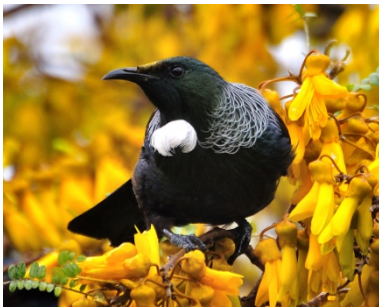




October 2023



Welcome to the monthly newsletter of the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hāhi Weteriana Aotearoa

A place to share special stories, events, achievements and celebrations from around the Connexion.

Please send photos and descriptions to reception@methodist.org.nz



Remember in your Prayers

It is with much sadness we inform the Connexion that Rev Colin Jamieson passed away at Chatswood Retirement Village this morning. He passed away at the age of 88 years.

Colin was ordained at the New Plymouth Conference in 1968. His deep ecumenical commitment was reflected in his ministry

in the Buller Union Parish where he played a major role in structuring the West Coast Union District Council. Then followed nine years in Mosgiel as the Superintendent of the Dunedin South Circuit and Colin was instrumental in the incorporation of the Dunedin Churches with the Mission. Colin supplied a years part-time ministry in Christchurch North Parish and he spent seven years as an Industrial Chaplain to the NZ Fire Service.

Colin's sensitivity to people and counselling skills was a feature of his ministry in church and community.

The Funeral Service and burial will be at St Cuthberts in Governors Bay date and time to be confirmed.

You can contact Linda Pringle at rimpots.linda@gmail.com for messages to the family.

It is with great sadness that Waikato Rohe of Te Taha Māori share and acknowledge the passing of our beautiful ruruhi, Doreen Moetu Wilson.

An active member of Te Haahi Wēteriana, Doreen has spent her lifetime serving our Lord.

Doreen is laying in state at her resident - 35 Pullham St. A service for Doreen will be held at Newstead, Wednesday 11 October @ 11am.

All communications to Faye, Liaison Person 021483722.





It is with sadness that we advise you that Barbara Aspell-Wallace, (wife of Rev William(Bill) Wallace ret), passed away in Christchurch. Barbara was a beloved wife and mother.

Barbara was a Language teacher, fabric artist, storyteller, in her 85th year. Beloved wife of the late Rev. Colin Paxton Aspell (UK), and of Rev. William Livingstone Wallace (Christchurch).

A funeral service for Barbara will be held at Durham St Methodist Church, 309 Durham Street, Friday 15 September at 11.00am, to be followed by a private cremation.

Our love and prayers go to Bill and his family. Messages to Monica and Liza: aspellmclellan@hotmail.com or Bill Wallace, Wesley Care, 91 Harewood Rd, Papanui, Christchurch 8053.

The link for the live broadcast and subsequent archive is.

<https://vimeo.com/864226757>

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Sharing links to Touchstone

Now that we have transitioned from a printed publication to online only, I encourage you to share the links to the latest online edition of Touchstone in

synod and / or parish communications.

For the link to the full publication [Click Here](#). Alternatively, for access to the reduced PDF version of Touchstone, (intended as a printable option for readers unable to access the online link) [Click Here](#).

I welcome your feedback.

Ngā mihi nui

Ady Shannon, Editor Touchstone
Email adys@methodist.org.nz
Phone: 021 209 9702



WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (N.Z.)
Te Roopu Hitori o Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa
Founded in 1930 as a Society within the Methodist Church of New Zealand

The Wesley Historical Society

Lynne Wall, WHS Secretary

The Wesley Historical Society AGM is to be held at 5.00 p.m. on Monday 6th November 2023 in the Wesley Hall at Trinity/St John's Colleges, 202 St Johns Road, Auckland.

This will be followed by dinner at 6.00 p.m. (\$25) and the annual lecture at 7.00 p.m when the speaker will be Rev Dr Jione Havea who will give a stimulating presentation relating to aspects of the translation of the Tongan Bible.

Details about the live-streaming of these events will follow later.



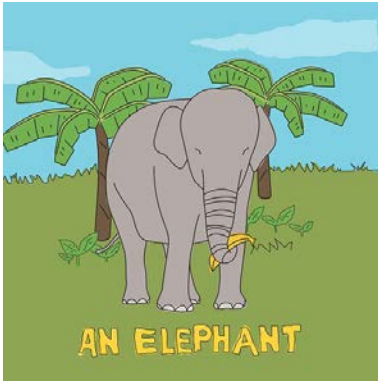


Minute Secretary

CWS

CWS is seeking a new volunteer Minute keeper for its Board.

Meetings are held via Zoom six times a year (on either a Thursday evening or Saturday morning). If you are interested, please contact Tim Pratt, National Director, tim.pratt@cws.org.nz



Gifted – gifts of love

CWS

Please help promote Gifted in your church and community.

Why not give an [elephant](#) to someone who loves elephants and care for creation this Christmas? CWS will send you a beautiful gift card and your donation will support Monlar's campaigns to protect habitat and wildlife as well as the livelihood of small farmers in Sri Lanka.

Children can raise funds to support others and have fun choosing the gifts.

The new Gifted catalogue is in the mail this week or you can order online at any time. There are 24 gifts to choose from – gifts act as a donation to one of our partners. You can choose a beautiful, printed card or ecard to accompany your gift or no cards at all. [Gifted](#) cards work for Christmas, birthdays or any special occasion.



Christmas Appeal orders

CWS

Christian World Service is preparing resources for the 2023 Christmas Appeal, Share Food this Christmas.

At the heart of the appeal is Somawathie, a woman farmer grappling with rising costs, drought, climate change and wild elephants. CWS is preparing resources for churches to use for each Sunday through Advent and on Christmas Day.

Please order posters and appeal leaflets for your parish today.

Christian World Service
 CWS Supporters' Council
 Friday, November 3, 7:15 - 8:30 pm
 Shared meal from 6:30 pm
 Speaker: Dr Nicola Hoggard Creegan, A Rocha
 Christians and Climate Change: Can we help?
 Short Film: "Sinharaja" produced by Monlar, Sri Lanka
 Venue: All Saints, 786 Cumberland St, Ōtepoti Dunedin or Zoom
cws@cws.org.nz
 0800 74 7372

MONLAR
 50 Years
 An opportunity to meet
 New Zealand's Pioneer, Rev
 Dr Tim Pratt and the CWS
 Board

Supporters' Council (in person and on Zoom)

CWS

You are invited to attend the Christian World Service Supporters' Council, 6:30 – 8:30pm, Friday November, 3, 2023 at All Saints Anglican at 786 Cumberland St, Ōtepoti Dunedin or by Zoom. A shared meal begins at 6.30, and the evening's programme and Zoom at 7.15 pm.

- Speaker: Dr Nicola Hoggard Creegan: Christians and Climate Change: Are we relevant? Can we help?
- Short film: Sinharaja, the Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform, Sri Lanka

All welcome.

RSVP and Register by Thursday November 2, cws@cws.org.nz or phone 0800 74 73 72.





Pray for People and Peace

CWS

The Vocational Training Centre run by DSPR Gaza

Christian World Service asks for prayers for all people and for peace in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. We endorse [statements](#) from ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) of which CWS is a member, and the World Council

of Churches calling for an immediate and peaceful resolution of the conflict, and the responsibility of all parties to uphold the principle of international humanitarian law.

Our partner in Gaza, the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) has written requesting support, prayers and solidarity.

“The people of Gaza are enduring unimaginable hardships... Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we navigate this difficult situation. Together, we can make a difference and provide relief and hope amidst this hopeless situation.”

DSPR Gaza operates three medical centres and vocational training programmes. The main office in Shijjaia and homes of more than five staff members have been severely damaged by the war. CWS is about to launch an appeal to provide humanitarian support to people affected by the conflict. Donations can be made [here](#).



Warkworth MWF Hostess Day

Val Shepherd

Warkworth MWF recently held a very successful Hostess Day and our entertainment for the afternoon was a fashion parade featuring clothes from our church opshop.

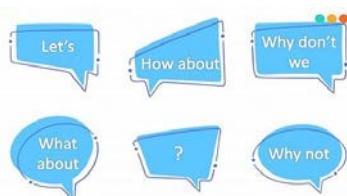
Our ladies and two gentlemen plus some of the Kids Church children were our models.

We invited local churches and groups and had a wonderful hall filled with enthusiastic people.

It was an amazing afternoon with everyone joining in with the fun.

We held a trading table and with the money raised will go towards the Special Objective for MWF 2024

Of course in true Methodist fashion we finished with a wonderful afternoon tea.



Lunchtime webinars – Last feedback request

Trudy Downes

Tell us what we should share with you.

Kia ora koutou

[CLICK HERE to provide feedback](#)

We are still gathering feedback to see if the Connexion would like some short conversation webinars on how to use some of the tools and information that we have available to us, or to understand how current events impact on our Church.

Before we start these conversations we need to know if people are interested!





TRINITY METHODIST
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Additional Pacific Health Project Grant awarded

Trinity College

We are please to announce funding for an additional

HRC 2023 Pacific Health Project Grant.

2023 Pacific Health Project Grant

Dr Nasili Vaka'uta, Trinity Methodist Theological College

36 months, \$1,171,446

The Lotu factor: Delusional religiosity, COVID-19 and Tongan wellbeing in New Zealand.

Lay Summary:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, health professionals encountered some objections and resistance from Pacific communities. One of the strongest (yet ignored) factors behind the resistance was people's illusionary lotu (faith/religion) or 'delusional religiosity' (i.e religious beliefs and practices with no link to reality or facts). Delusional religiosity is a 'pandemic' in its own way, and it had the propensity to harm people with its toxic and life-negating orientation. The overall aim of this project is to explore the impact of delusional religiosity on the health and wellbeing of Pacific peoples with a particular focus on Tongans.

Central to the project is the question: what impact does delusional religiosity have on the wellbeing of Tongans in New Zealand?

To answer this question, this project will employ a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis.

Dr Peter Lineham



Sr Kathleen Rushton



Dr David Tombs



Kete Aroha Waipounamu

Rev Dale Peach

South Island Methodist School of Theology 2024
Sunday 28 to Tuesday 30 January Aldersgate, 309
Durham Street, Christchurch Central Methodist Parish
Centre

Theme: Theology on the Edge

The decision to join together the three South Island geographical Synods, from February 2024, generated much energy, and from that came the decision to start holding Schools of Theology again.

This event is for anyone who is interested in being theologically/intellectually stimulated.

Please make sure all Lay Preachers know about this wonderful opportunity to hear from some inspiring speakers. A great way to start the year!

Keynote Speakers include:

Dr Peter Lineham

Sr Kathleen Rushton

Dr David Tombs

There will also be workshops and times for discussion - all for only \$150, including meals. We thank PAC for a Grant that has kept the costs down. Full information and programme out soon.

Interested? Keep informed by emailing - KAW@aldersgate.org.nz and you will be sent all the information as soon as it becomes available.





Will you give to Merge Community and help people make the positive changes they choose to make?

Andrew Merlino, Lifewise fundraising manager

Merge Community helps people find compassion and belonging, secure safe housing, develop skills like cooking and build their confidence. But Merge Community is facing a funding gap. Can you help close the gap?

Merge Community is there to listen and to help, with compassion and patience, for someone who doesn't know who else to turn to.

Give today at www.bit.ly/givetomc or give via bank deposit to 02 0800 0700 902 00 (Particulars: Your first name, Code: APL0923)

Merge Community receives no government funding (except for street outreach) and relies on the kindness and generous hearts of people like you.

- Peer Support Workers providing free advice and walking alongside people who are struggling.
- Supporting people to secure safe housing and connecting them with vital services such as Work and Income.
- Street outreach teams finding people who may be sleeping rough and offering them compassion, support or just company.
- Providing paid employment in cleaning and furniture moving.
- Supporting people to develop skills in digital literacy, gaining driver licenses and peer support.
- Free cooking sessions showing people how they might create delicious meals from food items they find, forage for, or are given.

Merge Community operates from 453 Karangahape Road, Auckland.

Give today at www.bit.ly/givetomc or give via bank deposit to 02 0800 0700 902 00 (Particulars: Your first name, Code: APL0923)



Christchurch CPE Centre

CPE Centre

New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (Inc) a member of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education www.cpe-nz.org.nz

Christchurch CPE – Clinical Pastoral Education comprehensive 400hr Individually-supervised course

Supervisor: Rev'd Helen Roud, Clinical Pastoral Educator (CPEd), MHealSc (Gerontology), BTheol., Science Cert.(Psychology/Statistics)

2024 course dates:

27th February - 27th June 2024

Group days: Fortnightly on Tues/Wed with additional Thursdays at beginning, middle and end of course.

Apply by 1 December 2023 Limited spaces available

Download application form at: <https://www.cpe-nz.org.nz/participating-in-cpe/>

Send expressions of interest and applications to: helen.roud@gmail.com Mob. 027 657 7947





Friendship Scholarship

Marie Smith

FOR PACIFIC ISLAND GIRLS RESIDENT IN NEW ZEALAND ATTENDING
A NEW ZEALAND SECONDARY SCHOOL

APPLICATIONS MUST TO BE RECEIVED BY 20 November 2023

Student will be in -

- In Year 12 or 13 during 2024
- Active members of a Methodist or Uniting Parish, within the Connexion of the Methodist Church of New Zealand
- New Zealand Citizens or have New Zealand Residency status

Information & Application Form on the Methodist web site

www.methodist.org.nz under – [Organisations](#) – [Methodist Women's Fellowship](#)

1. Completed Application Form- both sides of one page
2. School Report
3. School Reference
4. Reference from the Church Minister are required

References must be on one side of one headed A4 page

All documents must be sent together to: donmariesmith18@gmail.com

APPLICATIONS CLOSE: 20 NOVEMBER 2023

NZ Faith leaders call for peace, unity, and justice in the Middle East

Greg Hughson

As the conflict continues to grow in Gaza and Israel, and tensions continue to rise regionally, members of the regional interfaith councils and faith leaders throughout Aotearoa-New Zealand, unequivocally condemn the violence and call for peace and justice.

We pray for the current violence and fighting to stop, and we pray for lasting peace, unity, and justice in the Holy Land and the Middle East.

Inevitably when conflicts like this erupt in flashpoints around the world, tensions rise at home, and so we ask people from all faiths, to protect the sanctity of each other's places of worship and the ability of us all to practice in peace and safety.

We send our healing love to our Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and other faith brothers and sisters in the Middle East and to their families and friends here in New Zealand as they endure and try to come to terms with the huge loss, pain, and worry.

We ask all New Zealanders to reject all forms of hatred and violence through love, forgiveness, understanding the other, and compassion at this dark time and forever more.

Endorsed by the:

Auckland Interfaith Council
Canterbury Interfaith Society
Dunedin Abrahamic Interfaith Group
Dunedin Interfaith Council
Hawkes Bay Interfaith Council
Tauranga Moana Interfaith Council
Waikato Interfaith Council
Wellington Interfaith Council





Grant report

Kaurihohore/Kamo Co-operating Parish

Last year our Parish was thrilled to be successful in our grant application to the "Let the Children Live" fund for \$600 to purchase a collection of children's books.

We are a small Co-operating Parish located approximately 15 minutes north of central Whangarei. The majority of our attendees are over retirement age, with currently only one family with primary aged children regularly attending, and grandchildren of others attending from time to time. We don't offer a Sunday school programme, but we are trying to make our services more inter-generationally friendly. The books we purchased with the grant money are available for the children to read, worship leaders to share during our services and during services they lead at local Rest Homes, and for other adults to access as they wish.

Our intention is that children who come to our services will feel welcome in our church when they are introduced to special books just for them. It is also our hope that children will recognise themselves, and others they know, in the illustrations of these books, as people of different sizes, nationalities, and abilities are represented. Through reading these books, children will learn that God created them, and that God loves them the way they were created to be. For older children, we hope that these books might introduce them to new ways of thinking about God, as well as stories and parables they may have heard before, showing them that theology is a wide spectrum, and that different people interpret passages in different ways.

Some of the books we chose are as follows: A Very Big Problem, Animal Tales, I am God's Dream, Jesus Showed Us! Mother God, Stories Jesus Told, The Good for Nothing Tree, The Marvelous Mustard Seed, What is God Like?, When God Made Light, When God Made the World, When God Made You, Who Counts? 100 Sheep, 10 Coins, and 2 Sons, Who is My Neighbour

(Authors include, Matthew Turner, Bradley Jersak, Teresa Pecinovsky, Nick Butterworth, Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg, Annie Bowler, Rachel Held Evans)

We have been able to pay a koha to the school next door for a mobile bookstand to store these lovely books on and to use to store stationery supplies, paper and activity sheets for use during services.



The Everil Orr Village has been a prominent landmark in Mt. Albert for many decades, providing care and accommodation to the elderly.

Airedale Property Trust

Following years of tireless service, the village in its current form was no longer the best example of a modern aged care facility and was reaching the end of its economic life.

The site is being redeveloped to be fit-for-purpose and future-proof. The redeveloped site will enhance and enrich the neighbourhood and community through excellence in design. The site is under redevelopment with three stages complete. The final two stages are scheduled for completion in 2026 and 2028.

The recently completed Stage 3 building is named Frampton Building after Sister Margaret Frampton, a highly qualified nurse who had been matron from the facility's inception. She was Matron-in-chief of the whole Mt. Albert Old People's settlement. She brought a wealth of experience to her work and was fully abreast of the aged community's needs. The Frampton





Building has been opened for Care residents from the 1st of August 2023, and the first Independent Living resident will move in at the end of September 2023.

Frampton Building offers an extensive care facility offering 68 Care Units distributed across three levels for assisted living with superb amenities including a library, public and private dining areas that can be hired for family functions or special celebrations with catering service, activity rooms, beauty salon, onsite laundry service, theatre, and extensive comprehensive landscaping that enhance the development and enrich the environment. Level 4 of the building also consists of 8 brand-new Apartments for Independent Living, including private balconies or terraces with elevated views across the upper harbour and Waitakere Ranges.

The upcoming Stage 4 is a \$40m project comprising 42 Apartments for Independent Living. The construction will start in 2025.



Update on ENGAGE

Julie Roberts

ENGAGE is an evidence-based intervention that seeks to support tamariki with their self-regulation, through learning intentional skills by playing games.

Self-regulation is a vitally important skill-set to nurture and develop in the early years; substantial research has shown that a strong early foundation in self-regulation leads to sustained positive outcomes across all aspects of life. This includes better physical and mental health, more healthy and fulfilling relationships, better financial stability, reduced risk of criminal offending – the list goes on! The expansion of the ENGAGE programme is leading to a rapidly increasing number of our mokopuna in Aotearoa being supported to develop these important skills, and therefore increase their chances of success as they grow up and become adults.

Following on from Jo Luxton's announcement in April that the Government would fund the ENGAGE programme to reach 1,830 early learning services across Aotearoa over the next four years, the ENGAGE team have been working hard on the expansion of the programme. So far this year, they have started work with over 300 early learning services across Ōtepoti, Tāmaki Makaurau, Taranaki and the Bay of Plenty. As time goes on this delivery will also expand further into all of the ministry regions in Aotearoa, enabling tamariki across the country to benefit from what ENGAGE has to offer.

Another exciting progression for ENGAGE since the funding announcement has been an increased capacity for the ENGAGE team to provide ongoing support to early learning services for years after their initial delivery. This is an incredible milestone, and it sets ENGAGE apart from a lot of other Professional Development programmes offered in the education sector. The ability to maintain relationships and support between ENGAGE facilitators and early learning services has huge potential to increase the chances of positively impacting tamariki, whānau and kaiako within these services, as the programme becomes more and more deeply implemented and embedded.

If you would like to find out more, please feel free to email enquiries@engageplay.co.nz





Climate Change and the stewardship of creation

Rev. Freddy De Alwis

As this is the season of creation, I would like to focus on “the stewardship of creation” that’s a theme found in Mt 21 – the renters of the vineyard.

- Is global climate change a sign of the end times and the coming of Christ?
- Is it a scientific fiction that a Christian God would never allow?
- Is it a challenge that Christian teachings compel its followers to confront?

If we take the second creation story in Genesis 2 as about living in a garden, Mt 21 is a good parable about caring for it. And also Psalm 19, and Ps 104, Isa 5:1-6 This parable was a **reminder about ownership**. We do not own the vineyard; we are trustees or stewards of it.

The earth, air, water and food we receive as a gift from God, for every human being to use it wisely and sustainably, and pass it on to the next generation.

Background: Just in order to get to the subject - the word, “**The Environment**” what does it mean?? It means **whatever surrounds us** or is outside us. Is it a correct understanding of the world??

But the truth is contrary to this understanding. The world/creation around us is also within. We are an expression of the creation; creation is an expression of us. We are made of it; we eat, drink, and breathe it. **Read Gen 3:19**, And someday, when the day comes, we will each return to the earth. Earth is the bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

We have to admit that no one can ever understand the “**holy mystery of creation**”, the point I want to make is that the word “environment” does not carry the real meaning of God’s creation.

1. **Anthropocentrism** = A human-centred perspective

It is a fact that so much anthropocentrism has emerged through the influence of the Bible, and so many arguments are there to justify the human-centred perspective, Gen 1 and Ps 8, just to mention a few. With this (wrong) understanding of the will to dominate the earth, Gen1:26b - 28, Ps 8:6, begins with an understanding that humans are radically different from everything else in creation. It assumes that there is an unbridgeable gap between humans and the rest of creation.

Is it possible to think that this kind of understanding of theology has led the Church over the years to interpret scripture to undergird such theological positions and even to interpret biblical words such as “dominion” and “subdue” to abuse God’s creation.

2. **Creation is the place of God’s presence**

Many religious traditions mainly Judaism and Christianity believe and understand the indwelling of God within the whole creation. Creation is the place of God’s presence. **God is “home” here, as we are**. The Greek word earth and home is **Oikos!** The first and basic meaning of oikos is simply “Habitat Earth.” Oikos – earth as a vast but single household of life - means the capacity for survival, that is, sustainable habitat. **It means space** and the means for the living of all living things. Without adequate hospitable habitat, nothing lives. Not only humans, but all life-forms need carefully fitted habitats.

The same creation story says that God saw the other creatures were good quite apart from human beings, indeed, before there were any human beings. In Psalm 50:9-12, **For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the world and that is in it is mine...** Actually human beings are closely related to, and even dependent on non-human creatures. This point is





presented beautifully in Psalm 104, especially in verses 27-30, which is a liturgical parallel to the Genesis creation story.

Jesus in the NT says that God cares for even the ravens “they neither sow nor reap” (Luke 12:24) and clothes the lilies (Luke 12:28) which invites us to see in creation the **sacrament** of God’s hidden presence and experience all things as part of God’s creation.

So God creates and protects the whole of God’s creation and **indwells, accompanies, participates** and **delights** in them. I am convinced that similar insights can be drawn from Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Islamic scriptures.

In fact the delicate design behind whole of God’s creation convinces that nothing is accidental!

This foundational fact - that we all need a fitted space for us to live – right to live, is the one great element of “democracy” in life. **More than two thirds of the world is crying for this space and democracy.** That is an echo of the crisis we are faced with. There is a group of people call “Rohinjya in Myanmar” just over 700,000 women and children..... No country...

Whatever we choose to call it, the point is that all living beings, including animal **need a space, a productive land, forest, a hospitable atmosphere, safe water and clean air.**

3. When we talk about creation is the place of God, I am not talking about “Pantheism” God and creation equal in scope -Pantheism

In the Christian tradition there is a fear that this kind of theology will lead people to venerate matter and that is condemned by the Church as a heresy, and that heresy is named **Pantheism**. Pantheism is described in terms of making **God and creation equal in scope**. that the universe is God and God is the universe.

To overcome the issue of Pantheism Christian tradition has insisted on God’s **transcendence**, recognizing that God may be present within creation but cannot be reduced to creation. On the other hand, Christian tradition also talks about the **immanence** of God, meaning that God can be found within all creation. There are several biblical texts to justify these positions.

Conclusion: Look at the beauty and the scientific balance behind the whole of God’s creation that tells us that nothing is accidental.

In spite of this knowledge and awareness, the planet earth is under threat and according to Romans 8: 18-25, the whole creation is groaning.

What a mess we humans have made of God’s beautiful world! Pollution, forests wiped out, species of animals vanishing due to human actions, green-house gas CO2 damaging thin ozone layer, climate change, imbalance of weather pattern and hundreds of years of tribal warfare which still continues to destroy our world even today. What a mess we’ve made of God’s beautiful creation.

I would like to conclude with **Psalm 19** it begins with how clearly the sky reveals God’s glory! How plainly it shows what he has done! and how we can understand and see God through the creation. Each day announces the following day, yet it is speechless, no voice, no words used, yet their messages go out to the whole world. I see this as a wonderful metaphor. The voice of God then is speechless, yet the words go to the end of the world.

There is a voice in the creation, which the wise will listen to.





**METHODIST
ALLIANCE**
NGĀ PURAPURA WETERIANA

Racism, Race-baiting & the Rule of Law

Carol Barron

I have been so disappointed, outraged and ashamed, often all at the same time, when hearing what has been said leading up to the election. I thought that Aotearoa New Zealand had become more mature and could debate the issues affecting our society, sadly this does not seem to be the case.

Campaigning and korero around co-governance has highlighted what seems to be a giant step backwards to the infamous Don Brash speech in Orewa in 2004. Accusations of “race-based policies” are not helpful as they are dismissive of the actual disadvantage that is the sad reality for some in our communities.

Aotearoa New Zealand’s colonial history has resulted in tāngata whenua being over represented in negative economic and social statistics. These include:

- Māori life expectancy is considerably lower than non-Māori[1]
- Māori health status remains unequal with non-Māori across almost all chronic and infectious diseases, as well as injuries, including suicide[2]
- Māori are disproportionately represented in the most deprived neighbourhood areas[3] and are less likely to own their own home than other ethnic groups[4]
- Māori are less advantaged than non-Māori across many socioeconomic indicators[5]

The impact of COVID-19 disproportionately impacted on Māori, Pasifika, young people, women and those with disabilities. This combined with the intergenerational effects of trauma, colonisation, and racism has resulted in the widening gap between rich and poor – advantage and disadvantage.

Claiming the “one rule for all” dismisses the inequities that exist in our society, gives permission to disregard these inequities, and do nothing to address them.

The rule of law is quite different. The rule of law is the principle where Government and every person is bound by the law and everyone is accountable under the law. However, for the rule of law to be effective, there must be equality under the law, transparency of the law, an independent judicial system, and access to legal remedy.

It can be argued that statistics show that there is not equality under the law. The Department of Corrections report that Māori offenders are more likely to have Police contact, be charged, lack legal representation, not be granted bail, plead guilty, be convicted, be sentenced to non-monetary penalties, and be denied release to Home Detention.[6] Corrections also report that “Māori men are 3.5 times more likely to be sentenced to imprisonment.”[7] Māori constitute 52.7% of our prison population[8] and the Māori imprisonment rate is 700 per 100,000 while Aotearoa New Zealand’s overall imprisonment rate is 180 per 100,000.[9] Corrections report that “there appears to be sufficient evidence to conclude that ethnicity, in and of itself, plays some small but tangible role at key decision making points, in ways that are not intended by the justice system.”[10]

Research has shown that inequality affects everyone as it creates mindsets of superiority and inferiority, and affects how we interact and treat each other. If we want to live in a just and inclusive society where everyone flourishes, then we need to advocate for this, and be a voice for the most vulnerable.

As Methodists, we have a strong history of advocating for social justice and our social principles[11] guide this mahi. These include:

2. The sacredness of human personality and the equal value of all men and women in the sight of God.





- i. Listening and responding to the needs of the most vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged people in our society and communities.
 - ii. That as people of our many cultures and races we forge a multicultural society where these peoples may live in unity and diversity, maintaining different cultural traditions and languages, yet with a common destiny based on commitment to the ideals of equality, tolerance, justice and compassion.
4. Communal and individual responsibility for the due care for those vulnerable in our society.
- i. Dignity and reasonable standards of living for those who because of age, infirmity or family needs are not able to work.
 - ii. The care, nurture and safeguarding of children and youth.
 - iii. The removal of the root causes which perpetuate and compound cycles of poverty, unemployment, abuse and violence.
 - iv. Addressing the widening gap between rich and poor, to uphold economic and social values which move us toward a society of equity and compassion and a sharing of resources for the common good.
 - v. Work for systems of criminal rehabilitation based on restorative justice.
5. The opportunity for all to live well and with integrity.
- i. The rights of all people to equal quality educational opportunities, adequate accessible and universal health care, and affordable healthy housing.
 - ii. The right to freedom of conscience, constitutional liberty, integrity of public life, secrecy of the ballot, rights of each citizen to participate in decision-making in the community, and access to the Courts.
 - iii. Christian influence by lawful means in politics and civic affairs for the correction of injustices wherever they occur.

Our Conference decision-making demonstrates our Te Tiriti partnership between Te Taha Māori and Tauīwi. This is co-governance in action. When Conference changed to this model, we also adopted consensus decision-making. Making decisions by consensus enables opportunities for minority options to be acknowledged, more participation by members, a greater chance of obtaining unity of purpose which reflects a variety of values, and more stable longer lasting decisions. This is in stark contrast to our Parliamentary system which is based on an adversarial system that encourages argument rather than working towards consensus.

We need to be a champion for co-governance and share how more attention to consensus decision-making works. Imagine a government that works towards reaching a consensus with agreed cross-party policies relating to social housing, health, education, and climate action that are durable when there is a change in government. Imagine policies that would provide for the immediate financial and material needs of people who are disadvantaged, as well as addressing their root causes – this would break the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.

Imagine removing the barriers to accessing health, and education based on equity rather than an equality basis – this would increase social mobility opportunities.

Imagine an Aotearoa where we have policies that provide for safe, secure housing, an adequate and secure income, equitable access to affordable transport, childcare, health services, and good education.

Imagine a society where long-term investment in social inclusion results in people no longer experiencing discrimination and racism.

Imagine actually making this happen in your lifetime.

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- [1] [Reference Link](#)
- [2] Ibid
- [3] Ministry of Health, Wai 2575 Māori Health Trends Report, October 2019, p16
- [4] Statistics NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa, Housing in Aotearoa: 2020, 2020, p10
- [5] Ministry of Health, Wai 2575 Māori Health Trends Report, October 2019, p19
- [6] [Reference Link](#)
- [7] Ibid
- [8] [Reference Link](#)
- [9] [Reference Link](#)
- [10] Ibid
- [11] MCNZ Law Book updated to Conference 2021, P19

