



April 2025



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

The Connexional Office

Please send your articles to reception@methodist.org.nz



Remember in your Prayers

The Connexional Office

We share with sadness the news of the passing of Jennifer Jones, wife of retired Presbyterian Barry Jones. Jennifer died on 17 March from serious injuries sustained in a fall while visiting Kyoto, Japan.

Jennifer was a deeply valued companion in Barry's ministry, supporting him throughout his five full-time appointments and five part-time supply roles following his retirement in 2004. Her presence, support, and friendship were warmly appreciated by parishioners in every place they served.

In the 1980s, while part of the Laings Road Methodist congregation, Jennifer also served on the National Executive of the Methodist Women's Fellowship, offering her gifts in leadership and service to the wider Church.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary

It is with sadness that I inform you of the passing of Rev. Marcia Baker, who died on Saturday, 29 March, at the age of 95 at Addington Gardens Care Centre.

Marcia began her ministry journey in 1949 when she moved to Christchurch to train as a deaconess. Her first appointment was in a newly developed housing area in Invercargill, where she served for two years before transferring to the Dunedin Central Mission. After her marriage to Fred in 1955, she developed a strong interest in women's ministry within the Church.

While stationed in the Paparoa Circuit, Marcia became the first President of the Northland Guild Fellowship. During this time, she also served on the Waitemata Methodist Women's Fellowship District Council and was later appointed as the New Zealand Programme Convener at the Invercargill Convention. From 1982 to 1984, she was a member of the National Executive when it was based in Christchurch.



Marcia also made a lasting contribution as Archivist at the Connexional Office, a role she held for 26 years (1979–2005). She was ordained at the Nelson Conference in 1987 and retired from active ministry in 1992.

We give thanks for Marcia's faithful service and the significant contribution she made to our Connexion and the Connexional Office. Her dedication and leadership will be fondly remembered. She will be deeply missed.

A family Cremation was held on April 1st.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary



Merge Café's "Pay it Forward" Card: How a \$25 Donation Can Feed People in Need Cha Clarino

As a Social Enterprise, Merge Café, is always looking for ways to sustain its operations and continue its mission. One such initiative is the "Pay it Forward" project.

The concept is simple: By purchasing a \$25 card, you're helping Merge Café provide subsidised meals to those who need them most. If someone comes into the café in need of a meal but doesn't have the funds, these 'Pay it Forward' cards are given to them, ensuring they receive a healthy meal. Each card provides five meals at the café.

We offer subsidised meals costing between \$5 and \$7 to ensure that people who are homeless or living on the margins can eat well every day. The hearty lunches we serve cost us \$12 per meal to produce.

Ready Steady Quit, a New Zealand-based programme supporting individuals on their journey to quit smoking, recently purchased 150 'Pay it Forward' cards to the value of \$3,750. These cards were awarded as an incentive to those who graduated from their quit smoking programme. As a result, we were able to provide a total of 750 meals to these graduates.

These acts of generosity make a direct impact on the lives of individuals working to turn their lives around. If you or your organisation would like to purchase a "Pay it Forward" card, [simply click](#).

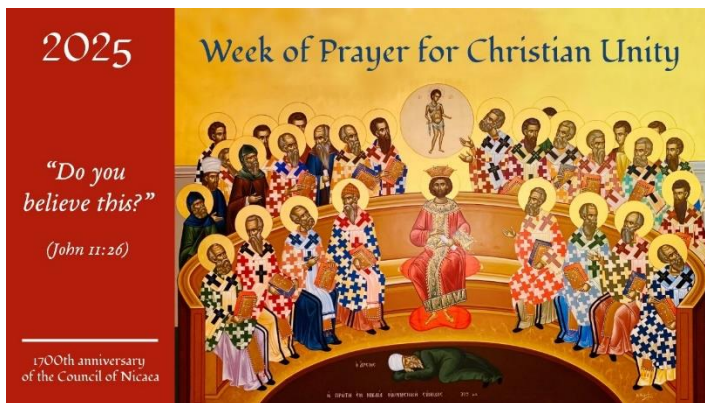




Kia ora koutou,

Dr Lucy D'Aeth

From Tuesday April 8th, the Orange Sky van, with its washing machines and showers, will park at Christchurch West Methodist Church each Tuesday afternoon from 2.30-5pm. Please can you advertise this service, using the attached poster, as widely as possible. We are hoping to provide the service to anyone who is homeless or struggling with the costs of washing and showering – all are welcome. We will be opening the church to provide people with a cuppa, biscuit and chat while they wait for the washing. Anyone who wants to help with this is also welcome to come along. We know that there are lots of people who are struggling in our area so please advertise widely – the service will be available for 8-10 weeks to see who turns up so we'd love to see it well used so it continues. If you'd like printed copies of the poster, or to find out more, please get in touch. My contacts: Phone number 027 3222 533 and [email](#).



An Invitation to the Methodist Church of New Zealand: Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – 1 to 8 June 2025

Theme: “Do you believe this?” (John 11:26)

Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa is invited to once again join the worldwide Christian community in observing the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** from **1 to 8**

June 2025 — a week that falls beautifully between **Ascension and Pentecost** in our calendar.

This year's theme, “Do you believe this?” (John 11:26), calls us into deeper reflection and trust in the promises of Christ, who prays that we may all be one. The resources have been prayerfully prepared by the **monastic community of Bose in northern Italy**, and are inspired by the 1700th anniversary of the **Council of Nicaea**. They centre on the Nicene Creed – a foundational expression of the faith we share across traditions – and invite us to rediscover its meaning and power for today.

For over a century, the Week of Prayer has brought Christians around the world together. In Aotearoa, our own journey toward unity has deepened through initiatives like the **National Dialogue for Christian Unity** and the ongoing work of **Te Rūnanga Whakawhanaungatanga i ngā Hāhi o Aotearoa**. These partnerships reflect our shared longing to embody the unity Christ desires for his Church.

This week is more than a ritual – it's an invitation to **step beyond our denominational walls** and into intentional, Spirit-led relationship with one another. It is a time to **pray together, act together, and witness together** in the communities we serve.

We encourage each Methodist parish, rohe, synod or local ecumenical partnership to take part. Here are some ways you could observe the week:

- **Host a combined ecumenical worship service** with neighbouring churches during the week.
- **Share a meal or social event** with another congregation as an expression of hospitality and connection.





- **Collaborate on a justice or environmental initiative** (like a beach clean-up or community garden planting).
- **Commit to praying for one another** during Sunday worship – lifting up the names of neighbouring churches.
- **Join a prayer relay**, where each day of the week, a different church community leads and commits to prayer for unity.

A suggested liturgy for shared worship is available below, along with more resources from [the World Council of Churches website](#).
[Please click here for additional PDF](#)

Let us come together – across our differences, across our streets, across the Pacific – to live into the hope of unity, the power of prayer, and the deep joy of our shared mission in Christ.

Let's make 1–8 June 2025 a visible and vibrant witness to the unity we are called to proclaim.



Fire Evacuations – Consider your neighbours!

Trudy Downes

Yesterday I had the experience of working one building over and across the road from a large industrial fire. The photo is the view I had from the front window and below is a link to the NZ Herald article for those that want to see more.

There was a lot of smoke bellowing out and it looked serious enough for us to consider evacuation, particularly if the wind were to change direction and

put us in the thick of the smoke, which was remarkably dark and heavy before the FENZ arrived to put out the fire. In fact, we thought that the buildings across the street were evacuating because of the smoke. Turns out that people were just exiting the buildings across the road to go and be nosy at the fire.

And then the dead-end street started to fill up with vehicles of Looky Lou and rubber neckers, to the extent that the roads had to be cordoned off to keep them out of the way of the emergency responders and also to protect the fire hose lines which were laid across the roads.

We watched and monitored the action for about an hour until the fire was quite under control although there was little danger of the fire spreading in our direction as the neighbouring buildings to the fire were solid concrete walls, no windows with steel roofs, and the wind was blowing in a different direction to us. We have experience with the wind directions in the area and knew that it would be very rare for the wind to come to us from the direction of the fire. The wind didn't change and we didn't evacuate.

It all made me think about the fire evacuation plans for our church buildings (strange, but true).

- Fire is not the only reason to evacuate your building. Smoke from a neighbouring, burning building is also a reason to evacuate. If the smoke hits your building, considering how thick the smoke was in this case, then it is probably already too late to stop inhalation. When do you make the call to evacuate?
- If people had to evacuate their buildings and leave work for the day, it would have been prudent to also remove valuable equipment and vehicles, but with all the nosy drivers clogging the street, it would have caused quite a bit of congestion. How then, do you decide how to evacuate a site in this situation?





Have you had a discussion with your emergency response teams about potential events in neighbouring buildings, and does your emergency response plan provide guidelines about how you will respond? In our situation, it was a discussion between two people, if you have a large number of people to organise, then I encourage you to have the discussions now because this fire was a bit close.

Be prepared in case it happens near your place.

[Click here for NZ Herald article on the fire](#)

[Click here to start your Emergency Response Planning](#)



Methodist Mission Southern: Finding the Positivity!

Julie Roberts

"Sometimes life is so hard you can only do the next thing. Whatever that is, just do the next thing. God will meet you there." – Elisabeth Elliot

Christ is risen! Hope stirs anew! Easter calls us beyond the weariness of the world and into the boundless grace of God. It is the triumph of life over death, of love over loss, of morning

breaking upon the longest night. As the first disciples stood before an empty tomb, bewildered yet radiant with wonder, so too are we called to look upon our lives with expectant hearts—ready to see the hand of God at work.

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." Philippians 4:8

Easter is not only a story of what was, but of what is. It is found in each act of kindness, in every struggle met with courage, in the steady, unseen work of grace among us. And at the Mission, we bear witness to this truth each day.

What joy there is when doors open, when a weary traveller finds firm ground beneath their feet! In our Youth Transition Houses, we have seen such hope take root. One resident has begun work in a rest home kitchen, while another, after much waiting and wondering, has heard the words—"You got the job!" A third has tested their strength in sport, competing in Christchurch, with yet another challenge ahead. Each of these steps—small, perhaps, in the eyes of the world—is a mighty leap towards renewal.

Yet beyond these visible victories, there is another story unfolding—a story of fellowship, of hands reaching out, of lives intertwined in warmth and kindness. In the quiet glow of a movie night, in the laughter shared over a board game, in the simple act of a birthday cake baked with love, we glimpse the true miracle of Easter: that hearts, once burdened, are lifted; that loneliness is met with belonging.

Among our young mums, the spirit of community has flourished. They have walked alongside one another, sharing burdens, lifting each other's joys. They have found solace in the rhythm of baking, their hands shaping more than just bread and cakes—they are shaping a future, one where they might give back, where they might stand with others as they have been upheld.





Their ventures into op shops have uncovered more than thrifted treasures; they have found wisdom in resourcefulness, delight in simplicity. They have learned that abundance is not always measured in wealth, but in the ability to share, to repurpose, to see value where others might overlook it.

But let us not forget those who make this work possible—the steadfast shepherds among us. Our Taituāra a Hapori and Transition House teams walk this road with our residents, not as distant guides, but as companions in the journey. They are the encouragers; the steady hands that help lift burdens. They are the ones who remind the weary that the path does not end here, that there is always another step to take.

Their work is not in vain. For in the patience of mentorship, in the gentle redirection of those who have lost their way, in the small, everyday acts of faithfulness, they mirror the love of Christ. They are the unseen miracle, the silent hosanna, the tireless light that shines in the darkness.

When we reflect on these stories, we hear the echoes of Easter—of tombs left empty, of lives restored, of love that cannot be conquered. The resurrection of Christ is not a distant event, sealed in history; it is here, among us, shaping us still. No matter how dark the night, morning will come.

So let us rise to meet it! Let us take Philippians 4:8 to heart. Let us fix our eyes on the good, the noble, the true. Let us carry one another, as Christ carries us.

For in so doing, we proclaim the great truth of Easter—not merely in words, but in lives made new, in love made visible, in the ever-unfolding grace of God.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful Easter!

Visit our website to set up a regular donation or find out more about the Mission's work.

Be part of our story, our work, and our community.

Please contact Julie
027 267 8140

[Email](#) to receive our monthly e-newsletters and connect with us on our various social media channels.



Dear World Day of Prayer Groups and Supporters

Zella McGirr National Liaison Officer WDPANZ

On behalf of the national Committee of World Day of Prayer I want to extend our deepest gratitude to all of you for the incredible dedication and effort you pour into the World Day of Prayer. Your commitment to fostering unity and hope through prayer, reflection, and action is truly inspiring.

Your work goes beyond words—bringing people together from all walks of life, creating space for shared faith, and offering a beacon of light in times when the world needs it most. Through your efforts, you uplift countless lives, strengthen communities, and remind us of the power of collective compassion.





Thank you for your unwavering dedication and for being a source of strength and inspiration for so many. Your impact reaches farther than you may realize, and we are so grateful for all that you do.

With heartfelt appreciation and blessings.



Sister Eveleen Retreat House may need you!!

Sarah Gardiner (SERH Board of Oversight chair)

Short Term Vacancy for a Live-In Host (May-August 2025)

Interested in serving God through the gift of hospitality??

Sister Eveleen Retreat House (SERH) is perched on the hill overlooking Sumner Beach. It is a place steeped in prayer and offering opportunities in contemplative Christian spiritual practice. The house accepts guests all year around, runs regular retreats, and hosts a wide range of Christian groups. Due to staff leave, we have a short-term vacancy for the role of Live-in Retreat House Host (RHH), paid 10 hours a week, accommodation provided. The RHH works with the Director to provide a hospitable welcome to guests and a presence at the house when the Director has left for the day. We are looking for someone who has a strong, firmly rooted, Christian faith,

someone who has a heart for the contemplative expression of faith as a way for God to be closely present, and someone who is available from May - August 2025.

Are you comfortable welcoming strangers, discerning when to chat and when to be silent, mature and responsible?

This might be more than just a role; it could be a calling for someone who feels drawn to a ministry of hospitality and contemplative service. You might be on sabbatical, writing/researching/working from home, or in a transitional stage of your life, and able to offer your time to Sister Eveleen Retreat House for this short time.

Still Interested??

If you think Retreat House Host sounds like you, please ask for a ministry description, or seek more information by contacting the Director, [Antje Duda](#), phone 022 563 6879.

We would welcome your expression of interest, so please [email](#) a 1-page summary of who you are, what you've got to offer, and how this role might work from your perspective to by Wednesday 16th April 2025. For more information about Sister Eveleen Retreat House check out our [website](#).

Link to a short [clip](#).





Canvas For A Cause

Anglican Family Care

1st, 8th & 15th May.

Tickets: \$60.

Limited to 20 people per session.

Professional Development Grants

Sonia Faulkner

Due dates for 2025 Applications 15th May, 15th August, 15th November

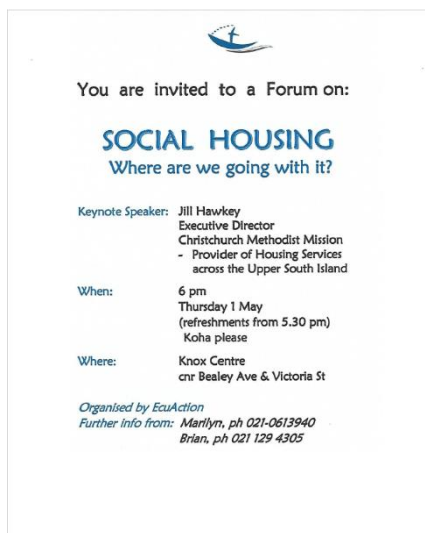
Professional Development grants are funded by Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa, the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The fund is administered by the Professional Development Grants Committee (PDG), which has membership from both Te Taha Māori and Taiwi. Funds are allocated equally to Te Taha Māori and to Taiwi applicants in any one year.

Professional development is the acquisition of skills and experience that will enhance ministry. It encompasses academic learning, the development of tikanga/mātauranga Māori, spiritual formation, and the development of practical ministry skills.

Priority in 2025-2026 will be given to training opportunities which will:

- enhance theological development aligned with our Methodist ethos and bicultural journey
- reflect our diverse church/community context of Aotearoa
- offer opportunities to first-time applicants and young people
- resource as many people as possible from a limited pool of funding

Find application forms, eligibility criteria and guidelines on the MCNZ website under Mahi (Grants and Funding) or contact the [PDG Secretary Sonia Faulkner](#).



Social Housing

Brian Turner

Speaker: Jill Hawkey

1 May 2025 at 6pm

At Knox Center cnr Bealey Ave & Victoria St

For more info contact: Marilyn : 021 061 3940

Brian: 021 129 4305





St John's Golden Church

Kerry Upson

St John's Co-operating Parish in Whangarei, (also known as St John's Golden Church), is celebrating our 50th Anniversary.

We are seeking past members, leaders and friends who may wish to be part of our celebrations.

To register interest please use the contact details on the attached poster.

