the angel assured the women, do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised vs 5,6.

With many catastrophic natural disasters, as well as human orchestrated, and personal silliness, difficulties, and pains, we are reminded again of the one that rolled back the stone, do not live as though every day were Good Friday.

Living out our call as Christians to be an Easter people can seem foolish, if not impossible. Today's readings remind us, however, that we are not the first generation to face this hurdle, and that we can learn to see the presence of the living God right before us.

Often, though, we try to fit our

understandings into the framework of our human senses and collective memories. The scriptures call us to broaden our views; setting our human experiences into the larger relationship and purpose of the people with God.

The Easter narrative in John 20:1-18, helps us as Easter people, to learn the essence of the Easter narrative of the empty tomb and the resurrected Saviour. And that is for everyone to know that the empty tomb means the resurrected Christ has conquered death.

As the first Easter people, Mary and the women were consumed with mixed feelings of fear and great joy, when they left the tomb after they were told that their Lord had been raised from the dead.

Suddenly, the resurrected Saviour, Jesus, met them and said, 'Greetings!' and they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him Matthew 28 vs 9,10. The words of Jesus dispelled the fears that gripped these women, and they became the first Easter people to proclaim the resurrected Saviour.

When the resurrected Saviour speaks truth into our lives and situations, it breaks all restraints that deprive us and so many of God's people the peace, purpose, and potential to be free.

The word of Jesus has the power to roll back the stone of life, so that faith is not blind obedience but rather faithfulness to the sacrificial love of the resurrected Saviour that falls outside our everyday comforts. It is a faith not in power, prosperity, or prestige, but in the love that came from God through the resurrected Saviour whose love knows no bounds.





# Lifting the Weight off Families & Whānau

Carol Barron, National Coordinator  
Methodist Alliance

**On 27 February, a coalition of anti-poverty groups called for Government to wipe debt to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to lift the weight off families and whānau. The Methodist Alliance is one of the groups in the Fairer Futures coalition that produced the report on debt owed to MSD.**

You can read the report here - <https://fairerfuture.org.nz/lifting-the-weight> which includes seven stories from people struggling with MSD debt and illustrates the severe pressure this places on whānau and individuals who are already living in hardship.

The stories include Olivia's who was cleared of benefit fraud in court but has been left with ongoing shame and trauma from the experience, alongside a massive debt that she is paying off week by week.

"\$10 a week might not sound like a lot to pay back," she says. "But sometimes we need that \$10. I know I won't ever pay back what they say I owe ... I'd never experienced debt like this before. I'd had a mortgage and student loan, but

those are different. I'd had a credit card. But you can pay off all those debts. This one feels like it's never going to go away.

I can't tell you what a difference wiping debt to MSD would make. I'd be freer in my own head. It would lift things off my shoulders. But it's also the stigma that would change. I'd feel less self-doubt about people judging me."

In 2020, almost 1 in 10 people in Aotearoa - more than 461,000 - are in debt to MSD with an average debt of \$3,550 per person. This burden of debt adds to the economic pressures of our most vulnerable individuals and whānau. The impacts of the high cost of living, the ongoing effects of the pandemic, and now recovering from climate disaster, are multiplying pressure on low-income families and whānau who were already struggling.

The report outlines how the Government can make a small, effective change that would make a huge difference in the lives of many.

People on income support are being pushed into debt most often in two ways:

- When they seek support to cover the basics - like dental care, rent, and unexpected costs like car repairs; or

- When the Ministry makes overpayments - often due to MSD's own mistakes, delays, miscommunication, or complexity within the system, and commonly without people even knowing they've been overpaid.

Strong public services for low-income families, like the welfare system, are essential to enabling people to live with dignity, stay connected, and participate in community life. However, research from Fairer Future released in 2022 showed that income support levels are \$300 short of what is needed to meet core costs to participate in society.

Currently, income support levels force people to choose between essentials like healthcare and food, or they are forced into debt just to make it through the week. Then MSD debt repayments are deducted from future weekly income, creating an impossible cycle of stress and hardship. These conditions make it almost impossible to put healthy food on the table, offer the best possible start for children, prepare for and recover from emergencies, and keep a roof overhead.

We applaud the Government's recent increases to Superannuation, main benefits and student supports that will come into effect on 1 April. However, this is only about 1 percent better than

the proposed adjustment on 1 April. With food prices increasing at almost 11 percent, this increase is hardly a windfall.

The real issue of debt owed to Government remains and it would not occur in the first place if benefit levels were adequate. So it is good the Government is currently consulting on a proposed framework to prevent and manage debt that people owe to government.

With an election coming up in October, we have the opportunity to talk with electoral candidates and examine political manifestos to see how they propose to provide a more equitable social security system that provides a better chance for everyone.

The Methodist Alliance working group campaigning to increase benefit levels and abatement rates will be producing resources for parishes to facilitate robust discussions on wealth distribution and to use in discussions with local candidates and key Ministers leading up to the election.

***<sup>8</sup>Speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all the destitute.***

***<sup>9</sup>Speak up and judge fairly, defend the rights of the poor and needy.***

**Proverbs 31: 8-9 NIV**

## Wesley Community Action working to minimise its environmental impact

**Pulling on a pair of rubber gloves and sorting through a week's worth of rubbish isn't everyone's idea of a fun day at the office but kaimahi at Wesley Community Action have taken it in their stride, gamely tangling with their colleagues' used teabags, empty food packets and discarded paper towels to help measure the organisation's waste.**

They've now carried out waste audits at four of Wesley's seven sites. It's grubby work but it's an important step towards helping Wesley minimise its environmental impact.

The waste audits have been initiated by Team Taiao which was set up last year to look at what Wesley Community Action can do to lead and foster positive environmental action.

"Our goal is to grow awareness of our environmental impact and implement new measures that reduce our carbon footprint," says Team Taiao coordinator, Kirsten Gendall.

She says taking steps as an organisation to help counteract the impact of climate change fits

with Wesley's kaupapa on a number of levels. It's a way of setting a good example and 'walking the talk' when it comes to taking steps to reduce carbon emissions - particularly as many of the whānau they work with are likely to be the most affected by climate change.

It also fits with Wesley's commitment to helping build and sustain healthy systems.

"By taking action to enable nature to heal, we also support good health in our social systems."

Team Taiao, which is made up of staff from throughout the organisation, has identified a number of key areas to focus on, starting with measuring and reducing the organisation's carbon emissions and reducing the amount of waste that gets sent to landfill.

The team is working with two external organisations to help it achieve these goals. EKOS helps organisations to measure their carbon footprint then develop plans to reduce it, while Para Kore is a Kaupapa Māori zero-waste organisation.

EKOS has now measured Wesley's carbon emissions and helped Team Taiao set targets to reduce them - a short-term reduction of 15% and a long-term reduction of 60%. That will be achieved by a number of measures, including increasing the number of electric cars in

Wesley's fleet.

The waste audits involved collecting and saving a week's worth of rubbish at each site, then sorting through it to identify what was being thrown out and how those quantities could be reduced.

The audits have thrown up some interesting results. Kaimahi at Epworth House in central Wellington were surprised at the number of teabags they were getting rid of each week. They are now investigating alternatives, such as using compostable teabags that can be taken to a nearby composting collection point or switching to loose-leaf tea. Many teabags are sealed with substances that cannot be broken down in a domestic composting system.

The next step is to come up with a waste reduction plan for each site.

The work of Team Taiao is part of Wesley Community Action's growing focus on the importance of caring for the environment and mitigating the effects of climate change.

"At the moment a lot of our work is looking at our internal processes and how we operate but it will become increasingly part of the community work we're involved in," says Kirsten. "A lot of what we do is about building resilience, including resilience to cope with climate change."

That work is already starting to happen. Recent community initiatives with an environmental focus include a tree-planting project and a community composting scheme.

Ngahere Korowai is an ambitious project to cloak the bare hills behind Porirua East in a ngahere (forest) of native trees. It's the brainchild of the Aotearoa Pasifika Men's Group which meets regularly at Wesley House in Cannons Creek. They've been joined by Ngati Toa Rangatira, Greater

Wellington Regional Council and a range of other organisations.

So far more than 7,000 trees have been planted, with more planting planned this winter.

The second initiative is a community composting scheme set up through a partnership between Te Hiko at Cannons Creek and a number of local groups. The collection bins are now in place at Awatea Kindergarten and the number of people involved in the scheme is gradually increasing.



Planting day for the Ngahere Korowai project in Porirua East.



# Te Matatini Ki te Ao

Reflection: Keita Hotere

**“Mā tini, mā mano ka rangatira a kapa haka, kapa haka flourishes through the efforts of many”. If we have learned anything in recent years it's never to take for granted our capacity to gather together as Māori and celebrate our culture to declare, we are still here. Te Matatini National Kapa Haka festival encapsulates our cultural identity like no other kaupapa Māori event in the country and showcases to the world Māori performing arts.**

Forty kaihaka performers take to the Te Matatini stage and perform a 30-minute bracket of waiata song and display kapa haka excellence. For many of us kapa haka enthusiasts being able to see, hear our favourite kaihaka sing our waiata and share our stories stirs within an immense sense of pride in being Māori.

Normally held every two years, kapa haka teams from across Aotearoa and Australia gather to perform. Due to the impact of Covid-19 this event was held in late February 2023 at Ngā Ana Wai, Eden Park, Auckland.

Teams spend years preparing for Te Matatini competition. Tutors, kaihaka and their whānau supporters devote hours of voluntary time and work to hold kapa haka wānanga perfecting their original compositions and choreography, practising, and rehearsing items in preparation for the opportunity to perform for a Te Matatini audience.

The National Te Matatini Committee spend years in planning, engaging with whānau, hapū, iwi, manawhenua, government and corporate organisations Taura Whiri i te reo, local councils, Waka Kōtahi, AirNZ - a plethora of people working collectively to bring kapa haka to life. This gathering did not disappoint drawing together thousands in person, and thousands more joined the streaming online.

In recent months communities from Taitokerau through to Te Tai Rawhiti and Heretaunga have been severely affected by flooding and Cyclone Gabrielle. All parts of the country have felt the sting as we recognise we are all in this together. And yet, via live-streaming we were able to experience and witness through cultural performance the resilience and faith of our people here

and now. Controversial and thought-provoking issues were raised in the compositions presented, issues around tribal identity, gender equality, religion, politics and the Covid-19 pandemic were all topical.

A marketplace of over 140 stalls, offered goods and services. Local urban organisation Te Whānau o Waipareira promoted healthy lifestyles being 'Proud to be Māori', and Māori Party MP Rawiri Waititi galvanised the crowd in chorus with his rendition of the song. These impromptu moments of the competition thrilled me, as I saw our people standing together strong in our cultural identity and inspiring our people to look for the solutions within ourselves.

Amongst the many gifts I picked up at Te Matatini was a values booklet series produced by E Tū Whānau, an initiative created through the Iwi Chairs Forum in Hopuhopu 2009. E Tū Whānau - a strength based kaupapa - provides resources characterising the qualities of building strong whānau; Te Mana Kaha o Te Whānau. The series offers positive affirmations about whānau free from violence promoting whakapapa (Knowing who you are and where you belong), whanaungatanga, (It's about being connected), Aroha (Giving with no expectation of return), Kōrero awhi (Positive communication and actions), Mana manaaki (Building the mana of others through nurturing, growing and challenging), and Tikanga (Doing things the right way, according to our values). In an era of increased consumerism and individualism, these resources are uplifting, strengthening the capacity and wellbeing of whānau to thrive. I commend these resources to the church. See the website [www.etuwhanau.org](http://www.etuwhanau.org)

E Tū Whānau Kaitohutohu Matua Senior Advisor and Hui Pōari member Patria Tamaka says, “One of the things that stood out about Matatini was that everyone was proud to be Māori which is a really big deal because there are a lot of Māori communities who don't feel like that. To find a place where we can be unapologetically Māori is as Dr. Kiri Waititi has stated a healing tool and process to bring whānau back to ora. Using Kiri's words, Expression plus connection plus healing equals Kapa Haka and the doorway to Te Ao Māori”.

The success of Te Matatini 2023 serves as an example of collective action a powerful instrument in the healing process of our communities facing ecological and economic challenges.



Keita Hotere and Patria Tamaka. Photo courtesy of E Tū Whānau.

*E te Atua O Te Whakaaro Nui  
I tēnei ao hurihuri*

*Ka tukua mai tō manaaki ki a mātou*

*Kia tau iho te hā o tō Wairua*

*I ō mātou tinana me ō mātou hinengaro*

*Hīkina ō mātou whakaaro kia rewa ake ai*

*Kia whai korōria ki a koe*

*Tuturu o whiti, whakamaua kia tina!*

*Tina! Hui e! Tāiki e!*

*God of Possibilities*

*In this changing world*

*Grant us your care*

*Let the essence of your Spirit*

*Grace our bodies and minds*

*Let our thoughts be lifted*

*To give praise to you*

*Let us be firm in this belief!*

*Bind it firm! Let us be one! United together!*

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

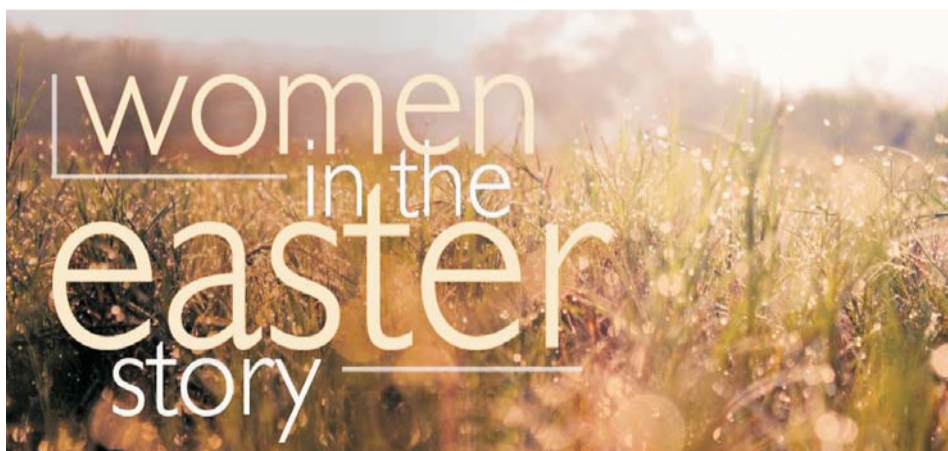
## An Easter Reflection

Rosalina Noa Toilolo, NZMWF- National Secretary.

**It is a privilege and honour to write this month's contribution on behalf of the NZMWF Executive team. With Easter around the corner, I thought it was timely to write about Easter, and specifically about the WOMEN in the Easter story; Mary mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene.**

I remember at young age, when I first read and learned about Jesus' mother Mary, my first reaction was, “Wow, of all the women in the world, our Father God chose her. How awesome is that?” I continued to be in awe, because she then becomes the mother of THE most famous man, Jesus. I wanted to be just like Mary, to be chosen by God but ultimately ... to be famous! Remember, I was young.

Now that I am much older and a mother, re-reading scripture or watching movies about Easter, I think of the suffering Mary



endured. I can't imagine the pain and heartache when she watched her son Jesus being beaten and mocked by Romans and despised by many Jews. Mary had to watch every agonising step.

While I thought it was cool, and an honour to be the mother of the Messiah, I also learnt and know it came at a big sacrifice.

Mary Magdalene went to visit Jesus' grave, and when the stone was rolled away and she realised Jesus' body was gone, she began to cry, thinking his body

had been stolen. She then heard a voice, asking why she was crying, and who was she looking for?

Mary begged the stranger to tell her where the body was, and with just one word he responded, “Mary”. Immediately Mary recognised his voice, He had spoken her name so many times. It was Jesus and He was ALIVE!

We all have people in our lives who we recognise by the way they say our names, especially our parents and spouse. You

recognise those you have a close relationship with, someone who loves you. Mary Magdalene had that kind of relationship with Jesus. Although she did not recognise him, she knew his voice.

These two amazing women and their relationship with Jesus provide valuable life lessons, Mary mother of Jesus has taught me that Easter is a reminder that our present suffering cannot be compared to the glory that is to come (Romans 8:18). Those three days were the worst days of Mary's life and the best days in the history of mankind.

As for Mary Magdalene, if you belong to God, He knows your name, and he is calling you. Do you recognise His voice?

**Think & Reflect:**

**Mary mother of Jesus** – How might your suffering be used for good in your life or the lives of others?

**Mary Magdalene** – Consider your relationship with Christ. Do you believe He knows you by name?

*Wishing you all God's love and Blessings over the Easter break.*



# Aristotle

Rev Abhishek Solomon

**Aristotle... and very few beside, seem to have had a universal genius, an extraordinary capacity to excel in whatever they took in hand.**

**John Wesley, Thoughts on Genius, November 8, 1787**

Aristotle was born around 384 BC in Stagira, ancient Greece. At the age of 18, he moved to Athens to study under Plato. He remained there for the next 20 years before returning to King Philip's palace in Macedonia, where he became the tutor of Philip's 13-year-old son Alexander, known today as Alexander the Great.

Aristotelian philosophy has its roots in Plato's ideas, as expected, but Aristotle's development gradually took him on a philosophical path of his own. He was a polymath whose work traverses the field of physics, metaphysics, logic, rhetoric, psychology, ethics, biology, zoology, politics, meteorology, etcetera. However, the originality of his thought lies not in his deep knowledge or expertise over a broad array of topics but in how he approached them. It is less about what claims Aristotle made and the conclusions he reached, most of which are timebound, and more about how he approached the subject matter of his study that set him apart from his predecessor.

Plato was an idealist who believed that ideas precede reality. Aristotle is widely considered the founder of empiricism, believing that all knowledge of reality comes from experience and sense perception (de Anima). Perhaps the difference between these two is best depicted in a famous painting by Raphael

called School of Athens. Plato's gestures toward the sky indicate his Theory of Forms, meaning that the real world is above, of which this material world here below is a copy. Conversely, Aristotle's hand is a visual representation of his belief that knowledge comes from experience and that you always start with the physical world under your nose.

The idea that all our knowledge comes from perception is at the foundation of Aristotle's project. For sure, we acquire knowledge in many ways. We learn from our parents, teachers, colleagues, and friends. But all these forms of learning, Aristotle thinks, rest on some sort of prior knowledge. The knowledge of our teachers, say, or knowledge of our culture.

Moreover, this prior knowledge will itself depend on further prior knowledge. One would question, where does the chain of regression end? Aristotle will say that perceptual knowledge is the only sort of knowledge that is not itself derived from anything prior. For Aristotle, sense perception should be the bedrock of our learning. It supplies us with knowledge in a way that does not depend on our already having some prior knowledge at our disposal. In this sense, knowledge becomes a first-hand experience rather than second-hand information.

Three primary insights drive this view. Firstly, perception triggers behaviour. We do not just passively perceive some situations but rather perceive things as things to be prevented, pursued, or reacted to. Secondly, perception can be trained. We can expand the range of



The School of Athens by Raphael.

things we recognize perceptually, and the range of actions perception provokes in us. Thirdly, perception provides the basis for advancing our knowledge, especially in scientific discourse, and developing a more formal understanding of the world.

The Enlightenment thinkers such as David Hume, John Locke and George Berkeley fully actualized the basic tenets of Aristotle's ideas. They are credited for starting a philosophical movement known as British Empiricism. These thinkers created the intellectual climate, of which John Wesley was a product. Trained in the liberal, classical tradition of his age and well aware of the commonly accepted principles of Lockean empiricism, Wesley endeavoured in his writings to show that revealed religion and the age of reason were complementary and reconcilable. He agreed with some of Locke's assertions, but Wesley largely remained committed to the Aristotelian schema. In his Compendium of Natural Philosophy, Wesley relied on the language of Thomas Aquinas, another Aristotelian, to explain that there is a revealed cause in God's

creation, which leads to a First Cause, setting everything in motion. Wesley worked in the Aristotelian tradition, insisting on the capacity of human knowledge of God through spiritual senses. He went so far as to insist that the preachers read Dutch scholar and theologian Gerard Vossius' introduction to Aristotelian philosophy to equip themselves better for the task of preaching.

Aristotle has undoubtedly influenced a host of Christian theologians who have long argued that God's truth is revealed in creation all around us. Observations and perception play a crucial role in grasping this truth. The knowledge of God is delivered to us by experience, not doctrine alone. In all this, we notice that philosophy and theology have much in common. They are both interested in the questions of truth and what being "human" means. On these questions, the two worlds collide. While there is competition and conflict, there is also undeniable cooperation and confluence.

## TŪHONONGA - Ā - TĀNGATA • AROUND THE CONNEXION

### Methodist Catholic Dialogue Team Reconvene



Members of the Dialogue team (L to R) Pat Lythe (Auckland Catholic Diocese - Co-convenor); Rev David Poultney (Convenor Faith & Order MCNZ); Rev Tony Franklin-Ross (Faith & Order MCNZ); Fr Dr Merv Duffy (College of the Good Shepherd, Auckland); Sister Dr Sian Owens (leader of Pastoral Services, Auckland Catholic Diocese); Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard (Co-convenor Orakei Methodist Parish).  
Absent members: Bishop Steve (Auckland Catholic Diocese); Rev Tovia Aumua (Sinoti Samoa MCNZ) and Rev Setaita Veikune (Mission Resourcing MCNZ).

**The Methodist - Catholic Dialogue team met 13-14 March 2023 at St Paul's Methodist Church, Orakei parish. Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard reports on the first gathering since the Covid lockdown.**

We spent time relating how our churches had coped with the lockdown experience. One discussion centred on the push for synodality within the Catholic Church, an initiative promoted by Pope Francis to set up processes for consulting the church, lay and ordained, across the Catholic world.

We also shared our memories and impressions of

the Bicentennial Methodist Conference held in Kerikeri attended by all but one of the Methodists and Catholics gathered.

After a discussion about the general situation for ecumenism at present, we considered the recently published report from the Methodist - Catholic International

Commission: God in Christ Reconciling. More study will be undertaken in future meetings; however, we did note that the report ends with a suggested liturgy for use at a joint Methodist/Catholic service. We agreed to seek to arrange such a service in Auckland at a date adjacent to All Saints Day in November this year. Details will be circulated when the time and location have been confirmed.

We agreed that ecumenism has slipped down the agenda of most churches, but we wish to state clearly that the blessings of ecumenism are only really experienced by those who are willing to engage in it and we encourage all Methodists and Catholics to "come on in - the water's fine".

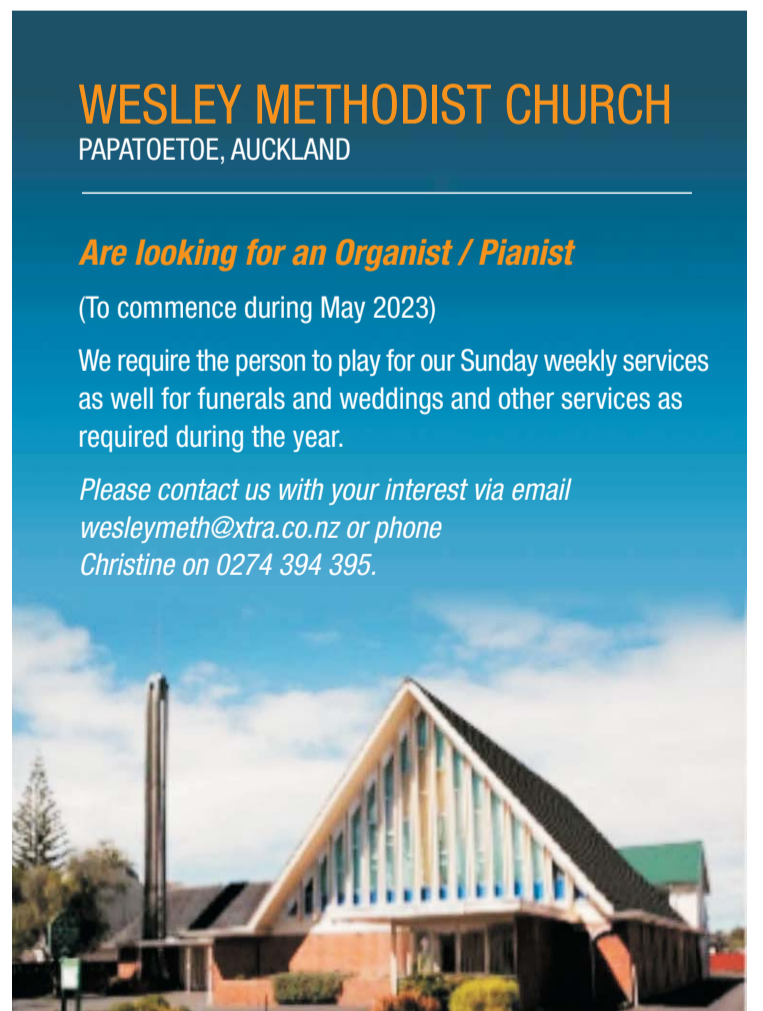
### WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH PAPATOETOE, AUCKLAND

#### Are looking for an Organist / Pianist

(To commence during May 2023)

We require the person to play for our Sunday weekly services as well for funerals and weddings and other services as required during the year.

Please contact us with your interest via email [wesleymeth@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wesleymeth@xtra.co.nz) or phone Christine on 0274 394 395.





# Vigilance Needed for Smart Scammers

Ruby Manukia Schaumkel

**A friend sent me some good advice I want to share. Always be aware of how seemingly "innocent" situations can be turned against us! Not all thieves are stupid, so we need to be extra vigilant with scammers.**

## Long- and Short-Term Parking:

A person left their car in the long-term parking at the airport while away, and someone broke into their vehicle. Using the information on the car's registration in the glove compartment, the thieves drove the car to the owner's home and robbed it. If leaving your car in long-term parking, do NOT leave the registration/insurance papers in it, nor your remote garage door opener.

## GPS:

A person had their car broken into while they were at a football game. Their car was parked on the grass verge adjacent to the football stadium, a parking zone specially allocated to football fans. Things stolen from the car included a garage door remote control, cash and a GPS which was prominently mounted on the dashboard. When the victims got home,

they found that their house had been ransacked and everything of value had been stolen. The thieves had used the GPS to guide them to the house. They then used the garage remote control to open the garage door and gain entry to the house. The thieves knew the owners were at the football game, what time the game was scheduled to finish and how much time they had to clean out the house. They brought a truck to empty the house of its contents. Something to consider if you have a GPS, do NOT put your home address in it. Use a nearby address (like a store or service station) so you can still find your way home if you need to, but no one else will know where you live if your GPS is stolen.

## Mobile Phones:

One woman has changed how she lists contact names on her mobile phone after her handbag was stolen. Her handbag contained her mobile phone, credit card, wallet, and more. When she called her husband, 20 minutes later, from a payphone, to explain what had happened, he said, "I received your text asking about our PIN number and I've replied." The couple rushed to the bank, and the staff advised them all their money was already withdrawn. The thief had used the stolen mobile phone to text "hubby" in the

contact list, got hold of the PIN number and in less than half an hour had withdrawn all the money from their bank account.

## Purse in the Grocery Cart Scam:

A woman shopping at a local supermarket left her handbag sitting in the children's seat of the cart while she reached for something off a shelf. Her purse was stolen, and she reported it to the store security personnel. After returning home, she received a phone call from the supermarket security to say that they had her purse and that although there was no money in it, it did still hold her papers. She immediately went to pick up her wallet, only to be told by security that they had not called her. By the time she returned home again, her house had been broken into. The thieves knew that by calling and saying they were security, they could lure her out of her house long enough for them to burglarize it.

## Fuelling Your Car:

While you are parked at the gas station, refuelling your car, make sure you lock the vehicle and do not leave a purse or phone on the passenger seat. Chances are while you are not looking, a thief may open your passenger door and take your



purse, money, phone or anything of value within sight. Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings.

## Withdrawing Money at the ATM:

Make sure that when you withdraw money,

no one is behind you to memorise your PIN. Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings.

## Moral Lesson:

Do not disclose the relationship between you and the people in your mobile phone contact list. Avoid using names like Home, Honey, Hubby, Sweetheart, Dad, Mum, etc.

When sensitive information is requested via text, always call back to confirm. Also, when you are being texted by friends or family to meet them somewhere, be sure to call back to confirm that the message came from them. If you do not reach them, be very careful about going places by yourself to meet "family and friends" who text you.

Even if the information above does not pertain to you, please share it with your family and friends so they do not get caught in a scam.

## TŪHONONGA-Ā-TĀNGATA • AROUND THE CONNEXION

# NZLPA Planning Weekend



(L to R) Joshua Robertson, Lute Taufalele, Ernest Willis, Linda Hall, Dorothy Willis (front), Rachael Masterton (rear), Viv Whimster and Peter Lane.

**On 11 and 12 February the Executive of the New Zealand Lay Preachers Association met in Dunedin to discuss the future of the association. Linda Hall, NZLPA Correspondence Secretary, reports on the gathering that resulted in a lengthy action plan and new ways to resource members.**

We considered some tough questions around the purpose of the association, including, Does it still meet a need in today's church? What do we need to do to keep it relevant into the future? Following extensive debate and discussion it was agreed that:

- We want to ensure we recognise and certificate those who our partner churches accredit as lay preachers.
- We want to promote training events for lay preachers

throughout New Zealand to ensure as many as possible have access to resources and ongoing training.

- In the meantime we will not be publishing print resources for NZLPA members. We acknowledged that no single resource can meet the needs of our diverse membership. We encourage people to check out our website where we will post resources. Newsletters will be emailed to lay preachers throughout the year.

We took the opportunity to invite all lay preachers in

Dunedin to join us for dinner on Saturday evening. This was a great interactive evening with lots of lively discussion. One lay preacher said, "It was good to meet new people who are trying to make a difference and to hear their stories." Others commented:

"I found that the lively and thought-provoking discussions led to positive outcomes: which will benefit all lay preachers!"

"The planning event was a mix of focussed hard work and generous southern hospitality, connecting with other lay preachers from across the motu and locally. It was well organised and well run. Thanks team!"

"The weekend was an extremely valuable time to reflect and refocus on the work of NZLPA now and into the future. It was also so great to meet some of the executive in person for the very first time!"

We extend our thanks to the Presbyterian Church of

Aotearoa NZ and the Methodist Church of NZ for funding support that helped to finance the weekend.

We have three members stepping down from the executive this year, and we really need some new people to replace them. If you have a heart for lay preachers and have skills in keeping a membership database or looking after bank accounts please let us know.

If you aren't sure just what the NZLPA is all about please contact me directly on [lindajeanhall00@gmail.com](mailto:lindajeanhall00@gmail.com), and I will be happy to help.

*Crossroads*

Methodist Church

25 Broadway, Papakura

**You are invited to help celebrate the anniversary of our church buildings**

**100 years Premier Building**

**50 years New Church Complex**

**30 years New Extension**

**Sunday 30th April 2023**

**Church Service at 10.00am followed by a light lunch**

**RSVP to: [meth.papakura@xtra.co.nz](mailto:meth.papakura@xtra.co.nz)**

**Phone: 09 2984695**

# Ministry Thrives When We Look After Our Leaders

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

**As a young youth leader in my local church, I was sometimes given a massive amount of work to do for little reward. At the time I was studying full time, working two part-time jobs, being a youth and worship leader, on the Sound and AV team and also having other life and social commitments. The pressures of needing to balance time and prioritise responsibilities was difficult to say the least. The reality is that most people just simply don't have the time to give full effort to something that they, like the vast majority across our Haahi, do out of a volunteering spirit.**

In my work across the breadth of Te Haahi, I have regularly come across children and youth ministry leaders who are simply spread too thin. Sadly, churches are often unforgiving and unrelenting in what they require of a

leader. Leaders are expected to offer some kind of effective ministry and service, but not given adequate time, resources (including financial) and pastoral support that might give them an opportunity to offer their best. Even when they thrive and are successful, this is not a healthy long term, sustainable model by which one should be working and serving. This isn't just a children and youth ministry problem, I should point out - it is one that affects all areas of church life, especially when the majority of our people give of their time freely and generously. However, it is often children and youth ministry that suffers the most from this reality, with many churches running leaders, and by association ministries, into the ground - long before they reach their full potential.

MCNZ belongs to an ecumenical network of national youth ministry leaders. This network, consisting of national coordinators from Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Brethren, Wesleyan, Assembly of God, Salvation Army and occasionally Catholic, work collaboratively across the Body of Christ to support youth ministry across each of our contexts. Early on we developed a resource called Sustainable Practices for Youth Ministry. This resource, that includes a volunteer and

paid worker edition, is an attempt to ensure that youth leaders in local parish settings receive an adequate level of support and care that gives them every opportunity to carry out a successful ministry in their parish. I believe that this resource is a vital one that is being criminally underutilized in our churches today.

The resource outlines seven commitments that a parish, either via their parish council or responsible supervisor, will practice in the managing of a key volunteer or paid leader in their church community. These commitments are:

1. We will pray and spiritually support
2. We will give space for reflection and rest
3. We will provide ongoing training and development
4. We will give freedom to lead
5. We will share responsibility
6. We will provide good management
7. We will celebrate and appreciate

Further information breaks down things to consider in relation to each commitment and practical ways to implement these ideas. Churches then

are asked to fill in a worksheet identifying the support it will provide in response, ensuring a level of support and accountability that churches provide and be held to.

I strongly recommend that churches adopt this resource as a key component to managing the well-being of a leader in their context. This resource can be used in the context of children's ministry as well and there is of course room for it to be further shaped to the context in which we serve. The key point is that, if we are to seriously consider the importance of ministry to young people in our Haahi, we must do more to effectively, pastorally, and practically support our leaders. When we make tangible motions towards caring for our leaders, we enhance the chances of seeing our ministries thrive and grow - over a long and fruitful period of time.

I urge you to download this FREE resource by visiting [www.missionresourcing.org.nz/leadersupport](http://www.missionresourcing.org.nz/leadersupport)

Tauwi Children, Youth and Families Ministries (TCYFM) also offer workshops for any synods or parishes interested in implementing Sustainable Practices for Youth Ministry into their context.

[www.missionresourcing.org.nz/contact-us](http://www.missionresourcing.org.nz/contact-us)

## TAITAMARIKI • KIDZ KORNA

### Welcome to this month's **Kidz Korna!**

When you read this, we will still be in the season of Lent, the time leading up to Easter Sunday. There are several things we celebrate during this time, and one of them is Passover. Passover is the time when we remember the exodus of the Jewish people from captivity in Egypt.

On the night before he was betrayed, Jesus met with his disciples for a meal to celebrate the Passover. A special meal is prepared and, on a table as a centrepiece, there is a Passover Seder plate. On it are five (or sometimes six) special foods, each with a special meaning:

Beitzah is a hard-boiled egg that represents new life.

Maror bitter herbs represent the time of slavery in Egypt.

Zeroa lamb shank bone represents the sacrifice of the lamb made when leaving Egypt.



A Passover Seder Plate

Karpas vegetables represent hope and renewal.

Haroset is a paste made with fruit, nuts and apples mixed with wine, which represents the mortar used to join the bricks when working for the Egyptians as slaves.

On the table beside the plate is a container of salt, that represents the tears that were shed. There are also three pieces of unleavened bread.

There is much more information online for anyone who would like to find out more.

### For your bookshelf

## The Easter Story

Author: Heather Avery  
Illustrator: Norman Young  
Publisher: Harper Collins

This is a beautifully illustrated version of the Easter story told in very simple language for very young children. With the book there are 60 picture stickers to fill in spaces in the story. It is a really good book to introduce the story of Easter.



## Easter Word Search

Can you find all the words in this puzzle?

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

CROSS HERBS PANCAKES DISCIPLES JESUS PASSOVER  
EASTER LAMB SEDER EGG LENT SUPPER

**What are the kids in your church up to?**

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



# Everyone does what they can to help



The Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees in Gaza provided therapy to 1,357 school-aged children at its three primary health clinics. Families are suffering from increased levels of stress and anxiety. Some have lost family members, or their homes have been demolished. DSPR reports a widespread sense of hopelessness and powerlessness among residents. Photo credit: ACT Alliance/Paul Jeffrey.

## Share the Love

Buy a gift for  
Mother's Day  
14 May 2023

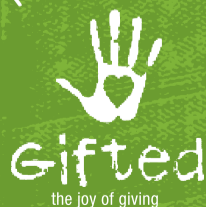


**GIFTS**  
*to grow*  
**HOPE**

Photo: ACT Alliance/Paul Jeffrey



**Christian  
World Service**  
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY  
actalliance



[www.gift.org.nz](http://www.gift.org.nz)

*Gillian Southey CWS*

**When Doxa comes through the door, the children race to greet him. He is a big dog who is used to being hugged by children in Berehove, Ukraine. Trained as a therapy dog he has helped hundreds of children cope with the trauma they have experienced during the war.**

Refugee children like Marianna in Poland, have found their own healing in the child-friendly spaces created by the Lutheran World Federation.

In Gaza, children who wet their beds or wake with nightmares every night, find some reprieve in group therapy sessions run by the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees.

Living through a natural disaster or conflict situation can cause lasting trauma. Psychosocial support can be as important as providing food and shelter to survivors. Community-led programmes backed by professional staff are part of the humanitarian response supported by Christian World Service.

"We know that local people know their communities best. In places like South Sudan, where the people have lived with violence and conflict all their lives, our partner the Mission for Sustainable Advancement welcomes people seeking refuge. They listen to their stories and give practical help so they can provide for their families," says Murray Overton, National Director.

Community-based psychosocial support recognises that people need social interaction and mental stimulation for their wellbeing. The way people's basic needs are met after a disaster or during a conflict can affect their recovery. People want to feel safe and secure as well as have the freedom to meet their religious and social needs. Outside organisations need to build on the resources of the community and not create future dependency.

Barbara Körozsi takes Doxa to dog therapy sessions at a local shelter run for people displaced by the war in Ukraine. The shelter is run by Hungarian Interchurchaid, a member of ACT



In Poland Marianna enjoys sharing her creations in an art therapy session. Photo credit: LWF/Albert Hillert.

Alliance (Action by Churches Together). In a few months, Doxa has helped many children.

"There was one family who arrived here from Severodonetsk," Barbara recalled. "When they arrived, their two children were afraid of any noise that sounded like the war. Thunder caused anxiety in them. A psychologist from Kyiv tried to help but could not get very far with them. The children wouldn't go anywhere without their mother.

"When they started to come to the programme with my dog, the children began to get more and more open. They now come to the programme without their mum. They don't cry but play and have fun," she continued.

Donations to the Ukraine Appeal will support Child Safe Places and Women Safe Places in Poland. Choosing A Parachute at [gift.org.nz](http://gift.org.nz) will assist traumatised children living in Gaza.

"In time most people rebuild their lives. Children go back to school. Parents can repair homes and replant their gardens. Some will need specialist support. With long-lasting conflicts and more intense natural disasters this is becoming harder. Your donations to our emergency appeals are so important," Murray adds.

## ACT Alliance Guiding Principles for Community Based Psychosocial Support

1. Promote the basic rights and dignity of women, men, girls, and boys, without discrimination, avoiding unnecessary distress, fear, and pain (e.g., physical, emotional and spiritual).
2. Include social and psychological considerations in all ACT work sectors (e.g., water and sanitation, livelihoods, shelter, health and security).
3. Build on community self-help strategies, promoting community ownership and control over resources using participatory processes of engagement and decision-making.
4. Promote the return to the optimal functioning of affected communities and individuals through their involvement in social activities and gatherings within local structures such as schools, community centres, churches, mosques, and local organisations.
5. Recognise and encourage the community's belief in its own capacity to make change and to protect their overall wellbeing by building on their own resources.
6. Promote positive communal healing practices, emphasising family and community support structures to address individual and collective needs.
7. Address people's spiritual needs to maintain good mental health and a feeling of belonging or connectedness.
8. Enhance a community's resilience and hope for long term recovery and sustainability by nurturing their capacity for growth.



## CINEMA

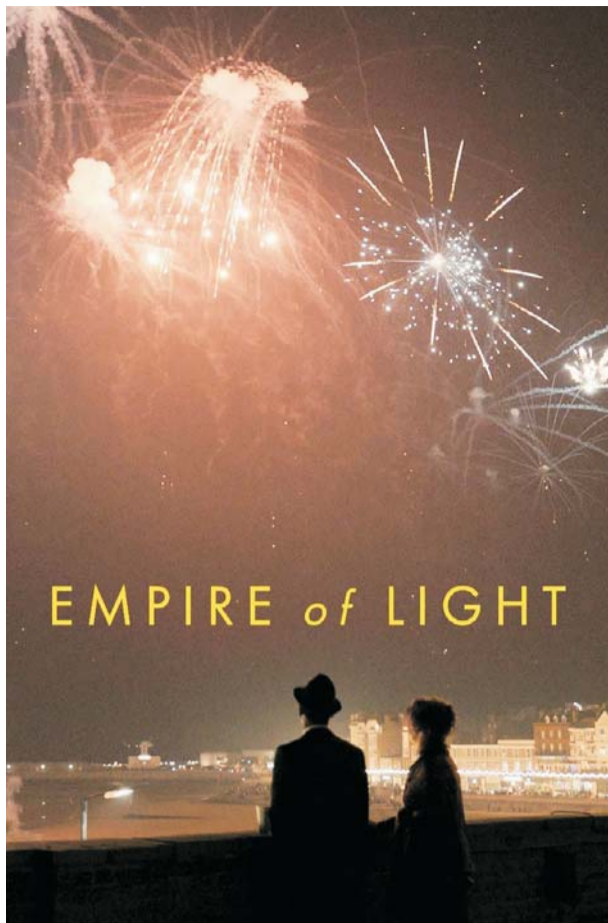
***Empire of Light* is intense. Actor Olivia Colman as Hilary is superb. The raw power of her emotional breakdown is extraordinary, as are the shifts in sound between the door to Hilary's flat being forced open and the silence of success.**

With actor Micheal Ward as Stephen, we witness the devastation that racism, sexism and mental illness can wreak in everyday lives.

The intensity is magnified by the backdrop of time and location. The year is 1981, and race riots shatter the façade of Margaret Thatcher's England. Casual racism spirals into violence as Stephen is brutally beaten for the colour of his skin.

The location for the senseless beating is the foyer of *Empire*, a movie theatre located on a British waterfront.

Movies about movies are a well-worn cinematic trope. Despite the clichés, the opening scenes as the art deco movie theatre is brought to life for the evening



shows, are a gorgeous call to life.

*Empire of Light* is directed by Sam Mendes, knighted for services to film, beginning with *American Beauty* in 2002. In *Empire of Light*, Mendes is both

director and scriptwriter and he works hard to squeeze a range of predictable metaphors from an ageing movie theatre. Disused rooms are places of potential. Birds with broken wings learn to fly. None of the metaphors seems as poignant as the plastic bags in *American Beauty*, for which Mendes gained his first, of four, Academy awards.

In writing the script for *Empire of Light*, Mendes drew on his mother's mental health challenges. Although not autobiographical, Mendes has shared how raising his children caused him to reflect on his upbringing. While fictional, the emotional intensity of *Empire of Light* invites needed conversations about pastoral care and theologies of shame.

In Hilary's flat, as she rages with pain, Stephen provides a pastoral model of presence. He needs no skills to fix or solve. Instead,

Stephen offers the gift of a silent presence and listening ear. To use theological language, as Stephen bears witness to Hilary's story, he honours her emotions and holds her pain.

Review by Rev Dr Steve Taylor

The movie spotlights shame. "Did I humiliate myself?" Hilary later asks Stephen. "It was intense," comes Stephen's kind reply. The impact of shame on human experience comes early in Scripture. In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve hide from God, ashamed of their nakedness.

God responds to the human experience of shame with a listening ear and the practical offer of clothes. Like Stephen, there is kindness.

While Mendes spends most of *Empire of Light* composing an ode to cinema, the ending offers a surprising twist. Cinematic metaphors are shed for nature metaphors.

Stephen and Hilary part, not at the *Empire*, but in a park. Hilary gifts Stephen a book of poetry and Stephen reads Philip Larkin's poem, *The Trees* (The Complete Poems of Philip Larkin (2012).

Last year is dead, they seem to say, Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

*Empire of Light* offers a freshness in which the kindness of human presence transforms the intensity of human pain.

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

## ON PAPER

### The Measure

Author: Nikki Erlick

Publisher: Harper Collins, The Borough Press. 2022.

Reviewer: Ray Coats

My random public library book choice had enough in the cover blurb to attract my interest. "Your fate arrives in a box on your doorstep. Do you open it?"

That is just one of the plethora of questions that are posed in this book. Individual and collective ethical questions are raised throughout the novel and the reader is challenged to pause and ask, "what if that was me?"

The story follows a group of people who have been affected by the result of waking up one morning, opening the front door and finding a box with their name on it. The boxes are found by everyone in the world who is over 22 years of age. Others get their box on their 22nd birthday. Those who open their boxes find that they contain a piece of string. The strings are of different lengths, and it is soon discovered that the length corresponds to the amount of time they have left to live. No-one knows where the boxes came from, who sent them, or why. But the strings are accurate in their predictions.

The ramifications of this knowledge are profound. For instance: "We will only send long-stringers into battle because

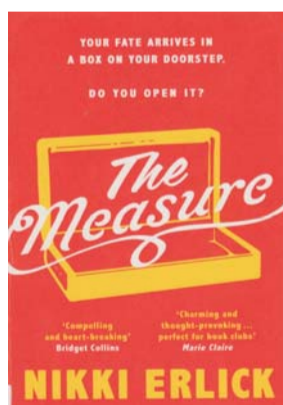
they won't be killed." But, what about relationships, marriages, children, the list goes on. Set in America just before a Presidential election, part of the story concerns the demand that all candidates must show their string to the country. Authoritarian countries force their citizens to disclose their details.

The main characters in the story, as expected, have different timespans left but they come to represent the general reactions to this news. The altruistic, the greedy, the self-seeking, and those who become a comfort to others. Segregation of the short-stringers becomes evident in the community and euthanasia a desirable exercise as it

allows the person to choose their time and place as well as who is going to be with them to say goodbye.

Naturally, religion comes into the stories, but in a more peripheral way. "Has God done this? If so, why?" Nobody quotes Revelation and the only Bible reference is to the passage in Matthew 7; Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.

One thing the book does say is that church attendance rocketed upwards. Maybe there's some sort of lesson there.



### Faith and Hope in Midlife: Reflecting on Churchgoers' Experiences

Author: Anne Shave

Publisher: Philip Garside Publishing Ltd, Wellington (2022) 243 pages.

Reviewer: Megan Blakie

Midlife is a period of change and growth; the essence of this book is to help individuals and church communities recognise the spiritual needs of those in this age bracket. Pastoral carers, clergy, spiritual directors and midlifers themselves are likely to find the author's research and thoughtful enquiry a treasure trove for addressing spiritual developments specific to this stage of life.

Faith and Hope in Midlife evolved from Shave's doctorate in theology, completed in 2018 through Otago University. Much of the book is peppered with, and informed by, comments and stories from her interviewees: long-term Christians from Presbyterian, Anglican, and Catholic churches. Although Methodists weren't represented, Shave drew respondents from a diverse range of church and personal backgrounds.

Long-term church-goers - and, by default, church communities - are "not always well prepared to anticipate or negotiate such [midlife] changes," writes Shave, reiterating the thoughts of some of her interviewees.

Shave's background in adult education

and high school teaching shines through in the book's approach, content, and layout. She provides sufficient context and theoretical tools to make sense of the juicier explorations of midlifers' experiences. Readers unfamiliar with - or wanting a refresher of - spiritual development concepts, for example, are likely to find the discussion in chapter 2

helpful and accessible.

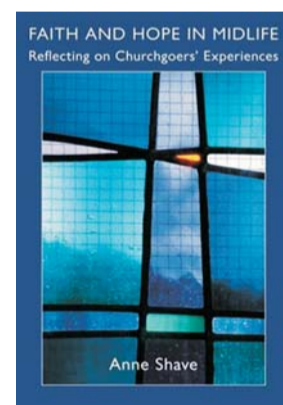
Bolded subheadings and occasional tables of bullet points help navigate the reader and act as quick-reference guides.

Shave says her intention is "to raise more questions than I have attempted to answer". To that end, each of the book's eight chapters include reflective questions

for individuals or discussion groups to ponder, plus a short list of recommended resources. The appendix details more of Shave's doctoral research.

Readers will gain insight into what midlife churchgoers value about their Christian faith, how it is evolving in their second half of life, and what they see as benefits and challenges of church involvement. Shave talks of spiritual lives remaining 'generative' rather than stagnating or drifting. The ministry of spiritual direction for this age group features positively.

Reviewer Megan Blakie is a Spiritual Director and writer [faithmattersnz@gmail.com](mailto:faithmattersnz@gmail.com)





## A Sacred Trust

### The beginning of the New Zealand Methodist Mission in the Solomon Islands

Lynne McDonald

**A significant event in the history of the Methodist Mission in the Solomon Islands occurred in 1922. Although the Solomon Islanders prefer to celebrate the 1902 arrival of Australian missionaries, this event instigated the New Zealand church's involvement in the Solomon Islands.**

Much of the research for this article was undertaken in the Kinder Theological Library, using Andrew Sinclair's Diaries of Solomon Islands visits. Other material was from the Methodist Times, also in the Kinder Library.

The Australian missionaries who went to the Solomons from 1902 to 1922 were under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Churches of Australia. The founding missionary, and subsequently chairman for nearly 50 years, was Rev John Francis Goldie. The Australians proposed, in 1919, that the Solomon Islands district should come under the auspices of the New Zealand Methodist Church.

The New Zealand Conference was cautious. It did not want to take on Australia's burden, but members reluctantly accepted the field in 1919. At the final joint Conference meeting, Sinclair reported that the Australians had handed over their "youngest and perhaps their favourite" mission field. He likened this to a father handing over his favourite daughter to "a man he



Sister Jean Dalzell, missionary 1925-30, with one of her charges. Image from Jean Dalziel Collection, Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives.

could trust", describing it as a "sacred trust" for the church in New Zealand.

The New Zealanders accepted an established field of influence, which already had substantial existing infrastructure. A delegation was sent from New Zealand, comprising John Court, who was lay treasurer for Foreign Missions, and General Secretary William Sinclair, to establish the needs and the status of the work already underway. Their enthusiastic reports encouraged the Conference in New Zealand and thus created interest in the proposed new venture. In 1922 William Sinclair met with the Resident Commissioner for the Solomon Islands at Tulagi, the

administrative centre for the Solomon Islands. The commissioner, Mr Workman, told him that the Wesleyan mission was considered the finest missionary work in the Pacific.

The general attitude of the Australian and New Zealand missionaries followed the social and scientific trends of the time and saw the local people as in need of help. Sinclair and Court wrote that the race was "well worth saving and they can be saved from decay and extinction". They believed that Solomon Islanders should be taught to cultivate the land and rebuild their "cheerless and unsanitary villages" in 'healthier' areas. The aims of

the Mission should be to save a race that they believed was living in the Stone Age and build the people up to have strong, stable Christian characters. The Islanders would become honest, clean, industrious, and self-reliant, understanding the dignity of labour. Sinclair and Court thought that 'this child race can be saved and built solidly into the Kingdom of God'.

A priority was the construction of a hospital with suitable medical staff. It was also proposed that every station should have a dairy herd to ensure a supply of fresh milk. Dairy cows were eventually provided on some stations. In later years, some were donated by

Morrinsville farmer, Mr Rushton. On the island of Choiseul, cattle were swum ashore from a boat. The survival of the herd depended on the quality of the grass available.

The mission continued with Goldie as district chairman for the Solomon Islands, and the New Zealand Methodist Foreign Missions Board overseeing the financial and personnel side of the mission. The mission was administered through the Foreign Missions Board (latterly Overseas Mission Department) in Auckland, headed by a General Secretary. The Board appointed the missionaries. There was also significant input from the New Zealand Methodist Women's Missionary Union (NZMWMU), whose members often interviewed and selected missionary sisters to go to the Solomons and provided their financial support.

From 1929 there was more specific attention paid to the general training of missionaries at Trinity Theological College in Grafton, Auckland, but not to the education of missionary wives. Missionaries did not undertake any training that would prepare them for a particular mission field, such as the Solomon Islands. Occasionally some undertook courses independently, but these were not required by the Methodist Church. The missionaries who arrived in the Solomons were often ill-informed about the physical conditions they would encounter. The mission continued to grow and even the interruption of WWII did not stop the mission's endeavours.

## Unsung Methodists

Rev Donald Phillipps

### "God Has Called Me ..."

**A while back, just after his death, I offered a brief tribute to Rua Rakena. I didn't mention it at the time, but he once told me the story of his call to ministry. Because of its wartime use by the military, Wesley College was closed to students for a year and more. Rua received his secondary education at St Stephen's College, an Anglican institution.**

For that reason, as he said, following his father and grandfather into the ministry was not automatic. However, 75 years ago he was summoned (his word) to a meeting with Eru Te Tuhi, the senior Māori minister, George Laurenson (head of Home and Māori Missions) and his father. In that meeting, he learned it was 'expected' that he should be a Methodist minister, and it happened.

The tradition started with Piripi Rakena (1858 - 1934). I recently came across an early report on his work as 'Native Minister' in the Hokianga region, in 1892. It makes fascinating, and salutary, reading:

'Great is my joy in my work of preaching the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, and in my prayers that the Māori people may be saved by the power of God. I feel very grateful to God for His goodness to me



Rev Piripi Rakena from his obituary in The New Zealand Methodist Times, Vol. 25 No. 1 (May 12, 1934). Credit Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives.

during my visit to the South Island last year, also to the Pakeha for their kindness, and also to the Māori who received me so well and were so desirous that I should stay with them as their minister. The work of God amongst my people here is in a healthy state.

Drunkenness is a thing of the past, and the Māori are turning their attention to sheep farming, by which perhaps, they may secure a livelihood. The places where

the work progresses best are Mangamuka, Taupo, and Utakura. I am chiefly engaged in preaching on the Sabbath, but when at home I conduct a Sunday school and singing class. On weekdays I am generally engaged in fencing, clearing, ploughing and planting the land, hunting cattle and horses, and in other ways seeking food for myself and my family. My people are very kind in giving me potatoes and kumara. At present, I am engaged in building myself a weather-boarded house and wish the Home Mission Fund would make me a grant towards purchasing the timber to finish it. Visiting the sick also occupies a portion of my time.

I am troubled by the smallness of my stipend. The Pakeha have ceased buying timber, and I have nothing left to supplement my stipend. If my stipend were £80 per year I should be satisfied, but I suppose I must be content as the Māori collect so little towards the Home Mission Fund, and God has called me to work in His vineyard. My people are always glad to receive the visits of our minister, Rev. T.A. Joughin, and it is our sincere desire that he may reside in the midst of us. We should also feel glad if at any time one of the Fathers of the Church visited us. This finishes what I have to say.' (Signed) Piripi Rakena

These reports to the Home Mission Fund Board were not included in its report to

### The Rakena Whānau

Conference. What Piripi described did not become common knowledge around the Connexion, and the Board was not, in a sense, under an obligation to report how it resolved issues raised by its Native Ministers and Home Missionaries. But then, the hundreds of Methodist Societies around the country did not have to send in an annual report of their work. The work of the Methodist Church went on because, as Piripi said, it was done in response to the call of God.

The Native Minister, however, was not in the position of his pakeha counterpart - who had a parsonage provided. Piripi's report describes what he had to do to ensure that his family were provided for - 'seeking food for myself and my family' as he said. There was pressure on him to do that while performing the duties of a preacher of the Gospel.

A generation ago the principle of 'sacrificial service' was still asserted within our Church concerning the call of God. Since that time the terms of appointment of a minister have been under constant revision, and the norms have been set by reference to the secular world of employment and its standards and legal requirements. Strikes for better pay and conditions are almost a part of our everyday life. Let's not forget those of an earlier generation who thought and acted differently. They deserve our respect.





## A SPECIAL EVENT

# LOTU TATALO LALOLAGI - WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

*Theme: I have heard the stories about your faith. Ua ou faalogo I tala o lou faatuatua.*

**On Friday 3 March, the Samoan Synod's Women Fellowship of Auckland District, which is made up of six churches, combined forces to commemorate the annual World Day of Prayer. This special evening service was held at Taeaomua (Ponsonby).**

The hosting church (mafutaga) is responsible for setting the scene and mood according to the theme translated by the committee of MTSSEMNS. (Mafutaga Tamaitai Sinoti Samoa Ekalesia Metotisi Niu Sila).

Our hosts, Taeaomua, implemented and read-through the set story as per this year's theme. During the service, a special collection was taken for donations to countries and societies in need, as appointed by the main office.

The Samoan Synod Superintendent Rev. Paulo Ieli was attendance as was

the District Superintendent Rev. Falaniko M.T, the church leaders, and our elders, who all made the evening an enjoyable one.

***This year Taiwan was the focus of the World Day Of Prayer.***

***Our offering this year will support:***

Christian World Service - Developers Foundation working with poor rural families in the Aklan Province of Philippines and Gender inequalities and Covid-19, and The Women's Centre, Sri Lanka.

The Bible Society : Beacon in the darkness of illiteracy' project to provide literacy classes for impoverished, illiterate Christian women in Pakistan.

Interchurch Council For Hospital Chaplaincy in New Zealand.

***GOD BLESS :***

***Saili. Ioapo (Itumalo Aukilani)***





## JESUS CONFIRGURATION IN THE MOUNT OF CONFIRGURATION Na nona matalia na turaga ena ulunivanua ni matalia



### MACIU 17:1 - 9

#### MACIU 17:2 A SA MATALIA NA YAGONA E MATADRATOU, A SA SERAU NA MATANA ME VAKA NA MATANISIGA, KA SA VULAVULA MAI NA NONA I SULU ME VAKA NA RARAMA.

Au sa vakabula raraba yani kina loma ni Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma E Niusiladi, ni bula nai Talatala Qase, dou bula talega na veitacini vaka I Talatala, kemudrau saka nai Talatala Qase Vakacegu, Mikaele Yasa kei Talatala Peni Tikoinaka, kei kemudou nai tokani vaka I Talatala kei na kena I vavakoso lomani.

Nai takitaki vakayalo ena i Lalakai ni Wasewase sai koya nai ulutaga levu ni macawa vakalotu eda se qai vakanadakuya tiko qo, "Na Matalia", se na nona matalia na turaga ena ulunivanua ni matalia. "The Configuration" or Jesus Configuration in the Mt of Configuration. Ena i talanoa ni lesoni ka koto I cake oqori, e koto kina na nona digitaki ratou na lewe tolu na tisaipeli qo ko Jisu, ko Pita, kei rau na veitacini ko Jemesa kei Joni, me ratou lako cake kina Ulunivanua, ka ratou sega ni kila, ni sa koto kina na nona i tuvutava na Kalou Bula, me ratou laki sota kina ko Jisu kei rau na Parofita levu qo, ko Ilaija kei Mosese, ni vakarau nai lakolako lesu ki Jerusalemi, me vakayacori kina nai lesilesi mai Lomalagi, kai cavacava ni veiqaravi I Jisu, sai koya na delana mai Kalivari.

Eda rogoca ena I talanoa ni lesoni, ni ratou sa yaco ki cake ko Jisu kei ratou na tisaipeli, sa qai matalia mai nai rairai kei Jisu, ka vaka nai serau ni matanisiga na matana ka sa vulavula mai na nona I sulu me vaka na rarama. Sa qai sikavotu mai ko Mosese kei Ilaija vei Jisu ka ratou veitalanoa. Ena nodratou sarava toka na tisaipeli na veika sa yaco tiko, sa qai cavuta ko Pita, Turaga, sa vinaka na nodatou tiko eke, ke ni vinakata, me keitou tara e tolu na vale vakaceveva, me dua na nomuni, ka dua me nei Mosese ka dua tale me nei Ilaija. Sa qai voqa mai

na domo ni Kalou ena loma ni O vei ratou, OQO NA NOQU GONE NI TOKO AU SA DAU VINAKATA VAKALEVU. DOU VAKAROGOCI KOYA.

#### NA NONA MATALIA NA TURAGA

E vica na ka eda raica ka vulica ena lesoni ni nona matalia na Turaga, nai matai, na nona digitaki ratou na lewe tolu mai vei ratou na vo ni tisaipeli, e vakatakila na bibi ni nodratou digitaki me ratou muria na Turaga ka vakadinadinataka na nona matalia na Karisito.

Nida raica na veika e yaco ena ulunivanua, ena nona matalia mai ko Jisu, sa seraka sara ga mai na kena I rairai dina Vakalou ka tukuna ni o koya na Luve ni Kalou, mai nai tutu vaka Luve ni Tamata ka ratou kila na tisaipeli ka ratou dau lako vata voli ena veiqaravi, me ratou raica ka vakadinadinataka ni ko Jisu e Luve ni Kalou ka sinai tu ena I serau, nai ukuuku kei nai yau Vakalou. Qo na ka e ratou digitaki kina mai vei ira na vo ni tisaipeli, ni ratou ka voleka sara vua na Turaga, {Jesus Inner Circle} ka levu na gauna e dau kacivi ratou me ratou dau lakovata ka vakadinadinataka na veigauna bibi eso dau vakayacora kina ko Jisu eso na veika lelevu se ena veigauna dredre eso e sotava.

Na rua na ka e vakatakilai vei ratou na tisaipeli, Nai tutu vaka Luve ni Kalou {Son of God} ka matalia kina na kena I rairai kei nai tutu vaka Luve ni Tamata {Son of Man} ena I rairai vakatamata ka ratou lako vata yani kina ka kilai koya talega kina, sa dusia vei ratou me ratou Vunautaka ka vakadinadinataka ni ko Jisu e Luve ni Kalou ka sinai ena I serau kei nai ukuuku Vakalou, kei nai yau vakalomalagi, ka vakatalega kina na nona I tutu vaka Luve ni Tamata, ka dusia na bula ni Dauveiqaravi Yalodina ka vaka Dravudravuataki koya me luvata tu yani nai serau kei nai ukuuku Vakalou e Lomalagi, ka mai sucu ka bula, ka veiqaravi ga vakatamata, ena I tutu vaka Luve ni Tamata, ni vakararavi duadua ga vua na Tamana, ka vakamalalumutaki koya me veiqaravi ena bula ni vakarorogo

kei na talairawarawa vua na Tamana. {Filipe 2:5 - 11}. "In his divine nature, Christ was fully God. In his human nature, he was fully man." Na rua nai tutu bibi oqo, ei dusidusi vakayalo toka vei keda nida kacivi talega ena cakacaka ni noda tomana na cakacaka vinaka sa mai vakadavora oti ko Jisu I Vuravura, na Kosipeli ni Veiyalayalati Vou, kei na nona mai solia na nona bula me mate ena Kauveilatai ka tucake tale ena vukuda kei na noda I valavala ca, me rawa ni ciqomi keda tale na Kalou ka veivinakati tale kei na tamata, ka dolava na katuba ni Loloma titobu Vakalou sa mai matana taka ko Jisu Karisito me rawa ni daru solia na nodaru bula, ka vakatokai me daru Luve ni Kalou {Joni 1:12} ni daru sa serauni ena I serau kei nai Ukuuku Vakalou ka lumuti kedaru kina na Kalou na Yalotabu, me waqa tu kina na cina Vakalou oqori ka daru qarava yani na cakacaka vaka Luve ni Tamata ena nodaru vakadadamuria na Karisito ena I yaloyalo ni Dauveiqaravi Yalodina, ka vakadravudravua taki kedaru ena nodaru solia na nodaru gauna, na nodaru bula, na kedaru kei na medaru, na nodaru I yau kina cakacaka ni loma ni Kalou kei na nona Lotu Savasava.

Me daru vakadadamuri Jisu na nodaru Turaga kai Vakabula ni daru solia na nodaru bula mei madrali bula kai votamate ni Lotu Savasava I Jisu. Sai koya ga oqori nai naki ni nodratou kacivi na lewe tolu me ratou vakadinadinataka na veika e yaco ena Ulunivanua ni matalia, ka Vunautaka ka toqa talega ena I Volatabu, me rawa ni da kila ka vuli kina, ka vakabibi na noda matanataka ni da tomana na cakacaka bibi sa mai tekivuna ko Jisu kei ratou na tisaipeli, kei na Veitalaki nei Jisu ena Maciu 28:19 - 20, O koya mo dou qai lako ka Vakalotutaki ira na lewe ni veivanua kecega, ka papitaisotaki ira ena yaca ni tamamudou, kei na Luvena kei na Yalotabu. Vakavulici ira me ra Vakabauta na veika kau a Vosa kina vei kemudou, ka mo dou kila talega niu sa tiko vata kei kemudou, ka yacova nai Yalayala kei Vuravura. {The Great Commision}

Ena matalia ni rairai kei Jisu ena nodratou sota kei rau na Parofita ko Mosese kei Ilaija, sai otioi tiko ni nona I lakolako I Vuravura me sa tavuki lesu ka mua nai lakolako ki Jerusalemi me laki vakacavari kina na nona veiqaravi ka davu mai Lomalagi, ka sa dusia talega vei keda nida sa lako tiko ena I otioi ni taba gauna ni tiko nanamaki ena nona lesu mai na Turaga, ka dina ga ni sega ni dua e kila na gauna cava, na Kalou na Tamada ga sa tiko mai Lomalagi, ia eda sa vakayadrati tikoga mai vua na Kalou na Yalotabu, ena nodra Parofisai na Parofita ena Veiyalayalati Makawa me vakayadrati keda ena veika ena yaco mai, ka vakakina na Kosipeli I Jisu ni Veiyalayalati Vou me dusia vei keda na Sala meda muria, ni sa tu kina na Dina ka na rawati talega kina na Bula.

Ena nodrau mai veivakadeitaki talega na Parofita e rua ko Mosese kei Ilaija vei Jisu ena I talanoa e wiliki vei keda, e sai dusidusi talega vei keda meda vakavakarau ni se siga toka, ni sa Vuravura ga ni vakavakarau ka lekaleka wale na bula eke, ka da sa lako tale tikoga ena I otioi ni noda I lakolako I Vuravura ni bera ni lesu mai na Turaga, meda taura matua nai dusidusi ni lesoni ka wasei tiko vei keda, ka qarava yani ena yalodina na veikacivi kei na veitalaki oqori nei Jisu, nida sa vakatokai talega meda Luve ni Kalou {Joni 1:12} ka sa tu vei keda nai serau ni Kalou ka solia vei keda na Yalotabu meda cakacakataka yani na loma ni Kalou I Vuravura ena I tutu vaka Luve ni Tamata Dauveiqaravi Yalodina ka muria na we ni yavana na noda Turaga ko Jisu Karisito sa mai sabolotaka e Vuravura. Tukuna ko Jisu ena Maciu 16:24, Okoya sa via muri au, me kakua ni muri ana lomana, ia me colata ga na nona Kauveilatai ka muri au. Me noda vata na Vakacegu kei na Veivakalougatataki ni noda Kalou Bula ko Jiova. Emeni

**"In his divine nature, Christ was fully God. In his human nature, he was fully man."**



# Fakaakeake 'a Hastings mei he afā

Ongoongo meia Fatongia Ofa & Olivia Ofa mei Hastings mo e ngaahi 'ata.

Ko hono talitali 'o e 'Eiki Minisitā 'a e MIA, 'Eiki Nopele Vaea, 'e he kominiutī Tonga he Vāhenga Hawke's Bay, pehē ki he Liaison Officer Tevita Niu Lata mo e kau ngāue RSE toli fua'i'akau, Setuata mo e kaingalotu Metotisi fakaafongā'i mai 'a e Siaola mo e Vahefonua Tonga 'o Aotearoa, Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'u Sila, Tevita Faka'osi mei he Kainga Pasifika, kau takilotu 'o e vāhenga ni. Na'e fakaafongā mai 'e he 'Eiki Nopele 'a e fakamālō mei he Pule'anga 'o Tonga, Koe'uhi ā ko e ngaahi tokoni kotoa pe na'atau fakahoko ki he 'etau fānau ngāue mei Tonga 'i he tāfea mo Saikolone ne toki 'osi.



Tongan Minister of Internal Affairs, Lord Vaea, visited Hastings to meet the community and RSE workers affected by Cyclone Gabrielle.



Lord Vaea with members of the Hastings Tongan community. Images taken by Olivia Ofa.



RSE workers in Hastings affected by Cyclone Gabrielle receive support and aid from Siaola and Vahefonua. Credit: Felonitisi Manukia.



Leaders from the Hastings community with Siaola staff during the presentations of gifts and aid to RSE workers. Credit: Felonitesi Manukia.



RSE workers in Hastings affected by Cyclone Gabrielle receive support and aid from Siaola and Vahefonua.