

Lotofale'ia's Easter at the beach

By Cory Miller

On Easter Saturday Aucklanders walking along the shores of Long Bay would have spotted a large circle of people kneeling in prayer.

The not-so-ordinary sight was members of the Lotofale'ia Mangere Tongan Church marking the end of a day of worship at the North Shore beach.

Their prayers took place around a symbolic sand sculpture, with the late summer breeze gently blowing as waves crashed into the bay.

Lotofale'ia minister Rev Goll Manukia says it was the first time the congregation has marked Easter week with a day at the beach, and it became a way for them to share the Christian message with others.

"It was about taking worship outside the four walls of the church into the community. It was a chance to enjoy the environment and the scenery."

Initially Goll wanted to do a full weekend camp, but this did not fit within the congregation's budget. The beach day was the perfect compromise.

Holy Week is a big one for the Tongan Methodist Church which tends to mark each day in a special way. In



Members of the congregation gathered at Long Bay to worship on the Saturday before Easter.

the past, Lotofale'ia has ended the week with a 'camp' on church premises.

This Easter week was conducted under a theme 'Holy Spirit renew us in the death and resurrection of Christ'.

The Monday was marked with some family time at the church, on Tuesday fellowship was shared with those not well-known in the parish, on Wednesday there was the usual service, and on Thursday bible studies, followed by a prayer chain overnight.

On Good Friday a service was held to mark the beginning of camp, before

members of the congregation went to spend the day at Long Bay.

A number of activities were held at the beach - bible study, Easter discussions and a creative arts session drawing on the natural environment to create an art piece.

Goll says they made sculptures out of sand and other objects at the beach and discussed how it represented Easter.

"Every group explained what it means to them and what Easter means and we just left it there. People walked by looking at the art work. Members of the congregation talked with them

and explained what we were doing at the beach."

Afterwards Goll says the church members made a big prayer circle around one of the art pieces and knelt to pray.

He says afterwards they decided to leave the artwork for others to enjoy, before the waves eventually came and washed it away.

"We left a few pieces of art on the sand for people to walk by and have a good look at. Even though it was our own programme, we like that we were taking it away from the church and bringing it out there into the community."



New ward for Helena Goldie Hospital

Methodist Church of NZ president Rev Prince Devanandan attended the opening of a new ward at Helena Goldie Hospital at Munda on New Georgia, Solomon Islands last month.

The new isolation ward will keep patients suffering from pneumonia and malaria separate from other patients.

Pitt Street Methodist Trust donated \$40,000 to the cost of the new ward and three members of the Pitt Street congregation - Ronnie Matafeo and David and Barbara Davies - accompanied Prince to attend the opening.

C A R I N G F O R O U R P E O P L E

Got an asbestos management plan?

By Trudy Downes

Malo e lelei. Talofa lava. Bula vinak. Greetings. Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.

Health and safety coordinator here, for The Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hahi Weteriana.

I am pleased to report that I have received the first asbestos management plan and it goes something like this:

'The Property Committee figures we only have one property, the parsonage, with asbestos and we know where it is and how to handle it. (They don't so they leave it to contractors). The other buildings are new (2016), or newish (2001.)'

I am sure that the property committee member was pulling my leg, however the core essence of the plan is all in place (if a little light). It:

- 1) Identifies the risk and where it is. Asbestos is only at the parsonage and the other buildings fall outside of the affected time period.
- 2) Controls the risk. Do not touch the asbestos unless you are a qualified contractor.
- 3) Evaluates the risk. The blanket approach of 'do not touch it unless you are a qualified contractor' makes the risk quite minimal.
- 4) Reviews the risk. Well, this bit isn't written into this particular management plan, but asbestos plans should be reviewed every five years as a maximum time period.

The missing piece of information from



Soon churches will need to create a plan to document and manage asbestos on their properties. Photo by Harald Weber.

the plan is the state of the asbestos. Is it contained with paint or behind another layer of material? Is it in a stable condition (not broken, or slowly breaking down into a dusty surface)?

If you are one of the many who does not have an asbestos management plan, do not fret. Keep it simple. The plan doesn't have to be elaborate when you are starting out.

If you do not yet know what does or does not contain asbestos within your buildings:

- Treat all surfaces and building

materials as if they contain asbestos.

- Leave all surfaces and building materials alone until they have been assessed further.
- Undertake assessment before you do any building work.
- Carry out in-depth assessments immediately if the building materials look broken or unsound.
- Communicate this plan with staff, tenants and contractors.
- Review your plan whenever tenants change, building works are planned, or in five years' time at a maximum.

Health and Safety Survey

By now, your parish or rohe should have received a request to complete a Health & Safety Baseline Survey. I strongly encourage you to respond by 30 June to help direct our Church's efforts.

This survey is for all parishes (Methodist and Uniting) and all rohe. When it comes to health and safety, ideally all parishes and rohe should have in place easy, repeatable, common sense processes to prevent foreseeable issues in our buildings and grounds.

Knowing where we are now with regards to basic health and safety will help us plan as a Church, what we need to do to positively move towards this ideal.

This survey is about setting the baseline of where we are now, and it seeks opinions on the challenges we face and where we can best direct our Connexional effort.

Please contact me if your parish or rohe requires an email copy of this survey, or if you have any questions.

All results will come to healthandsafety@methodist.org.nz and will be shared back to you after they have been sorted.

You can reach me on 03 366 6049 ext 823, 027 457 4196 or trudyd@methodist.org.nz.

Nga mihi mahana ki a koutou.