

Some people come into our lives for just a short time, but their influence stays with us and that is how it is with Leigh and Dianne.

Leigh and Dianne! We cannot speak of Leigh without including Dianne, because they are a team. When we had a "Face to Face" in February it must have been about 4 in the morning in South Africa, and both Leigh and Dianne were looking fresh and ready to talk. In New Zealand it was 7 p.m. We wonder whether it was the first Skype "Face to Face" in the Connexion? It worked really well, many questions and answers, and on the strength of that we decided that we could cope with them if they could cope with us.

There was a lot to do, our parsonage had been let for 6 months initially, and we were looking to move our tenants on, we were busy trying to find furniture and essentials when two of our members offered the use of their home for the six months that Leigh and Dianne would be with us. This was a great load off our minds and so it was that when they arrived in July, they settled happily into their Hamilton home.

Leigh is not afraid of hard work, and let's face it we are not an easy parish; he is in his office by 8 a.m. and works diligently on his parish commitments. He is a bit like a whirlwind, or perhaps a better way would be to say he is a fresh wind blowing through Hamilton East Parish.

Leigh has worked hard to understand New Zealand Methodism – not an easy task! He has shared his South African ways and his insights freely with us all. He has brought different perspectives to our thinking and ways of being and we thank you Leigh for that.

He has attended Synods and Conference so that he could learn more about us. He has been so open to learn from us and to share with us. Both Leigh and Dianne are good to be with and to learn from.

They are avid rugby fans! There was a bit of a down time when Waikato beat the Sharks, but they were very gracious in defeat.

Leigh is a great singer; he has a lovely bass voice. In fact he was invited to join Cantando Choir and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. He had quite a difficult time trying to fit in all the practices required and still keep up his commitment to the Parish. We will miss him in our church choir too.

And Leigh's waistcoats! They are part of him! I particularly love his rainbow one which reminds us of his homeland, the rainbow country.

Leigh we are going to miss you and Dianne, we will miss your sermons and your use of technology in our Worship Services. We won't forget you and we hope you won't forget us. You go leaving lots of love behind.

May God go with you.

- Catherine Dickie