



## December 2024



### 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](mailto:reception@methodist.org.nz)



### Remember in your Prayers

The Connexional Office

Harriet Couch, peacefully passed away in Tauranga on November 15, 2024, at the age of 95. Devoted wife of the late Rev. Moke Albert George Couch. Beloved mother of Rewi, Areta, Ngari, Paul, Philip, and Reihana. Treasured grandmother to 15 grandchildren, great-grandmother to 16 great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandmother to 3.

A service celebrating Harriet's life was held Wednesday, November 20, at 2:00pm at Elliot's Chapel on Cameron, 414 Cameron Road, Tauranga.

We fondly remember Harriet and Moke, who served faithfully in the Māori Division and later in Te Taha Māori. We honor their legacy and extend our heartfelt condolences to the whānau as they bid farewell to their cherished mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Ngā manaakitanga

**Rev Tara Tautari** | General Secretary

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It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of Rev Marion Peterson today in the Hawkes Bay.

Marion passed away after a long period of illness, surrounded by the love of her family. A devoted servant of Christ, Marion dedicated her life to ministry and service within Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa. She took early retirement in 2007.

Born in Paeroa and raised in Hikutaia, Marion's journey of faith began in her local church and blossomed into a shared ministry with her husband, Brian. Together, they faithfully served parishes across New Zealand, including Greenmeadows, Flagstaff Union, and Meadowlands, touching countless lives with their compassion and dedication.



Marion's steadfast leadership, wisdom, and ability to guide others through times of challenge were a testament to her deep faith. Her contributions to the Evangelical Network, her creative spirit, and her passion for nurturing relationships have left a lasting legacy in the Church and beyond. She was a cherished mentor, colleague, and friend to many.

Marion is survived by her loving husband, Brian, their children Rachel and Shaun, and her treasured grandchildren. She will be dearly missed but forever remembered for her unwavering faith, kindness, and strength.

Information about the service to celebrate Marion's life will be circulated in the days ahead.

Ngā manaakitanga

**Rev Tara Tautari** | General Secretary

**Hymm Peacemakers**

Norman Brookes

Peacemakers

Norman E. Brookes

M.C.W. Bell

*J* = 62

Peacemakers

Where are they now,  
the peacemakers,  
whom Jesus called "the blest"?  
Who risk their all,  
make walls to fall,  
and are of love possessed?

Where are they now,  
when hate reigns down,  
when rockets pierce the night,  
when children cry,  
and hell seems nigh,  
and truth has fled from sight?

Where are you now?  
Blest peacemakers,  
our world has need of you.  
To speak with strength,  
and deep intent,  
spark hope and life renew.

Where are you now?  
Away, or here?  
Peacemakers we can be!  
If we, Christ's way,  
live day to day,  
in blessed harmony.

Peacemakers work,  
and hope and pray  
that conflicts, wars, will cease,  
let arms embrace  
our human race,  
bring to God's world: true  
peace.

© Norman E Brookes

CCLI # 7247595

Tune: St Peter 99 in MHB / WOV 410

Contemporary tune: Michael Bell.





## Methodist Mission Southern: Making Room at the Inn: Advent and New Beginnings 🏠

Julie Roberts

The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning “coming” or “arrival.” It’s a time of anticipation, of preparing to welcome something—or someone—new. At the Mission, this season resonates deeply with our work in the Youth Transition Houses and the Young Mums’ House, where new beginnings and arrivals are part of daily life.

For the young mums in our care, Advent mirrors their own journey as they prepare to welcome

their babies into the world. Just as Mary awaited the birth of Jesus, these young women are navigating this time with hope and courage, supported by a community that nurtures their growth and wellbeing.

In the Youth Transition Houses, Advent also reflects the arrival of transformation. For rangatahi who have experienced instability and hardship, our houses are a place where they can prepare for their own fresh start. Every small step, from choosing a pair of donated shoes to setting personal goals, marks the arrival of a new chapter filled with possibilities.

As one staff member shared, "I wish you could see the faces of the residents when they get to choose a pair of shoes for themselves. They are so incredibly grateful." These moments remind us that preparing a place of welcome and dignity is as vital now as it was on that first Christmas night.

This Advent, as we reflect on the story of Mary and Joseph finding shelter in the stable, let us consider how we too can "make room at the inn." Whether through acts of kindness, prayers, or support for our Mission, we can help ensure that every rangatahi and young mum has the opportunity to experience the joy and hope of a new beginning.

After leaving the Young Mums' House and moving into sustainable accommodation in the community, one of our Young Mums has been continuing with her education. This has proved a highly successful undertaking, and she has been granted a scholarship to continue with her studies at SIT in 2025.

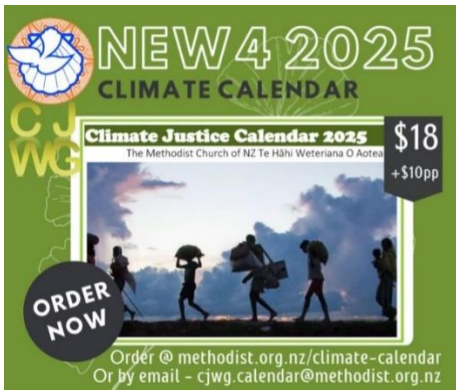
As you reflect on the meaning of Christmas, we invite you to join us in Making Room at the Inn for those who need it most. This Advent season, your support allows us to continue this mission of hospitality—creating a space where rangatahi and young mums can find safety, dignity, and hope.

Whether it’s through regular giving, a one-time donation, prayers, or acts of kindness, you can help us ensure that everyone who arrives at our doors experiences not just shelter, but the joy of belonging and the promise of a brighter future. Together, we can keep the spirit of Christmas alive in the lives of those we serve.

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

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





### Climate Justice Group

Marion Hines

The Climate Justice Working Group is committed to producing a calendar for each of the five key focus areas in the Climate Justice Decade – Rekindle the Va of Papatūānuku. The focus area for 2025/26 is Climate Migration/Displacement.

Our calendar leads the connexion month by month in challenging and inspiring reflections on this theme. It includes practical suggestions for action and a prayer. Contributors to the reflections are George Zachariah and Elisapesi Havea. Actions and prayers have been added by

Marion Hines. Translators have provided language versions of the calendar in Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian.

In love and respect for our late chair, Rev Siosifa Pole, the calendar for 2025 is dedicated to him in recognition of his passion for our work over the past five years.

Orders can be taken now.

Calendars cost \$18 each or \$15 each for orders of 10 or more. Postal orders cost an additional \$10 per order. Access the order form on our [web page](#) or order by [email](#).

Enquiries: Please email [Maion Hines](#) or Ph 021 053 2053



### Lifewise Connect

CHA CLARINO

We're excited to announce the launch of our refreshed newsletter, Lifewise Connect, with the Christmas Edition now available!

It's been a little while since our last issue that's why we're thrilled to share this special edition, packed with heartwarming and inspiring stories that showcase the incredible mahi we've been doing with our whānau.

This edition offers a look back at the work we've been involved in over the past few months, featuring powerful success stories and updates on the impact we've made in the lives of those we support. From personal triumphs to highlights from key projects, this issue celebrates the spirit of community, resilience, and transformation.

We're incredibly proud of the difference we're making, and this Christmas Edition of Lifewise Connect is our way of sharing those successes with you.

We also want to acknowledge the support and donations we have received from all over New Zealand. We would not have been able to achieve all these things without your generous help. Ngā mihi!

Grab a copy of Lifewise Connect Newsletter by downloading it [here](#).





## Wesley Historical Society

Lynne Wall

Weteriana Methodism is hot off the press and has been very well received around the motu.

It comprises the papers offered at the bicentennial conference in 2022 which have been edited by Emeritus Professor Peter Lineham who has also contributed a chapter himself.

Weteriana Methodism reflects on the impact of the Wesleyan mission in Aotearoa from 1819 onwards with new perspectives on our history.

Non-members of WHS please purchase your copy at \$45.00 + p.p.  
from Rev Ian Faulkner [email](#).

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## PITT STREET METHODIST CHURCH CONGREGATION REPORT

Shantell Nair

Since the arrival of our new Presbyter Rev. Metuisela Tafuna in February 2024, the Pitt Street Congregation has continued to grow in strength and spirit, embodying a strong sense of community, service, and faith. Our members have remained deeply engaged, bringing energy, passion, and commitment to a variety of activities that contribute to the ongoing vitality of our church. We are thankful for the dedication of each individual, and this report highlights key events, initiatives, and contributions that have enriched the ministry of Pitt Street.

Rev. Metuisela Tafuna leads our services with deep spiritual insight and a nurturing, gentle presence. His sermons are thoughtfully crafted and engaging, calling the congregation to reflect on Christ's teachings and apply them to our everyday lives. Metui creates a welcoming atmosphere through his warmth and pastoral care, making everyone feel valued and included. His storytelling, insightful prayers, and ability to weave scripture with the life of the church foster a spirit of unity and harmony that draws the congregation into a deeper connection with God and with one another.



## Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship at Pitt Street plays a vital role in the life of our congregation. Through regular meetings, members gather to support one another in faith, prayer, and fellowship. It is a space where they can share their stories, form meaningful relationships, and grow spiritually. The collective strength of the members involved, and the broader community that supports them, continues to make a significant impact in our church and in the lives of those they touch.





We want to extend our deepest gratitude to Hone Tafuna for her exceptional commitment and dedication in helping create the 2024 Women's Fellowship at Pitt Street. Hone's vision, tireless work, and unwavering passion have played an integral role in bringing this fellowship to life. Through her leadership and tireless efforts, she has not only shaped this important initiative but also demonstrated what it means to serve with heart and purpose. Hone's hard work, creativity, and devotion have created a vibrant space for connection, support, and growth within our community.

As the new Convenor of the Pitt Street Women's Fellowship, Hone continues to inspire us all with her steadfast commitment to this mission. We are incredibly grateful for her leadership and look forward to the continued growth and impact of the fellowship under her guidance. Thank you, Hone, for all that you've done and continue to do. Your dedication is truly a blessing to us all





### **White Sunday Service: Youth-Led Celebration**

One of the standout events of the quarter was our White Sunday Service, which was fully led by the youth of Pitt Street. The service was vibrant and full of life, with the youth participating in dancing, singing, and other creative forms of worship. Their leadership not only showcased their talents but also demonstrated their deep commitment to the life of the church. It was a beautiful expression of faith, as our young people led with passion and creativity, inspiring all who attended.

Following the service, we enjoyed a congregational lunch that provided an opportunity for fellowship and connection. The meal was a wonderful feast, and many members of the congregation generously contributed food. This shared time together was a joyful occasion that strengthened the bonds of our community.





**Youth Evenings: Building Community Across Congregations**

Our Youth Evenings, held on the last Friday of each month, have been a great success. These evenings are now a joint effort between Pitt Street and Mt Eden youth groups, providing a space for young people from both congregations to come together in fellowship, engage in activities, and deepen their faith. The youth evenings have helped build stronger relationships across both churches, fostering a sense of shared community and purpose. We look forward to continuing this ministry and hope to see it grow even further in the months ahead.







**Sunday School: A New Ministry for Children**

This quarter, we launched our Sunday School program, which has already begun to make a positive impact. The program provides a space for children to learn about the faith, engage with Bible stories, and grow spiritually. It's been heartening to see the children's enthusiasm and participation, and we are excited about the foundation this ministry is providing for the next generation of church leaders.





### **Easter Youth Camp Planning**

Looking ahead, we are thrilled about the possibility of hosting an Easter Youth Camp for all the youth across our parish. While still in the planning stages, the camp promises to be an exciting opportunity for young people to deepen their faith, build lasting friendships, and engage in team-building activities. This event will aim to inspire spiritual growth and provide a safe, enriching space for our youth to explore their relationship with God. We are working hard to finalise the details and look forward to offering an experience that will have a lasting, positive impact on everyone involved.

### **Youth Group 2024**

On behalf of the entire Pitt Street Church family, we want to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation for the incredible work done in reawakening the spirit of youth participation within our church.

At the beginning of 2024, we found ourselves in a difficult place, with no youth attending church or involved in our community. But thanks to the leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment of Rev Metui, David Tapu, Becks Tupa'i and Shantell Nair that has changed. Metui, your initiative to bring the youth back to the church has been nothing short of inspiring. Your heart for the younger generation has rekindled a sense of hope, unity, and excitement among them. Your dedication to creating a space where they feel welcomed and valued has made a lasting impact, and we are so grateful for your passion and determination.

David, Becks, and Shantell, your continued leadership and involvement in the youth group have been vital in maintaining and nurturing this growth. Your support, guidance, and mentorship provide the foundation for our youth to grow spiritually, emotionally, and socially. The energy, enthusiasm, and faith you bring to the group has been an encouragement to everyone, and we are blessed to have such dedicated leaders who lead by example and inspire our young people every week.





Together, you've all created a thriving environment where our youth not only attend church but also become active, engaged members of the congregation. The positive changes we've seen in their lives are a direct result of your hard work, dedication, and love.

Thank you all for your selflessness, your leadership, and your commitment to our youth. We are incredibly grateful for each one of you and the difference you continue to make in the lives of our young people.

### **The Bi-Cultural Journey of the Church & Commitment to Climate Justice**

Pitt Street Church is on a profound bi-cultural journey, one that celebrates and honours our Māori, Pākehā, and Pacific heritages, while embracing the rich diversity within our congregation. This journey is rooted in mutual respect, understanding, and a deep commitment to living out the gospel in ways that uplift and include all peoples. It is a journey of learning and reconciliation, where we come together to reflect on our shared history and move forward with a common vision of unity and peace.

At the heart of this journey lies our commitment to climate justice, which calls us to care for the earth and address the pressing environmental challenges that threaten our world. Through the leadership of Marion and others, we have become more aware of the urgent need to protect God's creation, particularly in the Pacific region, which faces unique environmental challenges. Marion has been a tireless advocate for creation care, dedicating her time and energy to raise awareness within the church and beyond about the need for sustainability and environmental stewardship.

This commitment to climate justice is not just an external action, but a deep expression of our faith. We are reminded that as Christians, we are called to be stewards of the earth, caring for the environment in a way that reflects God's love and care for all creation. With the support of Anne, Ivan, and many other dedicated congregation members, we have been working to reduce our environmental footprint and to live more sustainably. These efforts include raising awareness through educational initiatives, engaging in prayer and action for the environment, and advocating for policies that protect our planet.

As we continue this bi-cultural journey, we are also inspired to connect the protection of creation with our broader ministry, recognising that our responsibility for the earth is inextricably linked to our call to love and serve one another. By embracing our diverse cultural identities and fostering environmental stewardship, we are working together to create a church that reflects both our shared faith and our shared responsibility to the world around us.

### **Lay Preachers: Uili Misa, Eric Laurenson and Judy Robinson**

In the absence of our minister, we are immensely grateful for the leadership provided by our lay preachers, Uili Misa, Judy Robinson and Eric Laurenson. They have stepped in with great dedication, leading services, delivering thoughtful sermons, and offering spiritual guidance to the congregation. Their service to the church has been invaluable, ensuring the ongoing rhythm of worship and spiritual care during this transitional period. We appreciate their commitment to our church and their faithful ministry.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- Youth-Led Christmas Service: Our annual Christmas Service, led by the youth, will once again showcase the creativity and leadership of our younger members. This service offers a joyful celebration of Christ's birth and gives our youth an opportunity to play a central role in the worship experience.
- Christmas Carol Service (Led by the Choir): We also look forward to our Christmas Carol Service, led by our talented choir under the direction of Robert and Colin. The choir's beautiful music will create a festive atmosphere, and the service will be a time for the entire congregation to come together in song and celebration.

### **Safeguarding: Protecting Our Youth and Congregation**

In the coming weeks, we are in the process of implementing a safeguarding policy to protect our youth and congregation members. This policy will help ensure that our church remains a





safe and supportive environment for all, particularly the most vulnerable among us. We are committed to providing the necessary training, resources, and accountability to ensure that everyone in our church is treated with dignity and respect.

At the youth evening on Friday, 22nd November, we had an important conversation with the children about safeguarding, ensuring they understood how to stay safe both in person and online. We explained what safeguarding means, highlighting that it's about protecting them from harm, listening to their feelings, and making sure they know where to go for help if they ever feel uncomfortable or unsafe. We talked about trusted adults they can reach out to, both within our group and beyond, and encouraged them to speak up if something doesn't feel right. The discussion also covered topics like respectful behavior, setting boundaries, and how to be kind and supportive to each other. It was an engaging and open conversation, designed to help the children feel empowered and confident in knowing they have a safe space to express themselves

### **Community outreach**

The Orange Sky service continues to serve those in need in our community by offering hot showers, laundry services, and a place for tea, coffee, and biscuits. This initiative meets both practical needs and provides a space for dignity and connection. We are deeply grateful to Lifewise Methodist Mission, who generously provide tea, coffee, and biscuits for this outreach, making the service warm and welcoming for all.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the following Pitt Street members who have been instrumental in facilitating the Orange Sky service:

Sene Grant, Colin Waters, Barbara and David Davies, Pheobe and Neil Muller, Stranz Schaumkel, Shantell Nair and Gabby Tafuna

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge Michael Aufai for his past support.

This year, the Pitt Street Church congregation came together in a spirit of generosity and service to host a wonderful Matariki Outreach Lunch, feeding 130 people from our local community. In the true spirit of Matariki, we celebrated not only the Māori New Year but also the values of unity, sharing, and renewal. The event was a beautiful reflection of our church's commitment to reaching out and supporting those in need, as well as fostering a sense of togetherness and belonging. With the help of volunteers, the congregation prepared and served delicious meals, ensuring that everyone—regardless of their background or circumstances—could enjoy a warm, welcoming space. One of the highlights of the day was a heartwarming performance by the Street Choir, whose music added a special touch to the celebration, bringing joy and a sense of community to all who attended. The Matariki lunch was not just a meal; it was a powerful reminder of the importance of community, hospitality, and the joy of giving. We are incredibly grateful to all who contributed time, resources, and love to make this event a resounding success.

### **Conclusion and 2025 Vision**

The Pitt Street Congregation is thriving, thanks to the dedication and hard work of our members. From the leadership of our youth to the commitment of our volunteers, from the warmth of our fellowship meals to the impact of our outreach programs, our church is growing in faith, service, and community. We are excited for the upcoming events, particularly as we approach the Christmas season, and we look forward to continuing our shared ministry in the months ahead.

As we look toward 2025, Auckland Central Parish envisions a thriving, dynamic community that actively nurtures its youth while fostering a deeper understanding of our bi-cultural heritage and Methodist identity. Central to our vision is the creation of engaging workshops and programs that explore key areas such as Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our bi-cultural journey, and the Connexional Property Strategy, ensuring our church's resources are aligned with the needs of the wider community. These initiatives will also provide opportunities for deeper engagement with the structure and procedures within the Methodist Church, enabling our members—especially the youth—to understand the foundations of our faith and practice. Recognising the





diverse cultural backgrounds within our congregation, we are committed to creating a space that celebrates and integrates these differences, fostering a sense of belonging for all. Above all, our focus remains on empowering our youth, equipping them with the tools and knowledge they need to grow in faith, leadership, and service, so that they can continue to shape the future of the church and our shared journey as a community.

Thank you for your ongoing support, prayers, and commitment to the ministry of Pitt Street Congregation.



### November Update from Trinity Napier

Joanne Gaudin

Over the last 3 years Trinity has been on a journey to re-evaluate their place as Methodists here in Napier and the Hawkes Bay. We began with the 2 year Transitional Ministry appointment of Rev David Harding, helping us focus on where we were heading - was it to slowly disappear from sight or were we going to actively show the Community that we were still here.

A Congregational meeting (or two) later, showed us that we weren't done yet.

Methodism is alive and well here in the Bay and we wanted to transform Trinity Napier into showing an outward facing ministry.

**OPEN DOOR**  
Community Space

Here to help you at  
Trinity Church  
Clive Square, Napier

**What Can we do to Help:**

- be a listening ear
- support you to find medical, dental, & psychiatric health support
- help you fill in forms
- help with budgeting
- help you navigate interlocks & appointments at MSD or elsewhere
- direct you to the best place to find the help you need

Community Meals served between 4.30pm and 5.30pm  
Tues/Thurs/Saturday

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
9am - 5.30pm

Run in collaboration by Trinity Methodist Church,  
The Salvation Army, Annet Church  
& Volunteers from the Community



Three arenas of action were identified

1. care, support and nourishment for our congregation members
2. outreach to the community
3. better use of our physical resources

Step one was to put in place pastoral, social and study programs for our Congregation members and anyone who wanted to join in. We now have a regular Tuesday study group known as Mattering with Muffins that covers off 2 of these points; we've revisited Living the Question - a study Program meant to stretch your faith beliefs; and we have a robust Pastoral visiting program that includes leading a monthly worship service at Summerset Palms.

Step two was to run an Outreach program from the Church itself so that it could become a live entity rather than a building only used on Sundays. In terms of outward facing ministry sometimes taking the first step is often the hardest part.

Although serving meals at Trinity to those in the Community who are finding it hard to make ends meet had been something discussed often over the years when the time came it was virtually unplanned and came about in collaboration with the Salvation Army and Ascend Church. The meal itself is served from the Church 3 nights a week and looks more like a Church Fete afternoon tea tent than a soup kitchen. On average they serve between 20 and 30 people each night.

Once this had been running for about 6 weeks the next phase was begun - Open Door. Opening on Tues/Thurs Open Door is a place for people to come for guidance & assistance with the many problems facing our community at this time. As a part of this Orange Sky free Laundry service is there on Tuesday mornings along with Te Kupenga Hauora Ahuriri who do free health checks.

Step three was to utilise our assets better and if we couldn't find long term tenants for our commercial properties how could we use them for Mission.

We now have a long term tenant for 251a Emerson St: JJs Crafts run by Jim & Jo Gaudin (members of the Parish ) who have overseen the iening of a new Goodwill Shop for Trinity - Johns place.

In the words of our chief volunteer -

The shop offers a semi-structured social environment grounded in love, light, and truth in Christ. The legacy of the name John—God's graciousness and the qualities of love, humility, and truth—aligns beautifully with the shop's mission. It's a place where people's inherent worth, dignity, and value are revealed and celebrated, reflecting God's grace in everyday community life.





## HISTORIC MILESTONES AT TRINITY COLLEGE

Trinity College



December 7th, 2024 marked a historic day for Trinity Methodist Theological College as it celebrated a series of unprecedented academic advancements and honours, coinciding with its 180th anniversary. The College held a special ceremony to recognise individuals whose extraordinary contributions have shaped theological education in Aotearoa and beyond.

Trinity College conferred the honorary title of Fellow to two outstanding individuals. Rev. Dr. Arapera Ngaha, Tumuaki of Te Taha Māori, and Prof. Jione Havea, a former Senior Research Fellow in Religious Studies, became the first Māori and Pacific Islander to receive this prestigious recognition. Rev. Dr. Ngaha was celebrated for her exemplary leadership in educational governance and invaluable service as a Council member and chairperson. Prof. Havea was honoured for his significant contributions to research, teaching, and curriculum development, which have enriched theological education locally and globally.

In an equally momentous move, the College announced its first-ever academic promotions to professorial ranks. These appointments signify a new era of academic excellence and leadership at Trinity College. The honorees, promoted following a rigorous evaluation process, are:

- Dr. Emily Colgan – Associate Professor of Biblical Studies  
Dr. Colgan, a leading voice in biblical studies, holds a PhD in Hebrew Bible from the University of Auckland. Her pioneering work in eco-hermeneutics, feminist theology, and postcolonial biblical interpretation has redefined the field. Her forthcoming book, *Jeremiah: An Ecological Commentary* (Bloomsbury), along with co-edited volumes like *The Routledge Handbook of Eve*, demonstrates her ability to bridge academic rigor with contemporary relevance. As Academic Director, Dr. Colgan has significantly contributed to the development of innovative programs integrating Māori and Pasifika knowledge systems. Her courses, such as *Violence in Biblical Texts and Bible and Te Tiriti*, empower students to critically engage with faith and society. Beyond academia, her leadership in the Shiloh Project has developed resources addressing gender violence in religious contexts, including the widely-used Toolkit for Churches.
- Dr. George Zachariah – Professor of Theological Studies  
Dr. Zachariah, a globally recognized scholar in eco-theology and social ethics, holds a PhD from the Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. His publications, including *Alternatives Unincorporated: Earth Ethics from the Grassroots* and *Disruptive Faith, Inclusive Communities: Church and Homophobia*, continue to shape contemporary theological discourse. His academic contributions extend beyond publishing. Dr. Zachariah has delivered keynote addresses at global forums, contributed to ecumenical initiatives, and mentored students and colleagues alike. At Trinity College, he has led the development of the Bachelor of Theology program and fostered spaces for inclusive dialogue, amplifying marginalized voices in theological education.





- Rev. Dr. Nāsili Vaka'uta – Professor of Biblical Studies  
Rev. Dr. Vaka'uta, Principal of Trinity College since 2015, is a transformative leader whose scholarship integrates Pasifika traditions, postcolonial hermeneutics, and Indigenous epistemologies. His publications, such as Reading Ezra 9-10 Tu'a-wise and Theology as Thresholds: Invitations from Aotearoa New Zealand, have challenged conventional interpretations and highlighted Oceania's contributions to global theological discourse. Beyond research, Dr. Vaka'uta's visionary leadership has reshaped theological education by integrating culturally responsive curricula. His efforts in securing a \$1.2 million grant for The Lotu Factor project exemplify his commitment to addressing pressing community issues, such as the intersections of religiosity, well-being, and Tongan identity in New Zealand. His leadership extends to championing gender and sexual diversity through initiatives like the Que[e]rying Lotu project.

The ceremony not only celebrated these remarkable individuals but also reaffirmed Trinity College's unwavering commitment to academic rigour, equity, and fairness. The honorees' achievements were evaluated against national and international standards, ensuring recognition at the highest level of academic distinction.

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## **New Feature for Connexional Office emails!**

Peter van Hout

As part of our new eMessenger email system, we are also offering the ability to manage what emails you receive from the Connexional Office.

This will give you the option to opt in or out of the following preferences.

- Connexional messages
- Connexions Newsletter: who wouldn't want to receive this monthly newsletter!
- Requests to submit articles for Connexions: a newsletter doesn't create itself without your help
- Touchstone: Exploring faith issues for today (monthly issues)
- Vacancies
- Health and safety notices: Keep our people well and keep up to date with legislation and best practice changes

### **Church roles stay subscribed**

While you have a current posted or stationed role (refer to the Yearbook) within our Church's life, you will receive emails as needed for that role and we thank you for your ongoing dedication and service!

[Click here](#) if you would like to manage your existing email preferences.

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### [Privacy Act 2020 and the Privacy Principles](#)

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2. Only the details collected from you or currently on record will be used. If you want to verify your details held by te Hāhi, please email [eMessenger](#) with your request and any subsequent amendments.
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