

The Ageing Experience

Jan Fogg

Whose responsibility?

I think there will be many of you who heard the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report in early October with a great deal of concern, especially thinking of the world we will leave behind for the younger members of our families.

If we fail to change the way we live, the average temperature of the planet will increase by more than 1.5 degrees Celsius which,

among other drastic changes, will raise the sea level around land masses. We might perhaps think that this is too big a problem for us personally to do anything about.

It may cause us to think about the story of Noah in the book of Genesis. Because this was a popular story during Sunday school, we may view it simply as a story, something that once happened. We lose sight of the fact that it is part of an important teaching series in the first part of Genesis, helping us to learn about the differing kinds of responsibility we need to take

up if the world is to be good and fair for all.

In the scripture we hear that Noah was a pure and righteous man, and so God inspires him to save his family and the animals he takes with him into the ark. This seems like a pretty big task in itself, and we may miss the fact that Noah was not a hero, in that it seemed not to occur to him to try and save anybody else. He didn't see himself as responsible for the fate of humanity.

Have we grown our priorities since Noah's day? We are now faced with the need to step up where Noah failed. In the possible upcoming disaster, we cannot simply save our own

family and not worry about anyone else. We either all work together, or we all go down. Rod Oram, speaking on national radio mid October, acknowledged the economic difficulties in changing the way we live, and said that the most important thing we need to change is our relationship with the life-support systems of the planet. This is a spiritual change which is needed and is, perhaps, the hardest thing to change, he thought.

We in the older generations may be blessed with a degree of wisdom which enables us to respond to the needs before us, to ensure not just the continuation of our own families,

but of humankind across the world and, yes, at least some of the wonderfully diverse animals seeking a space in the world. Through the next ten years can we do everything we can to succeed in taking up the collective responsibility needed, to succeed where Noah failed?

Our Christian faith is built around the understanding that the future will be better than the past, when we respond to God's call to care for others. We are not a people who believe in fatalism. We are called to help bring light and hope into the world.

'God looked at all that he had made and saw that it was very good.' Whose side are you on?

My first Methodist Conference

Trudy Downes: Health and Safety Coordinator

Malo e lelei. Talofa lava. Bula. Greetings. Goeie dag. Anyoung haseyo. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

I was lucky to attend Conference this year. It certainly helped that it was held in Christchurch, just around the corner from the Connexional office where I am based. I really enjoyed myself and thank everyone for allowing me to join in. Conference has given me much to think about and I thought I would share with you a few comments I heard and conversations I had with members of Conference.

"Trudy; she's trying to teach us to care for people."

This made me laugh. I am the student when it comes to the people called Methodist caring for people. You certainly don't need me to tell you that the wonky old wooden ladder is unsafe, or that a chapel filled to overflowing for the ordination of new presbyters should have clear exit ways in case of emergencies. However, I can help with paperwork where it is needed, and I know how to make the legislative side of Caring for Our People Manaakitia ā Tātou Tāngata easier. Even more importantly, I know how to get the legislative side in order, without having to spend oodles of money.

"Oh ... Trudy ... I will do my asbestos management report after Conference."

This also made me laugh. It seems that my face and name provoke instant guilt over non-completed asbestos management plans. In chatting with various people, I gained a sense that everybody understands that asbestos is harmful and that it should not be disturbed, whether you know where it is



Trudy Downes

or not. I actually missed my last workgroup session at Conference because sitting in the sun and talking about those 'sneaky places' where asbestos might live was also important. Here are the 'sneaky places' that surprised my conversation buddy:

- Glues/adhesives holding carpets down
- Tape used in plasterboard joins
- Window putty
- Run out stocks.*

My buddy delighted in telling me all of the ways that he had worked at the very limits of the legislative requirements. Only after my gasps of horror did he tell me he did everything safely and under advisement from WorkSafe NZ. In return, I was able to suggest cost-effective ways to complete the good work he had already started.

"I don't know why we had to pay to test what we already knew was asbestos."

My only response to this last statement is to agree that you shouldn't have to pay for a test on something you already know is asbestos, particularly



One of two Conference arrangements made by MWF executive board member, Moe Petaia.

when it is clearly labelled on building plans. There is a disconnect between some consultants' understanding of our asbestos management needs and their asbestos survey/testing work. Unfortunately, it is at our cost and some

people are handing over good money in exchange for poor reports.

Please contact me if you have concerns about hiring an asbestos consultant or, alternatively, wait for the asbestos management workshop to come your way. In the workshops we will address many of the issues, including the information and misinformation surrounding asbestos. We will look at how best to navigate the minefield and minimise the cost of mitigating and managing the issue of asbestos.

Māu te kākahu e whatu, he tāniko tāku. You weave the garment, I'll make the border.

Ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou.

Contact Trudy on 03 366 6049 ext 823; mobile 027 457 4196 or email trudyd@methodist.org.nz.

*Run out stocks: manufacture of some asbestos products stopped in 1982, but old stocks may still have been sold up until the late 1980s.

ROBERT GIBSON METHODIST TRUST



Tertiary Student Grants

Applications are invited for grants to assist with study and accommodation. Students must be undertaking university or NZQA approved courses, be New Zealand residents and under the age of 25.

The primary criterion considered by the Grants Committee is financial need.

Applications are to be made online at: robertgibson.methodist.org.nz

Closing date for applications is 20 November 2018.

Late applications will not be accepted.