



November 2024



Welcome to the monthly newsletter of the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hāhi Weteriana Aotearoa

The Connexional Office

Please send your articles to reception@methodist.org.nz



Remember in your Prayers

The Connexional Office

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of Rev Jannet Mudavanhu. Jannet had a brain bleed caused by an aneurism on Sunday 13th October. While she had made quite a bit of progress and had a very good day on Thursday, unfortunately she did not wake up on Friday morning and died on Saturday evening.

Jannet's sister Tendai has been with her over the last week and during this time Jannet has been able to communicate with Tendai and others who have been supporting Jannet and her sister.

At Jannet's commissioning service with Trinity Union Parish, she sang her favourite hymn – This Little Light of Mine. During this last week Jannet's sister Tendai has spoken of her calling to serve God and to be a light in this world. Her ministries here in Aotearoa has been known for her ability to work pastorally with people and in support of people. Jannet's ministries at Hutt City Uniting Congregations, Beckenham, and Trinity Union Parish were defined by her pastoral heart. During this last year Jannet embarked on further studies to better her understanding of pastoral theology and to equip herself for contemporary pastoral ministry. She was excited about a new ministry appointment in Taranaki. Jannet's desire to be a light for others has continued in death as she was an organ donor. Her light will continue to shine through those she has helped in life and in death and of course all her family and friends.

At this time, we offer our love and support to Tendai and the rest of their family and to the people of Trinity Union Parish. We are thankful for the leadership, spiritual mentoring and life of Rev Jannet Mudavanhu.

The funeral for Jannet Mudavanhu will be held at 10:30am on Thursday 14th November, Wesley Church, 75 Taranaki Street, Wellington. The funeral will be live streamed and details for live stream will be circulated closer to the time.

Please note there will be no parking available on site, but there are parking buildings in close proximity to the church.

Messages to Jannet's family can be sent via Nicola.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary



Methodist Mission Southern: Te āo Māori in the Transition Houses

Julie Roberts

The Mission's Youth Transition House and Young Mum's House have been blessed with recent funding to support *rakatahi* (youth) in reconnecting with *te ao Māori*, the Māori world. This essential support enables young people in our community to participate in meaningful cultural activities, like kapa haka (traditional dance), marae-based gatherings, mirimiri (traditional healing), educational *wānanga*, raranga (weaving), whakairo (carving), mau rākau (martial arts), hikoi (cultural walks), and kai preparation (traditional food gathering and cooking).

At Methodist Mission Southern, we are reminded daily of the unique challenges faced by *rakatahi* experiencing homelessness or family instability. Our Youth Transition House in Waihōpai provides a safe, supportive place for 16- to 19-year-olds to live as they learn essential life skills, pursue education or employment, and build physical, mental, and social resilience.

From a *te ao Māori* perspective, true health and well-being encompass more than just the physical; they are rooted in *whanaungatanga*—the process of forming and maintaining meaningful relationships that enrich and sustain us (Wilson et al., 2021b). Health, or *hauora*, in the Māori worldview, represents a holistic balance, including spiritual and cultural identity alongside physical and mental well-being. *Hau*, or vital essence, is the breath of life that connects all people and living things, while *ora* signifies health, life, and vitality (Henare, 2001; Moorfield, 2021).

Our Mission recognises this comprehensive approach to well-being, and we are committed to offering our *rakatahi* not only a safe environment but also access to activities and connections that cultivate their *hauora*—fostering a thriving spirit of life and a sense of belonging within their culture (Reweti et al., 2022).

This vision extends to our Young Mums' House, where young mothers and expectant mums are welcomed with safe accommodation and support to continue their education and develop life skills as they care for their *pēpi* (babies). We strive to equip these young women to build positive futures for themselves and their *whānau* (families). At the heart of our mission is a commitment to holistic care, honouring *te ao Māori* values that nurture not only the individual but also their connections with *whānau*, culture, and community.

With this renewed focus on cultural well-being, our *rakatahi* are encouraged to strengthen their sense of belonging through cultural heritage. These connections foster a greater sense of identity, which is essential for their spiritual, emotional, and personal growth. In supporting this journey, the Mission actively integrates *te ao Māori* into its services, reflecting our shared belief in the value of community, compassion, and the spiritual care that comes from being rooted in who we are.

As members of the church, we share in the mission to uplift young people through love, support, and meaningful connection, recognising that each young life in our care is a precious part of God's family.

Be part of our story, our work, and our community.

Is there a specific programme we do that your group would be interested in learning more about? Would you like to read more about MMS' work in Otago and Southland?

Please contact Julie.julier@mmsouth.org.nz to receive our monthly e-newsletters and connect with us on our various social media channels. [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

(Reweti, August 2023)





Climate Justice Group

Marion Hines

The Climate Justice Working Group is committed to producing a calendar for each of the five key focus areas in the Climate Justice Decade – Rekindle the Va of Papatūānuku. The focus area for 2025/26 is Climate Migration/Displacement.

Our calendar leads the connexion month by month in challenging and inspiring reflections on this theme. It includes practical suggestions for action and a prayer. Contributors to the reflections are George Zachariah and Elisapesi Havea. Actions and prayers have been added by

Marion Hines. Translators have provided language versions of the calendar in Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian.

In love and respect for our late chair, Rev Siosifa Pole, the calendar for 2025 is dedicated to him in recognition of his passion for our work over the past five years.

Orders can be taken now (delivery end of October)

Calendars cost \$18 each or \$15 each for orders of 10 or more. Postal orders cost an additional \$10 per order. Conference delegates may collect their copy at Conference, Access the order form on our [web page](#) or order by [email](#).

Enquiries: Please email [Maion Hines](#) or Ph 021 053 2053



Invitation to our weekend retreats next year @ Sister Eveleen Retreat House

Antje Duda

Sister Eveleen Retreat House A sanctuary for those who seek replenishment, a pause in the whirlwind of life, or a reminder that we are not merely what we produce or consume, but beings created for rest, for silence and for the joy of knowing God. Be welcomed in our place

Special Invitation to our weekend (or 1-2 night) silent retreats in the first half of 2025:

- Living from the Tree of Life - facilitators: Donald & Janice Scott - **Date:** Sunday 19 - Tuesday 21 January 2025- [Follow this link](#)
- Final Steps: A Universal Spiritual Practice- facilitators: Eddie O'Connor & Annette Reinheimer, **Date:** 14-16 February 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- Coming Home to the Fathers Loving Embrace - facilitators: Carol & Colin Renouf, **Date:** 7-9 March 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- The Contemplative Gaze - facilitators: Janis & Donald Scott, **Date:** 4-6 April 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- A Pilgrims Soul - facilitator: Elinor Galbraith, **Date:** 2-4 May 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- Reflect and Create- Autumn Retreat- facilitator: Glenda Joy, **Date:** 9-11 May 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- Praying with St. Ignatius - Exploring major themes of the Spiritual Exercises and meeting God through them - facilitators: Colin & Carol Renouf, **Date:** 23-25 June 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- If you have not been at Sister Eveleen before, you might want to have a look at our new [video](#).
- Monthly Day of Retreat @ Sister Ev - every last Thursday in the month with different themes
This month: Thur 28 Nov, 9:30 – 2:30 - facilitator: Antje Duda - [November](#)- [January](#) - [February](#) - [March](#)





The Pitt Street Methodist Church had a service that was led by our youth.

Shantell Nair

On Sunday 27th of October 2024, The Pitt Street Methodist Church had a service that was led by our youth.

At the beginning of the year the numbers of our youth were very low. Thankfully with Metuisela Tafuna, Shantell Nair, David Tapu and Becks Tupa'i's support we now have approximately 25 youth members. Our youth group consists of a

vast number of different ethnicities ranging from Samoan, Fijian, Sri Lankan, and Tongan. Our youngest member is 18 months old and our eldest youth member is 23 years old.

Sunday 27th October was a service to celebrate Lotu Tamaiti/ Fakme/White Sunday.

The entire service was led by our beautiful and talented youth.

Our youth performed songs and dances.

The entire congregation stated how wonderful the service was.

A big thank you to the Pitt Street family and to the Parents who helped create our youth group.

Without their support, we wouldn't have had such a spectacular service.

Family start statement November 2024

David Hanna

60% reduction in services for babies and their families under most pressure in Kāpiti, Porirua, and Wellington.

Wesley Community Action is deeply disappointed at having to accept a 60% reduction in staff for the Family Start service it delivers in Kāpiti, Porirua and Wellington. We offered a 30% reduction, but this offer has been turned down.

This decision means that in the coming year up to 60 babies and their families already experiencing hardship will not be supported through Family Start. We believe that this is harmful and likely to increase problems and costs down the track. It is also a signal of deeper systemic issues.

Foremost, our disappointment is because of the long-term harm this will cause to the babies / children and their whānau that Family Start supports. The science is very clear: the early years lay the foundations for the rest of our lives. Babies in insecure or stressful situations are more likely to experience long-term health and social consequences.

These ripple across all aspects of life and can ultimately contribute to issues with educational achievement, addiction, health and employment, as well as difficulties maintaining healthy, stable relationships. These represent a compounding cost to future governments.

Family Start supports babies in families who are already under pressure due to mental health or addiction issues, histories of abuse, and engagement with the justice system.

Wesley Community Action has been providing Family Start to whānau in the greater Wellington region since 2012. We're one of 45 organisations throughout the country providing the service to local whānau and in the last five years our Family Start team has supported almost 1000 whānau. They work alongside parents in their own home, supporting them to identify their strengths as parents and working with them on changes they want to make.

The whānau involved consistently report that the relationship they build with our kaimahi is a key factor in helping them feel more confident as parents. This leads to happier and more stable home environments for babies and young children.

The pressure on the whānau supported by Family Start has increased significantly in recent years. In the face of this increasing pressure, some families are pulling back as the world feels more unsafe and uncertain. This pattern of pulling back is reflected in increasing truancy in schools, no-shows in the health system and non-engagement with helping services. At the





same time, whānau are more likely to 'unplug' through things such as gaming, drug use and high use of social media. All adding to the long-term stress and negative outcomes. Through our many years of experience of working alongside whānau we know that many of their issues flow from previous trauma. What's needed to heal this is compassionate and respectful services based on a deep understanding of the families.

We offered a 30% reduction in staffing given the difficult economic times we are all facing. However, Oranga Tamariki has not been willing to negotiate and instead has dictated a 60% reduction, arguing that they "must ensure the children and young people in our care have their needs met first and foremost."

We believe that this logic is highly flawed. Reducing Family Start services will guarantee an increase in the number of children who eventually need more direct and costly state care. This will eventually add to the tremendous pressure that Oranga Tamariki staff are already under. We value the work that Oranga Tamariki does and appreciate that their staff face a massive job. We also know that this decision has not been driven solely by Oranga Tamariki, and that it is wider than the current coalition government. The care system has been breaking down over many years and across many governments.

At the core of this breakdown is the increased disconnection of people and an economy that undervalues the essential role of supporting babies and their parents. Family Start goes some way to filling this gap – though we believe that ultimately the solution lies in changing the system. Perhaps the inevitable negative impact of these funding changes will trigger deeper conversations about how this can be done?

In the meantime, we now face the difficult prospect of having to lay off dedicated staff who are skilled and passionate about working with families experiencing the greatest stresses just as we enter the Christmas season.

