

METHODIST PUBLISHING BOARD (TOUCHSTONE)

The Methodist Publishing Board maintains publication of 'Touchstone' to a high standard, thanks to our Editor, Paul Titus. 'Touchstone' is available digitally, but we acknowledge that many of our readers prefer the printed version. The Board does not charge parishes for 'Touchstone' – it belongs to the Connexion which in turn supports it with continuing grants.

The MPB Endowment Fund and an annual grant from the Connexional Budget enables the Board to employ our Editor and his team in this era of continually rising prices. The Board also acknowledges our other generous donors, and funding from the PAC Trust. We would also wish to commend the careful management of the Editor, Paul Titus, and the convenor of advertising, Pieter van den Berg.

Your Connexional newspaper is committed to keeping the parts of our wonderfully diverse Connexion in touch with each other. Please keep on giving us your feedback and suggestions – and, even better, your Parish, Rohe and Synod news.

Part of our brief is the oversight of the MCNZ Web page. The updated version was launched in July and I recommend that you take the time to familiarise yourselves with it.

As I now complete my term as Board Chair, I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Editor and the members of the Methodist Publishing Board and also Jane O'Neill who produces our financial reports and takes the extra time to attend the meetings and explain the details. MPB takes up hours of Jane's time! Special thanks to Brian Turner who is retiring from the Board at the end of the year.

Methodist Website

In July the website was re-engineered so that it is functional on smart phones and tablets, as well as larger screens. The new menus and layout have also enhanced the website.

The website can be the first place to look for all sorts of useful information, the latest Law Book, Information Leaflets, details of organisations and committees and large sections featuring parish history and Connexional archives.

The website is provided free to parishes. The interest from the original PAC grant of \$50,000 pays all the costs, including this year's upgrade. A big thank you also to the many volunteers who update information and add new material.

One plea – in a short time a website can become a 'cobweb' populated by out of date information and data. If you are responsible for part of the website please do your best to keep it up to date.

TOUCHSTONE EDITOR'S REPORT

Touchstone is the forum where people in Te Haahi Weteriana and Uniting Congregations tell their stories and share their opinions.

As Touchstone editor I stand at the centre of a wide network of volunteers and professional writers, artists and designers who contribute in ways large and small to gather those stories and produce our monthly editions.

A team of journalists writes the lead news items in Touchstone but many of the stories we carry on parish life around the Connexion are prepared (or suggested to us) by people in the pews. These stories come from the top of the north to the bottom of the south. For example, in the August edition we carried a story on a fire at Kaitaia Union Church, and in the September edition we ran a story written by parishioner Raewyn Birss about Invercargill Methodist Parish's Friday Club.

This year we also saw several lively exchanges of opinion in letters to the editor on such topics as evolution, homophobia and Immaculate Conception. We were also able to run theological

reflections on a range of topics. Again, these contributions come to Touchstone thanks to the lay and ordained people who are willing to put their thoughts on paper and share them with the Connexion.

A number of others deserve special thanks for their input. These include liaison people Rev Paulo Ieli, Edwin Talakai and Niko Bower who coordinate the stories we have run on the activities and accomplishments of people and parishes in the Pacific language synods.

President Tovia and Vice President Bella have been diligent correspondents. They have shared their thoughts and experiences as they have travelled around New Zealand and visited neighbouring churches in the southwest Pacific.

Betsan Martin has regularly provided provocative articles on behalf of Publish Issues. They challenge us to think about how we as Church can be force for good in society.

Our team of proof readers should also be mentioned. Their attention to details helps ensure the quality of Touchstone.

With the oversight of the Methodist Publishing Board Touchstones strives to meet its obligation to be financially sound. The Connexional Budget and Prince Albert College Trust provide a large share of our budget but we also depend on revenue of advertisers and grants from Methodist trusts boards and individuals.

Christian World Service, Methodist Missions Aotearoa, Trinity College, and the Methodist Trust Association are regular advertisers. Their support is very welcome, as is the opportunity to tell their stories in the pages of the newspaper.

Finally, this year sees the departure of Gillian Watkin, who has written the 'From the Backyard' column for Touchstone since February 2010. I wish Gillian all the best in the next stage of her life and I also extend a welcome to Rev Jan Fogg who has undertaken to write a column on aging.

Touchstone will continue to tell the Church's good news stories and explore the issues we face as Church, society and global community. Suggestions are always welcome on topics that we can address.

Suggested decisions:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Methodist Publishing Board thanks retiring member Brian Turner for his contribution and service.
3. That the Publishing Board for 2016 be: David Hill (Chair), David Bush, JooHong Kim, Paul Titus, John Wilson, Siu Williams-Lemi, Pieter van den Berg, Barbara Peddie, Jim Stuart and Alec Utting (Corresponding Members).

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS ENDOWMENT FUND

Separating the Media & Communications Fund Application Form, from the main PAC fund, has proved most successful and we appreciated the parishes recognising this difference. Please ensure you check the list of requirements before emailing your application.

The Media & Communications Committee reminds parishes that any money granted from the Media & Communications Fund, that is not spent on the project in the Connexional year, needs to be returned to Media & Communications for reallocation. It is very much appreciated those parishes who in the past have done this.

Congratulations to those groups who were successful and received grants towards their projects.

Waiwhetu Methodist Parish	\$2000	upgrade of sound system
Taukau Union Parish	\$1000	advertising their church and its activities

Richmond Stoke Parish	\$2000	upgrade sound system
Mangapapa Union Parish	\$1000	data projector
Palmerston North Methodist	\$1000	additional costs to produce final copy of Music in the Air
St Stephen's Wainuiomata	\$400	Radio microphone
Wesley Blenheim Parish	\$3000	upgrade sound system, cabling,
St Paul's Taumaraumu	\$1030	create a media centre
Hamilton East Parish	\$1000	large TV
Tawa Union	\$1000	Computer
Wesley Community Action	\$1000	Produce information resource to attract foster Parents
St Andrew's United, Hokitika	\$1000	ceiling mounted data projector
St Luke's, Northcote	\$1000	data projector
Orakei Parish, Auckland	\$1000	Resource book of Reflections and
		Theological issues
Waiuku & District Churches	\$1000	data projector
Mahurangi Methodist Parish	\$1000	large screen TV
Mangere Central Samoan Parish	\$1000	microphones, mixer
Mangere East Samoan Parish	\$1000	computer
Ellesmere Co-operating Parish	\$1000	microphones
Paeroa Co-operating Parish	\$2000	large screen TV, moving sound system
Wanganui Methodist Parish	\$1000	Microphones
Chartwell Co-operating Parish	\$1000	audio visual items
Central Parish, Christchurch	\$2500	High Quality Data Projector
St Paul's Methodist, Otara	\$2000	speakers, microphones to improve sound system
Mt Albert Methodist	\$2000	new processor, speakers to improve sound system
Auckland Manukau Synod	\$1000	laptop
Auckland Deaf Christian Fellowship	\$1000	data projector
St Francis Co-operating Parish, Hamilton	\$500	website
Pukekohe Methodist Parish	\$360	portable sound system
Manurewa Methodist Parish	\$2000	upgrade sound system
Petone Methodist Congregation	\$1000	laptop
Student Christian Movement, Wellington	\$1000	laptop
Christian Broadcasting Assoc.	\$2500	towards scholarships for Christian students studying Media at Tertiary level
Mangere Tongan Parish	\$1000	data projector

Suggested decisions:

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Committee for 2016 be: Graeme White, Te Rito Peyroux, Robyn Allen Goudge, Gillian Laird, Trish Moseley Taylor (Convenor)