



Shaped by our relatives

Rev Jan Fogg

Being out for a meal with friends recently led into a conversation of who we are, where we came from and reflecting on relatives now gone. It's good to be able to share with friends something of those stories and particularly the precious parts of the lives of close relatives and how they affected our own lives.

It reminds me of the importance of visiting those who are ill, to help them remember some of the things that have made up their life story. Occasionally, with people who are very unwell, there may be a great deal of confusion and family are often helpful in clarifying some of that confusion. It's good for us to remember too though, that this may be painful for family and they too may not be functioning at their best.

I'm reminded of an interesting story about Moses, leading the people of Israel through the desert. You can read about it in the book of Exodus ch.17, but the same story with a few more details is in Numbers ch. 20. The people are complaining again about there being no water. Moses, whom one might have thought would have a bit more control over himself in front of this stropy crowd by now, loses his cool, calls the people 'rebels' and takes the credit for achieving water from the rock for himself and Aaron, rather than Yahweh. In scripture every detail counts so we ignore details at our peril. A detail here is that Miriam, Moses' elder sister, has just died and been buried. Moses is suffering the acute grief of the loss of this very significant person.

Grief does all kinds of things to us, hiding our ability to be in control, to discharge our duties faithfully and well, and maintain good relations with those around us. So it was for Moses. Recall the importance of Miriam

in his life:

She was the six-year-old child who had changed a situation threatening the life of her baby brother floating in the Nile in a basket.

Her actions then, meant that Moses spent early parts of his life knowing his true family, his people and his identity; how important this is for each one of us.

Later, she was a significant support for her brother Moses in leading the women and supporting them through hard times.

Moses then at this point in the journey, having just lost his elder sister, would have been feeling bereft of her support and alone in a way that any of us who have lost a close loved one of our family understand. In bereavement we are vulnerable to making mistakes, and wrong judgements; we may act too quickly or not at all.

Perhaps we need to remind ourselves of this and accept that

we may need 'time-out' for a period following the loss of a close family member, to take time to let God's presence be real within us again, to think through

'who am I now'? As for many of us in loss, Moses' special sister Miriam became more fully appreciated when she was no longer there.



Gary firmly believed his stewardship role extended as much to the environment as it did to Sunday services at St Clive's.

CARING FOR OUR PEOPLE

What is 'safe'?

The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines 'safe' as "secure from threat of danger, harm, or loss". This can be quite subjective; the degree of danger/harm/loss that I find acceptable may be different from what others find acceptable.

To see how far this could be taken, I plugged 'safe' into my Māori dictionary and I got a different range of options that opened up the concept of what safe might be. The best immediate matches were:

marutau: (adj) be safe, (n) safety

haumaru: (mod) safe, risk-free (e.g. He kāinga haumaru: A safe home, a sheltered haven)

Then it started getting interesting.

wehikore: (stative: I treat statives as 'a state of being') be fearless, in safety,

unafraid, intrepid, safely

Wehikore is made from two words:

wehi: (v) to be awesome, afraid, fear, to be terrible, (n) dread, fear, an awe response

kore: (modifier) makes an opposite of the associated word (in this instance)

This is interesting because intrepid and fearless are qualitative states. The quality of the situation today may be a different quality tomorrow for the same situation. How does safety become a measurable constant if it is subject to change?

Feelings of security may also be impacted by our environment. Personally, I might be wehikore in certain places or with certain people where I have certainty around the outcomes of my or others' actions, or because of the expectations society has in peoples' behaviours. The tragedy of 15 March took certainties away and completely ignored society's expectation of acceptable behaviour. Even though in the aftermath we have seen quality behaviours in response to those events, our whenua, our land, will never be the same again.

As a Church, how do we return ourselves to a state of being wehikore? How can we control our environment when the certainty of socially acceptable behaviours has no guarantee?

Unfortunately the dictionaries don't tell us how to move from wehi to wehikore. We need to do that ourselves. Has your parish or building occupants had the discussion about how safe they feel? Would you like to do more to control your environment?

Trudy Downes
As-salāmu 'alaykum. Peace be upon you.



Trudy Downes

We experience stress when we feel situations are out of our control, therefore we need to learn how to act rather than react. An example of action is practicing our emergency

response drills: fire, lockdown, earthquake, and shelter-in-place. Also, instead of closing our boundaries we should expand them. If we control expanded boundaries, this provides more time to implement our learned responses if an emergency occurs. We could expand and monitor our boundaries by having parking wardens, or perimeter wardens, active during our services and events. Even security cameras will help achieve an expanded boundary.

The most interesting results from the dictionary search were the following two words which, I think, represent the goal of our journey.

ora: (v) to be alive, well, safe, cured, recovered, healed

pai: (modifier) well, safe and sound, indicates something happens without any problems or mishaps

Ko te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tipu o te rākau.

How the sapling is nurtured, determines how the tree will grow.

Nāku noa nei.

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SITUATION VACANT

CARETAKER Camp Morley

Camp Morley is an outreach of the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The camp, equipped to sleep up to 80, is set in farmland on the southern shores of the Manukau Harbour, 45 minutes south of Auckland City

From November 2019 a resident caretaker will be needed.

This is a live-in position but not a full time role. It involves supervision of arrivals and departures, day-to-day care and maintenance of the grounds and buildings, management of the booking systems etc. A 3-bedroom house is provided on-site for a reasonable rent. Schools and shops are readily accessible.

The successful applicant needs to exercise practical skills, create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for campers and work willingly with a co-operative committee to fulfill the purpose and mission of Camp Morley within the life of the Methodist Church of New Zealand / Te Haahi Weteriana.

For further information, contact:
Secretary, Rachel Cumberland, Camp Morley
Email rachel_cr@hotmail.com
or Phone Allen Beaumont (09)2962480

APPLICATIONS CLOSE ON 31 AUGUST 2019