



# Methodist Church of New Zealand

## Connexions - May 2023

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

Please send your articles to [reception@methodist.org.nz](mailto:reception@methodist.org.nz)

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### Remember in your prayers

It is with sadness we advise the Connexion that Syd Easton died on Saturday 4 February, while gardening with neighbours on the hillside behind their properties.

Syd, Parish Council Chairperson for Manawatu Rangitikei, Lay Preacher, Parish Lay representative to 3 Conferences (*including*

*Kerikeri 2022*) was 76 years old. We share our sorrow with Syd's wife Audrey, their children Naomi, Mark, Eddie, Murray, Paul and Sarah, and their families.

Funeral arrangements are yet to be decided, but will likely be next week.

Messages of sympathy and support may be sent to Mark via [mseaston@gmail.com](mailto:mseaston@gmail.com)

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It is with sadness that Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa would like to advise the Connexion of the death of Rev Sione Tokanauto Taukolo on the 21st February 2023.

Vahefonua Tonga would like to extend their sympathy to the window To'ilea Taukolo and the family. The wake service for Rev Sione Tokanauto Taukolo was held on Sunday Evening (26th February) and the memorial service celebrating Rev Sione Tokanauto Taukolo's life was held at 9.00am on Monday morning the 27th of February 2023.

The Wake and Memorial service was held at the at the Epsom Methodist Church on 587 Manukau Road, Epsom, Auckland.

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It is with sadness we advise the Connexion that Rex Millar has died, at the age of 91 years old.

Rex has been a Lay Preacher in Marton for just short of 70 years. In the early 1950s when he went to Auckland University to do his B.Sc. he lived at Trinity College and became a Lay Preacher then. He has preached in Wellington, Wanganui, Palmerston North and Waituna West. We believe he was involved in Synod and probably a Conference Lay Rep for Marton.

Rex was a Secondary School Teacher at Rangitikei College over 2 or 3 decades, and the school became renowned for its excellence in Physics.

Rev Ian Boddy will be leading Rex Millar's funeral and it will be before Easter

**10.30 am Thursday 6 April** at Beauchamps, Kimbolton Road, Feilding.

Please see below a link where you can watch the service live and later if they are unable to watch live. <https://beauchamp.co.nz/tributes/#website-funeral-tributes/view-funeral-details3/642a06b83b14ed00288fd130/>

Rex, husband of the late Noelene, is survived by his sister Rell, his children Katherine, David and Jennifer, and 9 grandchildren.

Messages to the family can be emailed to Rex's daughter Jen, [carlr\\_jenr@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:carlr_jenr@yahoo.co.nz)

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It is with sadness we advise the Connexion that **Rev Derek Vernon McNicol** died on Sunday 5 March 2023 in the Nelson Hospital, at the age of 88 years old.

Derek offered lay ministry and leadership at Shirley and Johnsonville while pursuing a career in advertising/marketing. His interests extended from Christian education to the "New Citizen" and the Porirua Social Justice Unit. Derek graduated from Trinity College to Ngaio Union, where he continued an interest, and represented Te Hāhi, in international affairs, peace-making, media and communications, and edited "Focus" for four years. In 1990, having moved to Tawa Union, he led a parish group of 13 people to Germany to study "justice, peace and the integrity of creation."

From 1992 Derek served in St John's Methodist, Nelson and was superintendent of the Nelson-Marlborough-West Coast district synod, and a member of the transitional MMA during 1998. Derek retired at the 1998 Conference.

We share our sorrow with Derek's wife Barbara, children and family members. Private funeral arrangements will occur.

Messages of sympathy and support may be sent to his son Andrew McNicol via [andrewmcnicol@optusnet.com.au](mailto:andrewmcnicol@optusnet.com.au)

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It is with sadness we advise the Connexion that **Rev Michael Jackson Campbell** died on Saturday 11 March 2023, at the age of 98 years old. Michael was an ordained Minister for over 70 years and he will be remembered by many and greatly missed by his family.

Michael came to NZ in 1959 bringing with him wide experience in Circuit Ministry in England, marked skills in many forms of communication, and capacity for leadership.

Under the NZ Methodist Conference Michael was stationed in New Plymouth, also serving as Superintendent Minister at Spreydon and Auckland East Circuit at Pakuranga.

We share our sorrow with Michael's family. Messages of sympathy and support may be sent to Alastair Campbell via [arcady1174@gmail.com](mailto:arcady1174@gmail.com). Details of his memorial service to be advised.

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It is with sadness that we advise you that **Betty Bell**, (wife of Rev Basil Bell ret), died early Sunday morning 16th April 2023 at Palmerston North Manor.

Betty and Basil have been associated with the Wesley Broadway congregation since Rev Basil retired to Palmerston North over 20 years ago. A service of thanksgiving for her life was held on Thursday 20th April.

Our love and prayers go to Basil and his family. Messages can be sent to Rev Basil Bell via he daughter Kathryn Patterson [lancekathryn56@gmail.com](mailto:lancekathryn56@gmail.com)

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It is with sadness we advise the Connexion that **Rev Wallis Browne** died on Wednesday 19 April 2023 in Nelson, at the age of 83 years old.

Wallis was ordained at the Dunedin conference in 1967, and served on the Faith and Order Committee. The experience of ministry in a new housing area, and including many Samoan worshippers, was richly rewarding to him.

There followed 27 years of service in Justice as a probation officer and manager. Wallis return to ministry in 2002 and served in Levin, Blenheim and Rotorua.

We share our sorrow with Wallis's wife Jane, children and family members.

Funeral arrangements are to follow.

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## In memory Elizabeth Mackie

CWS [invites](#) everyone to a memorial gathering for former staff member [Elizabeth Mackie OP](#) in Otautahi Christchurch at the Aldersgate Centre, 309 Durham Street on Sunday, May 21 from 12:30-2:30pm. Soup and slices will be served, followed by a time of sharing and a short liturgy. Please RSVP to [cws@cws.org.nz](mailto:cws@cws.org.nz) for catering purposes.

If you cannot come, please send messages and memories for a memorial display to [cws@cws.org.nz](mailto:cws@cws.org.nz).

[Donations](#) in memory of Elizabeth are most welcome.

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## Connexional Office webinar programme

The Connexional Office has started a webinar programme aimed at topics relevant to the Connexion.

**Thursday 11 May 5pm**

[Register here](#)

[Meeting our requirements](#)

Learn about our key requirements from Wendy Anderson and how Trudy Downes verifies our requirements are being met.

[Future and Past Connexional Webinars](#)

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## Media & Communications Endowment Fund 2023 - applications and information

Greetings

Please click on this link: <https://www.methodist.org.nz/mahi/grants-and-scholarships/media-and-communication-endowment-fund/>

to go to the Media & Communications Endowment Fund application form for 2023.

Funding requests **open on 1 April 2023 and close 5:00pm on 30 June 2023.**

**Please read the instructions carefully, ensure you have filled out the correct forms and obtained all required information and signatures before sending in your application.**

**Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Media & Communication Endowment Fund is a subsidiary of PAC. Use this fund if your application is for media or communication equipment, e.g. sound systems, data projectors, publishing costs for media etc.*

Regards

Trish Moseley-Taylor  
Methodist Communications Fund  
P O Box 125 194  
St Heliers 1740 Auckland  
[patriciamoseley44@gmail.com](mailto:patriciamoseley44@gmail.com)

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## Professional Development Grants Reminder

Professional Development Grants Poipoia te kākono, kia puawai, "Nurture the seed and it will blossom"  
Please note: Applications for the June funding round are due to the Secretary by 15 May

The 2023 information and application form is now available on the Methodist church website under Mahi (Grants and Funding) as well as from the Secretary, Sonia Faulkner [sonia.faulkner257@gmail.com](mailto:sonia.faulkner257@gmail.com)

**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.

The PDG Committee welcome applications from

- any member of the Methodist Church of New Zealand including those in Co-operating Ventures with a Methodist component
- Presbyters and Deacons (after two years of being received into Full Connexion), Kaikarākia in training, Kaikarākia, Minita ā iwi, Minita i tōhia, lay worship leaders and lay people who are New Zealand Citizens
- groups planning hui and training events being held within the Connexion
- those selected officially to represent Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa New Zealand

**Priority in 2023-2024 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

**Applications in 2023 are due to the Secretary by**

*15th May, 15th August, 15th November*

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## Year Book Updates

Details that have changed are in *Italics*

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*80 Red Beach Road*

*Red Beach 0932*

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[E] [sione.tesimale@gmail.com](mailto:sione.tesimale@gmail.com)

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## Book Wanted

The Rev Michael Greer is hoping to obtain/purchase a good condition copy of Sister Heeni's autobiography,

entitled "Heeni - A Tainui Elder Remembers", first published in 1997, but now out of print.

Email: [mgreer@gdesk.co.nz](mailto:mgreer@gdesk.co.nz)

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# METHODIST ALLIANCE

NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

Photo by .

## Economic Justice

Carol Barron — May 3rd, 2023

Do we have a progressive tax system where those who earn more pay more and lower incomes pay less?

The recent IRD report highlighted the inequitable tax system in Aotearoa New Zealand. Most Kiwis believe we have a progressive tax system where those that earn more income pay more tax as their income grows, and those earning lower incomes pay less tax. The report states:

**“The tax system supports the well-being of New Zealanders by providing revenue to fund public goods and services, influencing behaviours, and as a means of redistribution. The progressive nature of New Zealand’s income tax means that the tax system plays a role in reducing inequality and encouraging social cohesion.”<sup>[1]</sup>**

The report, however, provided evidence that showed that for the very wealthy (the top 1%) the opposite was true.

The IRD report revealed that our country's wealthiest 311 households paid an effective tax rate of 9.5%.<sup>[2]</sup> This compares to a person who has a personal taxable income of \$50,000 will have an effective tax rate of 16% and those with an income of \$100,000 have an effective tax rate of 24%.<sup>[3]</sup> This is because the report shows that the wealthiest New Zealanders accumulate most of their wealth through untaxed capital gains and inheritances rather than taxable salaries.

I am impressed with the wealthy people that responded to the release of this report by saying they were willing to pay more tax.

Wealth is only one end of the income spectrum, with poverty at the other. To get a fuller picture of economic justice, we also need to take into account the criminalisation of poverty in our country. Lisa Marriot, Professor of Taxation at Victoria University of Wellington, explains the difference between how welfare fraud is treated more harshly than tax evasion.<sup>[4]</sup>

There are significant differences in the legislative powers that IRD and MSD have. IRD has significant powers to write off debt, while MSD has very little power to write off debt owed to it and is under a legislative duty to recover debt. This explains the different approaches these government departments take in recovering debt. The question is whether this is fair? Is it fair that most MSD debt is not written off until a person dies, and their estate is insolvent?

Another important difference to note is that tax debt arises from unpaid tax on previous earnings, while welfare debt arises from overpayment of support entitlements or recoverable loans for emergency income support. Tax evasion or fraud is usually viewed as a white-collar crime, while welfare fraud is viewed as blue-collar crime, however tax evasion generates significantly higher levels of economic hardship due to the amounts involved and the lower tax take means there is less money to fund health, education, and social services.

Marriott’s research shows the stark inequalities in how these two types of debt to government is treated. See table below.

	Welfare Fraud	Tax Fraud/Evasion
<b>Detected amount of fraud</b>	\$24m welfare fraud	\$1,200m tax evasion
<b>Investigations</b>	6,000 welfare beneficiaries	1,000 taxpayers
<b>Prosecutions</b>	500-900 pa welfare fraud	30-100 tax evasion
<b>Average amount of fraud</b>	\$76,550	\$229,471
<b>Sentenced to prison</b>	67%	18%
<b>Repayment</b>	Reparation order not sought: MSD to recover the full amount of overpayment directly from the Defendant.	2 cases only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one in full</li> <li>• one \$5,000</li> </ul>
<b>Funded</b>	MSD - \$48M	\$35.8M (Serious Fraud Office \$9.7m & Financial Markets Authority \$26.1m)
<b>Debt written off</b>	\$13m Welfare debt	\$1,127m Tax debt

Economic Justice — Image by: Carol Barron

People who get their income from welfare support, are our most vulnerable people in society. In 2019, the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG) report recommended changes to our social support system to provide liveable incomes for our most vulnerable whānau. Only a few of these recommendations, however, have been implemented to date.

The recommendations from both the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG) report and Tax Working Group have provided the government with a range of possibilities to reduce income inequality and wealth distribution in Aotearoa New Zealand. The recent report from IRD provides real data on how unequal our tax system and subsequent wealth distribution is.

In summary, there is a clear need to revisit both the tax and welfare systems to make them fair and equitable to ensure that everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand can thrive in a society that is just and inclusive. Societies that are more equal, have higher functionality and productivity, more cohesion, and are healthier than their unequal counterparts. Many recent polls in Aotearoa show that most people are concerned with our widening inequality and the associated negative effects, and the majority of New Zealanders support a more even distribution of wealth than we currently have. We can and should advocate for change which is needed to ensure the most vulnerable are provided with a liveable income and treated fairly.

The Methodist Alliance's working group campaigning to increase benefit & abatement rates has drafted a resource that looks at the issues of income security, wealth distribution and debt to government. It contains questions to consider, stories to reflect on, and questions for parliamentary candidates. We hope this will be a well-used resource to help us make Aotearoa a more just and inclusive society where everyone can flourish.

**Carol Barron, National Coordinator**

03 375 0512 | 027 561 9164 | [Carol@MethodistAlliance.org.nz](mailto:Carol@MethodistAlliance.org.nz)

[1] IRD, High-wealth individuals research project, April 2023. P1

[2] <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/on-the-inside/488815/proving-the-wealthiest-new-zealanders-pay-low-tax-rates-is-a-good-start-now-comes-the-hard-part#:~:text=The%20report%2C%20commissioned%20by%20Minister,percent%20if%20you%20include%20GST.>

[3] IRD, High-wealth individuals research project, April 2023. P1

[4] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWfo5ovlqys>





Photo by Trudy Downes

## Are we getting it right?

Trudy Downes — May 4th, 2023

This year we will be verifying that our buildings meet legislative requirements. Some of these items you have heard about before, and some of them may be new to you. Here is how we are going to check up on our buildings.

### **Asbestos Management Plans**

Everyone managing our buildings will have heard about asbestos, but did you know that an asbestos management plan should accompany all building applications to MCPC? That is one way of checking that asbestos management is occurring. Another way is that I will be making contact and asking you for a copy of your plan!

**Talk to me or check out our [asbestos webpage](#) if you want asbestos management help.**

### **Building Warrants of Fitness**

Local councils manage building warrants of fitness (BWoF) for buildings with specified fire and safety features. BWoF certificates are generally displayed somewhere just inside a building's entry. BWoF buildings tend to be non-residential (such as churches), and the building features include fire alarms, automated doors, lifts and sprinkler systems. As well as talking with people, I plan on sending a building list to the local councils to get their confirmation on which of our buildings require a BWoF and if the BWoFs are up to date.

<b>BUILDING WARRANT OF FITNESS</b>	
Form 12, Section 108, Building Act 2004 Compliance Schedule Number:	
<b>The Building</b> Building Name: Street Address of Building: Level/Unit Number: Legal Description of land where building is located: Location of Building within Site Block/No:	<b>BWOF Expiry Date:</b> Year first constructed: Current, Lawfully, Established, Use: Highest Fire Hazard Category: Intended Life of building if 50 years or less: Maximum Number of Occupants that can safely use this building is:
<b>The Owner</b> Name of Owner: Contact Person: Mailing Address: Street Address: Email Address:  Website: Contact Number:      Landline: Mobile: Fax Number:	<b>Agent</b> Name of Agent: Contact Person: Mailing Address: Email Address: Relationship to Owner: Fax Number: Contact Number:      Daytime: After Hours:
<b>Compliance</b> The inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures of the compliance schedule have been fully complied with during the 12 months prior to the date stated below in relation to the following specified systems:	

Image by: Supplied

**Not every building needs a BWoF.**

**Let us talk if you are unsure, or I will call you if I am sure!**

**Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ) Approved Evacuation Plans**

Our buildings need an evacuation plan approved by FENZ if the building:

- can hold 100 or more people.
- is where 10 or more people work.
- is where 6 or more people sleep, unless there are 3 or fewer households.
- is storing certain levels of hazardous substances.
- is used for early childhood, medical, and disabled care services, unless the building is a normal home.

As well as talking with people, I plan on sending a building list to FENZ to get their confirmation on which of our buildings require an evacuation plan and if the plans are up to date.

**Any church capable of holding 100 or more people will need a [FENZ approved evacuation plan](#).**

**Emergency Response Plans**

All of our non-residential buildings require an emergency response plan regardless of whether they require a FENZ approved evacuation plan or not.

I will have to check up on these individually, but it would help if you contacted me and let me know which buildings have an emergency response plan!



# Emergency Response Planning



Image by: Supplied

All non-residential buildings require an [emergency response plan](#).

## Buildings we lease (and in turn if we lease out our building)

Generally, the landlord is responsible for the asbestos management plan, the BWoF, the FENZ evacuation plan approval and an emergency plan for their people.

Tenants are still responsible for an emergency plan for their people, visitors and clients. Tenants should also verify the asbestos status of any building they lease (by viewing the landlord's asbestos management plan), where they have a responsibility for any building alterations (major, minor, planned, unplanned), particularly when their staff, volunteers and contractors go into that building as part of their work.

I can't check up on leased buildings unless I know about them; therefore, the lessor will be responsible for working with the landlord regarding these building requirements and keeping our people safe.



Image by: Supplied

## Me mahi tahi tātou mo te oranga o te katoa

## We should work together for everyone's wellbeing

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa

Nā **Trudy Downes**

[trudyd@methodist.org.nz](mailto:trudyd@methodist.org.nz)

027 457 4196



Easter Reflection by Dr Emily Colgan

Photo by RNZ/Paul Bushnell

## Easter Church Service from Holy Trinity Cathedral

Mission & Ecumenical — May 3rd, 2023

### Easter Reflection by Dr Emily Colgan

In the name of God, creator, redeemer, and giver of life. Amen.

There's a really well-known story about a young girl walking along a beach where thousands of pātangaroa – or starfish – had been washed up during a storm. When she came upon a pātangaroa, she would pick it up and throw it as far as she could, back into the ocean.

She went on like this for some time, until an old man approached her and called out, 'E Kare! Why are you doing that? Look at those starfish, you can't possibly save them all! You can't even begin to make a difference!' But the little girl looked him in the eye and then bent down, she picked up another starfish and threw it as far as she could, back into the sea. 'I made a difference for that one,' she said simply.

Now, this story has become something of a cliché, but bear with me because it asks us to think about those deemed to be of little account and a world that is quick to turn away in indifference or give up in the face of overwhelming odds. And I want us to think with this story as we reflect on Easter Day and the events that led up to this moment.



Easter reflection by Dr Emily Colgan — Image by: RNZ/Paul Bushnell

The gospels tell us that, like the little girl, Jesus shows concern for and commitment to those the world has deemed to be of little account. Time and again throughout his ministry, Jesus challenged the Roman empire, which favoured the rich and powerful when the majority of the population lived in

abject poverty. His actions and words proclaimed a world where the first will be last and the last will be first. A world where those at the bottom of the pile – those of little account – hold a special place in God's kingdom.

Jesus dared to suggest that the values of empire – and its elitist trappings of wealth, power, and influence – are not the values of God. Rather, God sides with those who are marginalised and oppressed, willing a world where all are able to flourish and mutually enjoy abundance of life. Unsurprisingly then, it was here, on the margins, that Jesus spent much of his time – with tax collectors, fishermen, women, those who were stigmatised because of illness, and those considered ethnically or religiously 'other.' It is those that the world deems to be of little account that are given priority in the divine re-ordering of society.

Ultimately, of course, the empire responded to Jesus's vision of an alternative kingdom with execution by crucifixion. But in death – as in life – Jesus was accompanied by those on the margins. It is the women who remain at the foot of the cross until the very end. It is the Earth who holds Jesus, And because of their witness to the risen Christ, others also came to recognise that the empty tomb does not signify absence, but presence: it proclaims the resurrected Christ's presence with us! In the weeks, months, years, and centuries that have followed, millions of people have come – in different ways – to experience something of the resurrected Christ; to experience a God who is always present and bringing newness of life. So, 2000 years on, their claim is our claim: Christ is alive and that even in death, new life is possible.

But the resurrection is more than something we marvel at; it is something that we are called to participate in. The claim that Christ is alive is a call to action. When we seek justice for those who suffer violence and death, we participate in the resurrection. When we work to reconcile damaged relationships, we participate in the resurrection. When we protect the life of a single starfish – or indeed any aspect of creation – we participate in the resurrection. womb-like, in the rocky darkness of the tomb for three days and nights, who then quakes as the stone sealing his grave is removed to reveal an empty space. And it these figures of little account – these women and the Earth – who cannot stay silent, who proclaim the good news of the resurrection, announcing that, despite all reason and logic, Christ is alive, that death is not the final word.

When we act to keep our vulnerable communities safe, when we share love with our neighbours, when we work to restore peace in the world, when we offer welcome and hospitality, when we stand in solidarity with those the world deems to be of little account, when we work towards a world where all are able to flourish and live abundantly, we participate in the ongoing resurrection.

So, the resurrection of Christ was not a one-off event that happened 2000ish years ago. Christ's resurrection is simply the clearest example of God's ongoing action in the world. Wherever there is death, God struggles with us to find new life – even in the face of indifference or against overwhelming odds. And this is cause for celebration; this is good news for all creation! Christ is risen and present with us. So, let us go out into the world and live that resurrection. Amen. From Church Services, 7:00 am Sunday 9th April 2023 live on Radio NZ



The week of Prayer for Christian  
Unity

Photo by Supplied by Mission and Ecumenical

## The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Mission and Ecumenical — May 3rd, 2023

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated in the Southern Hemisphere between Ascension Sunday and Pentecost Sunday, thus from 21 to 28 May in Aotearoa New Zealand for 2023. The theme for this year is “Do good; seek justice” from Isaiah 1:17.

The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023 was chosen, and the materials prepared, by a group of Christians in the United States of America convened by the Minnesota Council of Churches. The draft resources were finalized by an international group jointly sponsored by the Dicastery for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches.

### **A Service For Christian Unity: Friday 26 May 2023 7.30 pm.**

A service will be live Streamed from Takapuna Methodist Church, 427-429 Lake Road, Takapuna Auckland. The Rev Tony Franklin-Ross is Cordinator for the Auckland Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Supper and refreshments will be served after the service.

Participating clergy and church leaders:

TeRito Peyroux-Semu – Vice President, Methodist Church of New Zealand – Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa

Reverend Uesifili Unasa – Auckland Methodist Synod Superintendent, Methodist Church of New Zealand

Reverend Peter Norman – Northcote-Takapuna Methodist Church; Vice President-elect, Methodist Church of New Zealand

Most Reverend Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Auckland, Roman Catholic Church

Very Reverend Fakaofu Kaio – Onehunga Cooperating Parish; Auckland Presbytery, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Dean Anne Mills – Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Anglican Church:Diocese of Auckland, Anglican Church

Reverend Ivica Gregurec – Holy Trinity Cathedral, Anglican Church

Reverend Joseph Zachariah Maramkandam – Cor Episcopa, St Peter’s Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church

Father Jean Paul Abou Naoum, St Elias Melkite Catholic Church

With representatives from:

St Peter's Anglican Church, Takapuna

St George's Presbyterian Church, Takapuna

St Joseph's Catholic Church, Takapuna

Northcote-Takapuna Methodist Church

St Gregory the Illuminator Parish, Armenian Apostolic Church

The major theme for this service, drawing on Isaiah (1: 17) is — Do good; seek justice.

This service is taking place around the world. The liturgy was prepared by an ecumenical group overseas and has been adapted for Aotearoa New Zealand by a working group from the National Dialogue for Christian Unity. The National Dialogue for Christian Unity is a gathering of Church leaders, supported by members of their congregations or leadership teams. It is primarily a forum for sharing as we move forward together on our faith journeys.

The people will be given a stone as they enter the church, or they may have brought their own from home: For each person attending, a small stone is offered. During the service there will be opportunity to place their rock around a cross or lit candle placed at the front of the church.

This emulates the pilgrimage to Santiago to Compostela, where pilgrims place a rock, stone or item from home at the Cruz de Ferro. The Traditional Pilgrims Prayer at the Cruz de Ferro is :

“Lord, may this stone, a symbol of my efforts on the pilgrimage that I lay at the foot of the cross, weigh the balance in favour of my good deeds some day when the deeds of my life are judged. Let it be so.”





Participants of ATCHAA national training programme in Cambodia

Photo by Supplied by Mission and Ecumenical

## CCA facilitates advocacy training for young Cambodian Christians on HIV and AIDS

Mission and Ecumenical — May 3rd, 2023

Phnom Penh, Cambodia: The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) organised a two-day national training programme on 30–31 March 2023 that equipped a group of Cambodian Christian youth leaders with essential knowledge and leadership skills to work towards combating the HIV epidemic in the country.

Dr Ronald Lalthanmawia, CCA Programme Coordinator for the Action Together to Combat HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA), conveyed greetings on behalf of the CCA. Rev. Sok Nev from the Beautiful Church of Christ in Cambodia greeted the participants on behalf of the church leaders of Cambodian churches.

The sessions that focused on enhancing comprehensive knowledge of HIV transmission helped participants to understand the seriousness of the growing menace in Cambodia. The SAVE approach (Safer Practices, Access to Treatment, Voluntary Counselling and Testing, and Empowerment) was emphasised in the HIV awareness sessions. The Biblical expositions and group discussions analysed the role of churches in providing a platform for vulnerable communities to attain the fullness of life through the holistic healing of Christ.

An interactive session allowed participants to share their personal experiences of encountering HIV in their homes and their neighbourhoods, highlighting the realities of HIV being close to one's families and communities, and not a distant or isolated phenomenon. The participants committed to acting in their own surroundings to ensure that comprehensive knowledge of HIV is shared.

Two sessions further analysed the challenges and opportunities faced by Cambodian youth, the fourth-largest youth population in Southeast Asia. They included understanding the vulnerabilities of youth and identifying solutions for the problems they face, such as mental and psychological weakness, violence and abuse, high incidences of teenage pregnancies and unsafe abortions, and forced migration. Sessions also discussed how young people could overcome challenges through faith, values, and traditions, followed by a presentation on servant leadership and other concepts and models of leadership.

About forty Cambodian Christian youth leaders including young pastors and church workers from different provinces participated in the national training programme. The CCA continues to prioritise equipping young people with the knowledge and leadership skills to be mobilised in efforts against HIV and AIDS through its special programme, Action Together to Combat HIV and AIDS in Asia (ATCHAA)





# World Council of Churches

Photo by .

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle for May 2023: World Council of Churches

Mission and Ecumenical — May 3rd, 2023

30 April - 06 May 2023 Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

07 - 13 May 2023 India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

14 - 20 May 2023 Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal

21 - 27 May 2023 Indian Ocean Islands: Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles

28 May - 03 June 2023 Angola, Mozambique

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle takes us through every region of the world over the course of a year. Praying for each place on earth and its people at least once a year, we affirm our solidarity with Christians all over the world, brothers and sisters living in diverse situations, experiencing diverse problems and sharing diverse gifts. Pray with us!

The suggested prayer texts are based on the publication "Pilgrim Prayer – an Ecumenical Prayer Cycle". The book and the website offer valuable aids for intercessory prayers, prayer on behalf of and in solidarity with others. ([oikoumene.org](http://oikoumene.org))



**Child rights ... children in the Solomon Islands benefit from PCC Child Protection programmes**

Child rights. children in the Solomon Islands benefit from PCC Child Protection programmes

Photo by PCC Child Protection programmes

## **We reach out to all**

Mission and Ecumenical — May 3rd, 2023

The first quarter of 2023 has seen a flurry of activities across the region. From the Republic of the Marshall Islands to Nauru and Kiribati, the Pacific Conference of Churches has been involved in a series of activities. These included the training of trainers in Child protection methods and creating safe churches in the region. A concerted effort has been made to involve the Northern Pacific churches in regional activities in a greater way.

In May, Marshallese churches will host a meeting of church leaders as they become more involved with the ecumenical family. A quick survey has been done on Nauru to determine the needs of the local church before implementing programmes around youth, women and children.

PCC General secretary, Reverend James Bhagwan, said that a project to improve meeting facilities on Majuro would take shape soon as activities were ramped up in the Northern Pacific.

“We are able to help refurbish one of the oldest church schools on Majuro ahead of meeting the Pacific Church leaders meeting”, said the Reverend James Bhagwan. “The PCC is committed to keeping all its members involved through meaningful dialogue and activities.”

Last quarter Rev. Bhagwan visited the Marshall Islands and Kiribati to support ecological stewardship and youth programmes. He also spoke at the annual Gay Pride event in Sydney after an invitation from the organisers. He said, “The task is now to go back and find ways to respectfully share the messages and the lessons from our rainbow community to our Christian community in the Pacific: that is my role.” From Talanoa Toktok Issue No 15 March 2023



Photo by Supplied by CWS

## Join Operation Refugee

Christian World Services — May 5th, 2023

CWS invites you to stand with refugees on World Refugee Day, June 20.

Sign up to [Operation Refugee 2023](#) and take on a 12 hour challenge as an individual or team – [a winter walk](#), [food for life](#) or a [shelter challenge](#) – and then ask friends and family to support the cause. You will be raising funds for people who have fled Afghanistan, Palestine, Syria and Ukraine and need food, education and medical care. [Sign up today.](#)

Parishes are encouraged to mark Refugee Sunday on June 25 in the Methodist and Presbyterian calendar or July 2 for the Anglicans. Worship resources will be available at the end of May.

Donations for refugees can be made [online](#).



Wilson, aged 79 — Image by: Supplied by CWS

At 79 years old, Wilson has transformed himself from being a retired fisherman to a happy farmer on Tabon Island in the Philippines. His garden skills flourished during the lockdown that kept people over 65 years at home. Thanks to Developers offering practical training, plants and tools, he is growing food

for his family and community. The fish stock in the bay has been in sharp decline and people on the island's coast say they are losing one metre of their land every year thanks to climate change. Read [Wilson's story](#) and if you can, please donate to our [Family Food Gardens Autumn Appeal](#).



Andrew, Vanuatu — Image by: Supplied by CWS

### **CWS appeals for Vanuatu**

Two months after Vanuatu was hit by back-to-back cyclones, the people need help to rebuild and recover. Please continue to pray for ni-Vanuatu. Donations to the [Vanuatu Cyclone Appeal](#) will provide materials to build new latrines, replace and expand family food gardens, re-establish community gardens and seed banks, stop violence against women and children, and provide psychosocial support. If you can, please [make a donation](#) to help ni-Vanuatu like Andrew (*pictured*) rebuild.





Photo by Christian World Services

## Mothers Day Gifts

Christian World Services — May 5th, 2023

[Gifted](#) is a great place to shop for a gift that shares love. We will send you a [card](#) or [e-card](#) to share with your Mum. Write your own message and if you like, add some flowers or chocolates or something you made. Your gift will be a donation that will give another family what they want and need – like fruit trees or healthcare. [Gifted](#) is a great place to shop for a gift that shares love. We will send you a [card](#) or [e-card](#) to share with your Mum. Write your own message and if you like, add some flowers or chocolates or something you made. Your gift will be a donation that will give another family what they want and need – like fruit trees or healthcare.



Türkiye Syria Appeal

Photo by Supplied by CWS

## Türkiye Syria Appeal

Christian World Services — May 5th, 2023

The ACT Alliance Appeal has raised over US\$4.5 million for the response in Syria.

CWS is grateful for the generous donations received to [assist](#) Syrians in Türkiye and northern Syria after the earthquake in February. Members are supporting the humanitarian response in both countries however a lack of international funds, means rations to the many affected families have had to be reduced. Families are slowly moving out of collective shelters as temporary accommodation becomes available. The removal of debris from the earthquakes has been slow because of the lack of heavy equipment. Schools have reopened but attendance is low in part because of the damaged buildings. Mental health and psychosocial services are in high demand. Please continue to pray for those affected – many had already fled conflict in other parts of Syria. [Donations](#) to provide much-needed support like medicines (*pictured*) are welcome.





Photo by Devonport Parish

## World Day of Prayer Aotearoa New Zealand Annual Service.

World Day of Prayer Aotearoa New Zealand National Committee — May 5th, 2023

Thank you to those who organised and participated in the World Day of Prayer Aotearoa New Zealand Annual Service.

On behalf of the World Day of Prayer Aotearoa New Zealand National Committee I would like to thank all those who organised and participated in the annual service. The reports that the National Committee is receiving are very positive of the material put together by the Taiwan WDP Committee many commenting they have learned so much about the country. In spite of the devastation in many areas of the North Island, financial support has once again been very generous and when able appreciated the opportunity of being able to come together again after the COVID disruptions.

Once again, many thanks for your support. Keep up the good work, as we support our sisters, who give us each year little insights into their lives' joys and difficulties, so that we can respond with prayerful actions. More information about the World Day of Prayer Aotearoa New Zealand can be found on our website: <https://www.worlddayofprayer.org.nz/>



Methodist Mission Southern

Photo by Supplied by Methodist Mission Southern

## Investing in Our Children's Future: Generational Change for the Better

Julie Roberts — May 3rd, 2023

Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

When children lack self-regulation skills, they struggle to manage their emotions and behaviour in appropriate ways. They may have difficulty controlling their impulses, which can lead to involuntary and sometimes destructive actions. Children who lack self-regulation skills may also have trouble focusing their attention, sitting still, and completing tasks.

Without these crucial skills, many children go on to experience negative outcomes in their academic and social lives. They may struggle to form positive relationships with peers and adults and have difficulty in school due to an inability to regulate their behaviour and emotions. Additionally, a lack of self-regulation skills across the domains of cognition, behaviour and emotion has been linked to a higher risk of mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression.

Developing self-regulation skills early on is crucial for success both in and out of the classroom. At MMS's Youth Transition Houses, for example, residents often struggle with self-regulation, leading to negative outcomes like homelessness and the need for support services. While our staff walk alongside these teens to develop the skills they may have missed during their primary years, an **ENGAGE** program could have made a significant difference in preparing them for their teenage years. **ENGAGE** focuses on developing self-regulation skills through intentional play, language, and activities, leaving children better equipped to succeed in real-life settings.

Jimmy McLauchlan the Mission's Chief Development Officer *"Eight years ago, I went down a research rabbit hole to find evidence that we could use to support tamariki on a really large scale. I thought it would lead me to experts dotted all around the world, instead it led me to a couple of experts who were a six-minute drive from my office, and eventually to a huge team of people around New Zealand who have grown this Kaupapa together."*

In 2016 Methodist Mission Southern entered into a partnership with Associate Professor Dione Healey (ENGAGE creator) to deliver **ENGAGE** to ECEs and primary schools. Working alongside funders and policy-makers in the early childhood education sector to encourage long-term investment in developing these essential skills for future generations.

Over the course of seven years, MMS undertook eight different research and pilot projects, with support from The Tindall Family Foundation. These projects included piloting the **ENGAGE** program in ECEs and primary schools, culminating in a successful 'scale-up' pilot in 2021/22, which demonstrated the program's suitability for a large-scale rollout. Since July 2021, **ENGAGE** has been delivered to 300 ECEs across Auckland, Bay of Plenty, and Otago/Southland, resulting in the development of the **ENGAGE** programme that will be delivered to at least 1,830 ECEs around Aotearoa from July 2023, following Jo Luxton's (Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Education), announcement of a \$19.7 million government investment for a nationwide rollout of the **ENGAGE** program to early childhood education services.

**ENGAGE** develops children's self-regulation skills through intentional play – with skills and games grouped into three domains: emotional (feeling), cognitive (thinking) and behavioural (doing). **ENGAGE** games are played for approximately 30 minutes a day, with an intentional focus on supporting children to develop specific skills that they need to thrive at school and lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

**ENGAGE** has been demonstrated to support significant gains in tamariki's self-regulation skills, including improvements in their emotional regulation, attention, memory, aggression, hyperactivity and social skills of empathy and co-operation.

*"I wished that we had this program when I was still teaching in my Centre because of the way that children learn and they learn through play and the skills that they gain in and develop when going through programs like this, it moves with them throughout their schooling"* Jo Luxton (Education Under-Secretary)

**ENGAGE** is also part of a gold-standard randomised controlled trial involving 140 ECE's around New Zealand called **Kia Tīmata Pai** (KTP). The study is a partnership between Methodist Mission Southern, BestStart, University of Otago, Emotional Regulation Aotearoa New Zealand and the Wright Family Foundation. KTP will run until 2025 and looks at the benefits of supporting self-regulation and oral language skills in pre-school tamariki – ensuring that the best research on child development continues to find its way into the real world, to enrich the lives and outcomes of our tamariki across Aotearoa.

You can follow **ENGAGE** progress on their Facebook page [www.facebook.com/EngageInfo](http://www.facebook.com/EngageInfo)

Did you know you can read our *Kōrero Kete* directly in your inbox through our monthly newsletters? You can sign up on our [website/Facebook](#) or contact Julie [julier@mmsouth.org.nz](mailto:julier@mmsouth.org.nz)



**10-20  
JULY  
2024**

**WCG2024.COM**

New Zealand Choral  
Federation

Photo by NZ Choral  
Federation

## **World Choir Games 2024**

NZ Choral Federation — May 3rd, 2023

The World Choir Games, the largest choral festival and competition on the globe, is coming to Auckland in July 2024

Since 2000, the Games have brought together singers from all cultures in a celebration of creativity, diversity and friendship and have been described by participants as supportive, inspiring, even life-changing. This will certainly be the most significant choral event ever to take place in Aotearoa.

### **[FIND OUT MORE](#)**

The Games are for everyone

Regardless of the type or level of your choir, there are a host of reasons to enter. The Games offers many non-competitive and educational options, including workshops, seminars, individual assessments and open rehearsal sessions. Choirs can also participate in one or more of the dozens of concerts that span its two-week length, as well as attending others.

The competition itself is run in a supportive and friendly way with no fewer than [28 choir-type or music-genre categories](#) available. In the process you'll get to sing alongside choirs from many other places, receive helpful feedback from international judges, and walk away with a World Choir Games medal or a certificate that will forever be part of your choir's history.

Beyond all that, you'll be part of a major international event with wonderful opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-choral exchange. You'll get to sing in a range of venues across Auckland, meet singers from over 50 countries, and feel the buzz of being right in the heart of the world's biggest choir festival in your own country!

Special pre-registration discount offer!

Interkultur, owners of the Games, have just announced a special pre-registration campaign for the World Choir Games 2024 in Auckland. This is an excellent opportunity for choirs to secure a 5% discount voucher and save on Event Package costs by pre-registering for the event before 20 July via [this online form](#). The voucher will be redeemed when you send your full registration by the Earlybird deadline in September. Your pre-registration is non-binding, of course, and no payment will be required until the full registration has been received.

### **[PRE-REGISTER NOW](#)**

Please contact us at [info@wcg2024.co.nz](mailto:info@wcg2024.co.nz) with any questions you might have, or head straight to [www.wcg2024.com](http://www.wcg2024.com) for all the official information.

With Earlybird registrations (and their very generous rates for NZCF member choirs) ending on 20 September 2023, now would be a great time to start thinking about how much your choir will benefit from taking part in the World Choir Games in Tāmaki Makaurau next July!

Ngā mihi mahana

NZCF and the World Choir Games 2024 Team