



February 2025



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 the Connexion of the passing of Rev. Russell Marshall, who died peacefully on the morning of January 18. Russell had distinguished careers in the Church, politics, and civic affairs.

He served in two parishes: Spreydon, Christchurch (1960–1967), where he oversaw the Lincoln Road and Hallswell congregations, and Masterton (1967–1971). In 1972, he moved to Whanganui to contest the parliamentary seat for the Labour Party, successfully winning it. He represented the electorate until his retirement in 1990.

Russell served as a Cabinet Minister in the Fourth Labour Government, holding several portfolios, including Minister of Education and later Minister of Foreign Affairs. After his parliamentary career, he chaired the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO from 1990 to 1999 and, in 1994, led the Commonwealth Observer Mission to South Africa. From 2000 to 2002, he was Chancellor of Victoria University and subsequently served as High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 2002–2005.

Russell received the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977, the New Zealand Commemoration Medal in 1990, and was appointed a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2001 New Year Honours for public services.

Upon retiring from ministry at the beginning of 1972, it was agreed that Russell would remain a Methodist minister, reflecting his enduring connection with the Church. In February 1991, he served as an advisor at the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia.

The family held a private cremation service on January 21.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary



It was with much sadness that we heard of the death of Mary Rose, one of our long serving Lay Preachers. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mary's family and the congregation at St Paul's Co-operating Parish, Putaruru.

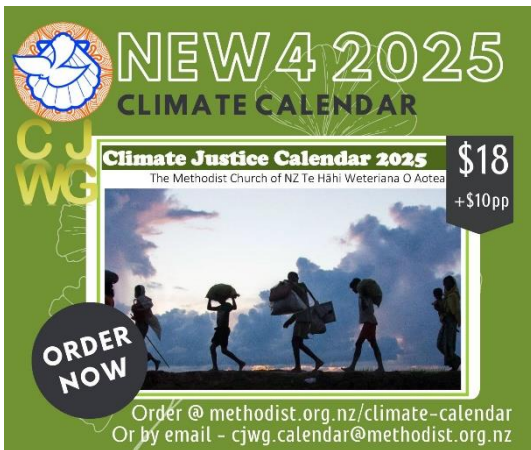
New Zealand Lay Preachers' Association (NZLPA) records suggest that Mary first started as a Lay Preacher in 1980, and a Methodist Lay Preachers Certificate was issued to her in 1992. Her upbringing in British Methodism was reflected in her approach to worship and fitted well with her Anglican-Methodist congregation. Mary is remembered for her sincerity, her commitment and practical approach to life and ministry.

Mary served as President of the NZLPA when the Executive Committee was based in the Waikato-Waiariki from 2004 – 7. As Putaruru was a central location for the Committee, the Executive met there regularly and appreciated the hospitality which Mary and the Parish offered for these meetings. They always concluded with Chinese takeaways and wide-ranging conversations over meals together. During her time in office, the NZLPA committee offered a few Lay Preacher training days each year and again the hospitality at St Paul's and its convenient location were appreciated. Mary and then NZLPA Secretary Viv Whimster attended the final meeting of the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2005 in Porirua, as representatives of one of the few parachurch groups to work inter-denominationally. Mary travelled to Christchurch to represent the Executive and hand over the reins to the Canterbury Lay Preachers in early 2008.

Mary continued to be active for as long as she was able, and we acknowledge with gratitude her many years of faithful ministry as a Lay Preacher.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary



Connexions update

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.

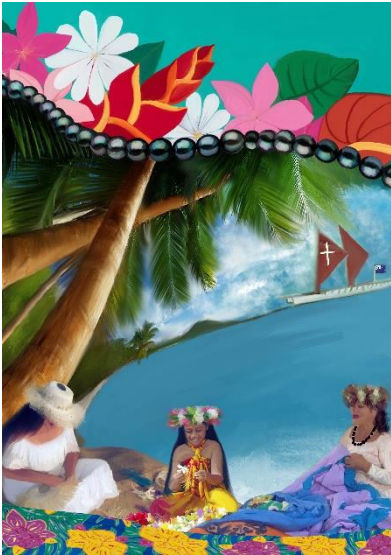
In love and respect for our late chair, Rev Siosifa Pole, the calendar for 2025 is dedicated to him in recognition of his passion for our work over the past five years.

We have a few copies left in all languages. Order copies for your friends or neighbours now! SPECIAL PRICE NOW Calendars \$15 each. Postal orders cost \$10 per order.

Access the order form on our [web page](#) or order by [email](#).

Enquiries: Please contact [Marion Hines](#) or Ph 021 053 2053





World Day of Prayer – 2025 – “I Made You Wonderfully”

Lynne Scott

The 2025 World Day of Prayer service and resources have been prepared by the WDP Committee of Cook Islands. The theme is “I Made You Wonderfully” based on Psalm 139: 14. The ecumenical service will take place on Friday 7 March 2025.

Please contact your local Church for details. The National Liaison Officer, [Zella McGirr](#), may have some information about local services but unfortunately not all Church groups let her know when and where the Service will be held. Remember, everyone is welcome to attend a service.

The 2025 programme invites us into the knowledge that each one of us was made with care and love by God. When we can receive this profound truth, everything in our life changes and

we begin to radiate and shine from within. We also learn how to treat every other person as made wonderful by God.

The first Guiding Principle in the World Day of Prayer articulates that our starting point is Christian women – Informed Prayer, Prayerful Action. This has been an essential conviction of our movement over the last century. Too often, women and girls have been silenced and oppressed, making this theme from WDP Cook Islands particularly relevant. The message that we, as women and girls, are “fearfully and wonderfully” made in the image of God reinforces our movement’s support of women in expressing their faith and speaking about their lives in prayer and worship before God and in community.

The offerings this year will support CWS – Tongan Community Development Fund, The Bible Society – Healing the trauma in the South Pacific, and the Interchurch Council for Hospital Chaplaincy. If you are unable to make the Service you can donate [online](#).

The WDP Website is where resources for this years service are available.



Warm greetings from Sister Ev and wondering what happen to this summer

Antje Duda

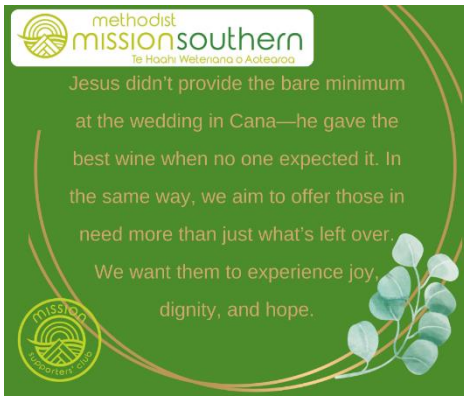
Slow Down, Pause and Rest: Experience the Gift of Retreat

You can book a room for a day or overnight to have a self-guided retreat, or register for one of our guided retreats.

Here are our 2- 3 day retreats -not always on a weekend- in the first half of this year.

- Coming Home to the Fathers Loving Embrace - facilitators: Carol & Colin Renouf, Date: 7-9 March 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- The Contemplative Gaze - facilitators: Donald & Janis 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 - facilitator: Glenda Joy, Date: 9-11 May 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- Creative Writing Retreat - facilitator: Eddie O'Connor, Date: 7-8 June 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- Praying with St. Ignatius - facilitator: Colin Renouf, Date: (Mo) 23- (Wed) 25 June 2025- [Follow this Link](#)
- or book in your personal retreat day with us
- [For our annual programme please see here](#)





Methodist Mission Southern: There is More Than Enough

Julie Roberts

At Methodist Mission Southern, we believe in the abundance of love, care, and resources that our community can offer. Yet, for too many in our society, life is about getting by with what's leftover—what's unwanted or barely enough to survive.

But this is not the way of aroha. True care does not measure out the bare minimum or offer only what is convenient to give. It sees the inherent worth in every

person and says: *You are worthy of the best.*

When a young mum walks through the doors of our Young Mums' Transition House, she is greeted with dignity and compassion. She finds the resources she needs to care for her baby and the support to build a sustainable, hopeful future.

For the rangatahi who come to our Youth Transition Houses, the message is the same. These are not places of charity but of empowerment—where young people receive nutritious meals, warm beds, and opportunities to grow their skills and confidence.

One of our Taituarā a Hāpori (Community Support Workers) shared a special moment from this Christmas. Each resident woke up on Christmas morning to find a gift bag outside their door. Inside were small, thoughtful items: toiletries, sweet treats, and tokens of care. "I was with some of the residents when they opened their packs, and they were absolutely delighted," they shared.

It is humbling to think how something as basic as a bar of soap or a bottle of shampoo can feel like an extraordinary gift. In a world of excess consumerism, where some children discard extravagant toys, these teenagers were grateful for simple, practical kindness.

Our mission is built on the belief that there is more than enough to go around. Whether it's swimming lessons for the babies of young mums, confidence-building workshops with horses, or a new pair of togs for a rangatahi who's never been to a pool before, we show the people we support that they deserve more than the dregs.

This vision of abundance is deeply rooted in faith. Jesus didn't provide the bare minimum at the wedding in Cana—he gave the best wine when no one expected it. In the same way, we aim to offer those in need more than just what's left over. We want them to experience joy, dignity, and hope.

We see this joy in moments big and small—like a young mum's pride when her baby takes their first swimming lesson or the confidence of a teenager who's learned a new skill. These are the glimpses of the Kingdom of God at work here on earth, where everyone is valued, respected, and given the chance to flourish.

At Methodist Mission Southern, we know there is more than enough in our community. With care, generosity, and love, we can share it in a way that uplifts everyone.

Would you consider becoming a regular giver? With your help, we can ensure that no one in our community is left to make do with the dregs. Let's show them that there is more than enough.

Visit our website to set up a regular donation or find out more about the Mission's work. *Be part of our story, our work, and our community.*

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





Contribution of things happenings for Auckland Synod at the start of this year.

Uesifili Unasa

The Auckland Synod work got off to a busy start in 2025 with the Induction services for Rev Kaurasi Lagi at the Pitt St Fijian congregation in Auckland Central Parish and Glen Eden Church in the Waitakere Parish. The Synod is looking forward to successful parish ministries in both parishes and ministering alongside Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma.



The Avondale Union Parish redevelopment project is full steam ahead. Demolition work was completed before Christmas and the reconstruction phase of the project is now underway. The opening of the new facilities is scheduled the end of the year in November.



Changing Church

Frank Hanson

Feminine Descriptors for God. Based on terms used in "Changing Church" (Jann Aldredge-Clanton), the stories of 12 US ministers (mainly women), their lives and their theologies.

After having read this book I went back through it to write down words/phrases they had used to describe the feminine face of God.

Here are some of the better known ones:

Inner Eve, Divine parent/friend, Strong mother God, Divine feminine, She who reigns in glory

and majesty, Vibrant life giver, Mother of Creation, Mystery, Mother God, Mother/Father God She Spirit (fem. In Greek), Sophia/Wisdom, Sister, Midwife, Holy Other, God/dess, Feminine, face of God, Heart of love, Holy Spirit/ female dove, She who is. Here are some others that they also mention:

Divine One, Guide, Poet, Liberator, Saving Grace, The Risen One, Shepherd, Holy Other, The Ground of our Being, Steadfast/Faithful One, Birther of new life, Anam Cara – Soul friend Mother Eagle, Friend, Divine Presence, Divine Parent, Giver of life, Divine Musician, Womb of Creation, Holy Wisdom, Holy Mother, Merciful Mother God, Nursing God, Source of Compassion/Love, Creator of New Life, Soul Guide, Friend, Brother/Sister Spirit, Holy Wisdom





The Creator and her Creation, Her Church, Her/His Fullness, Glorious Majesty, Friend, God – Our Parent, Lover, Partner, Creative Spirit, She who rides on the wings of the world.

Some other brief quotes that took my eye:

- Brother/Sister Christ
- Glory be to the Mother, and to the Christ and to the Spirit
- White God/Brown God/Black God
- God is love and only love
- At the empty Tomb, Jesus is reported as saying, “Mary, go tell the brethren”. (There’s a sermon there!)
- God of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel. (Not just Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)
- Church Sign: “Would we recognise God if we saw Her?”
- God is gender-full not gender-less
- In the end, God is beyond any human name – male or female.



Lifewise invites you to the Myers Park Cottage Re-opening

We are delighted to invite you to the re-opening of the historic Myers Park Cottage. This event marks the beginning of an exciting journey as Lifewise takes over the lease from Auckland Council and activates community usage of this cherished space.

Lifewise Reopens the Myers Park Cottage

Cha Clarino

Lifewise is delighted to announce the re-opening of the historic Myers Park Cottage, located at 72 Greys Avenue, Auckland Central. To formally mark the re-opening, there will be a small event where neighbours are invited to join us at the Myers Park Cottage on Wednesday, 19 February, at 10 am.

The re-opening event will include a few formalities, but most importantly, Lifewise will share its vision and

exciting plans for the community use of the cottage. The Myers Park Cottage, constructed in the 1850s, is not only a historic landmark but also a beacon of hope and community engagement. Lifewise aims to transform this space into a vibrant community hub dedicated to addressing homelessness and fostering a sense of belonging within the community.

If you are on the lookout for a space in the CBD for your community events, please do not hesitate to reach out to [Lifewise](#).



INVITATION

Beverley Osborn

Because of shrinking congregations and limited finance, many small NZ churches have been forced to close. Their remaining members make choices about driving long distances or attending services of a different denomination in local churches which still have open doors. Those choices aren’t available for people who live on an island.

Stewart Island once had two vibrant churches – St Andrew’s Anglican and Oban Presbyterian. There is now no local congregation at St Andrew’s and only an occasional service there round Christmas and Easter. Oban Presbyterian still has regular

services and a small core of devoted members who welcome both visiting tourists, and ministers – lay and ordained – from a variety of denominations. They can no longer afford the travel fares for volunteer worship leaders, but they do offer an amazing accommodation perk. This is two free nights in a well-equipped manse, which sleeps four, and a suggested \$25 per person donation for any extra nights.

Stewart Island is a very attractive tourist destination and a night even in a basic DoC hut in the wilderness there costs 2 or 3 times that – with no electricity, laundered sheets, friendly pick-up service, etc





So if you could lead worship some Sunday and enjoy several days on New Zealand’s third and very beautiful island, do get in touch with the Interim moderator, [Rev Nyalle Paris](#), (or phone 03 218 0663). You would be so very welcome.

South Island Methodist Synod
Te Hinota Weteriana o te Waipounamu

**2025 School of Theology
Kete Aroha o Waipounamu**
From 2pm Sunday 16 to
3.30pm Tuesday 18 March
Including evening sessions on Sunday and Monday

Te Hinota Weteriana o te Waipounamu

being held at **Aldersgate, Central Christchurch**

We are pleased to announce that our two keynote speakers will be current MCNZ President, **Dr Te Aroha Rountree**, and **Dr Emily Colgan**.




While Te Aroha is currently on secondment from Trinity Methodist Theological College, Emily continues to offer her scholarship and wisdom to the Trinity College students.

Most people in Te Hāhi know how gifted these two speakers are - well worth prioritizing your time to be part of this event.

There will also be Workshops on topics like:


- origins of Christianity in the West Coast from a Māori perspective
- Climate Justice – sharing findings from last year’s World Methodist Conference
- Working with Pacific People as part of your congregation
- Congregational-based Ministry with children - the learnings that come with experience
- A fresh look at the New Zealand liturgical calendar
- Theology through a disability lens

As a result of feedback from last year’s *Kete Aroha o Waipounamu*, the workshops will be organised so that participants will be able to attend more of these stimulating sessions.

Full Programmes and Registration forms will be widely distributed mid-February.
Last year the cost was \$150 - we expect there will only be a small increase for this year’s event.
If you want the information sent directly to you, please email - superintendent.sis@methodist.org.nz

The South Island Synod is again holding it’s School of Theology, Kete Aroha o Waipounamu, this year in March

Dale Peach
Please see image.



**MARCH 29,
2025
9:30AM – 12:30PM**



WITH DR EMILY COLGAN
Trinity Theological College & University of Auckland

The Bible is a book that’s filled with violence. Sometimes, it’s easy for us to recognize the violence being described in a text; at other times, it’s hidden in plain sight, and we might not even notice it’s there.

What can we learn from biblical “texts of terror” that depict all manner of violence? And how might they speak to us about the violent acts, words, and ideas that we encounter in our world today?

In this session, Emily will share her thoughts on the enduring significance of biblical violence and the ways that it can inform our own understandings of contemporary violence.

Bring your questions for discussion!

NZ Lay Preachers Association
AKL Ecumenical Gathering

Auckland Ecumenical Lay Preachers Workshop

Nau Mai Haere Mai Welcome

An Ecumenical Workshop open to all

Please Bring a Plate
Suggested Koha \$10

Come join us on this exploration/ korero/taiao.

VENUE
Wesley Roskill Methodist Church
276 Mt Albert Rd
Sandringham, Auckland 1041

RSVP
Judy 027 6464 572
judy.mcfall@gmail.com
As Soon As Possible

The NZLPA Auckland Ecumenical Lay Preacher group whanau is happy to bring you the first of its three gatherings of 2025 on Saturday March 29th 9:30am-12:30pm at Wesley Mt Roskill Parish, 276 Mt Albert Road, Sandringham.

Judy McFall
Dr Emily Colgan, (Trinity Theological College, University of Auckland), is our Guest Speaker on the topic The Bible: Violence in /and our Sacred Texts. See the full details in our flyer. These events are open to all, so please advertise in your parishes, and circulate the invitation to your networks.
The other two gatherings in 2025 are on Saturday 26th July and Saturday 29th November at the same time and same venue. Book these dates in your calendars with details of the events to follow.





'Our Future Together'
 UCANZ (Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa NZ)
 Biennial Forum
 Onehunga Co-operating Parish, Auckland.
 Kings Birthday Weekend 2025
 9am, Sat 31 May – Lunch, Mon 2 June



UCANZ is staging it's Biennial Forum at Kings Birthday Weekend in Auckland this year, and will be considering the future of this expression of the Ecumenical Project.

Andrew Doubleday
Please see image.

Purpose: To consider the future of our expression of the Ecumenical Project
 We expect this to be a once in a generation event
"History.in.the.Making"

Who's it for?

- CV (Co-operating Venture) Representatives
- Regional and National Partner Leaders (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian)
- Other interested parties

What's on the Agenda?

- Inspirational Worship
- Creative, thought provoking, experiential encounters
- Facilitated discussion groups – both vertical and horizontal
- Caucusing opportunities
- Networking opportunities
- Great food and refreshments
- UCANZ Biennial General Meeting.

How much will it cost?

\$250 pp if registered before the end of April. \$300 pp thereafter.

Is any Accommodation provided?

We have arranged only a limited number of single rooms for B&B at the Hillsborough Friary.
 Cost? \$225pp - First in first served.
 Book a room? Contact robyn brown at teacoop1@gmail.com

Want to know more?

Contact Andrew Doubleday at office@ucanz.org.nz for registration form

