



May 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

It is with sadness that we share the news of the passing of Rev. Beverley Pullar (née Taylor), who died peacefully on Friday, 2 May, at the age of 94, at Oakwoods Village Care Centre in Richmond (Tasman).

Beverley began her training as a Deaconess in 1955 from the Stoke Methodist Church. She served in the Feilding Circuit and at Pitt Street Methodist Church in Auckland, where she became the longest-serving officeholder apart from the caretaker—a testament to her deep commitment and faithful service.

She had a distinguished ministry, including service in the Waimea Parish from 1985 to 1986, where she oversaw three distinct worship congregations.

Her desire to be more fully involved in ministry led her to serve for a year in Westtown, New Plymouth, in a supply appointment. She later responded to a strong calling to work with Pasifika communities, serving as a supply minister in Ōtāhuhu for eight years.

Beverley was ordained in November 1979 and, in 1980, made history by becoming the first Methodist woman presbyter appointed as a Parish Superintendent in Aotearoa New Zealand.

After retiring at the end of 1986, Beverley remained a dedicated member of the Nelson Tasman Methodist Parish.

Ngā manaakitanga

Rev Tara Tautari | General Secretary



A Pilgrim's Soul – A Weekend Retreat

Antje Duda

"A pilgrim is a person who prays with their feet." – Edward Hays

Pilgrimage is not only about distant journeys—it is also an inner movement of the heart.

You are invited to **Sister Eveleen Retreat House** for a weekend of reflection, creativity, and prayer, exploring what it means to walk as a

pilgrim in daily life.

Through contemplative practices and time in nature, we will attune ourselves to the Sacred presence within and around us.

Date: 2–4 May 2025, Sister Eveleen Retreat House, Sumner

[More Info and Registration](#)

Link to a [short clip](#).



Reflect & Create: A Seasonal Creative Retreat

Antje Duda

Join us from 9–11 May 2025 for a weekend retreat led by **Glenda Joy**.

Through gentle, user-friendly creative exercises—using pastels, paint, collage, clay, poetry, and music—you will explore personal themes in a nurturing space (no artistic experience needed).

Time for rest, walking, and reflection is woven throughout, offering a contemplative retreat rooted in Christian tradition. Enjoy nutritious meals, breathtaking views, and a peaceful setting to pause, reflect, and refresh.

Sister Eveleen Retreat House, 9–11 May 2025 - [More info and registration](#)

Link to a [short clip](#).



Monthly Day of Retreat @ Sister Eve

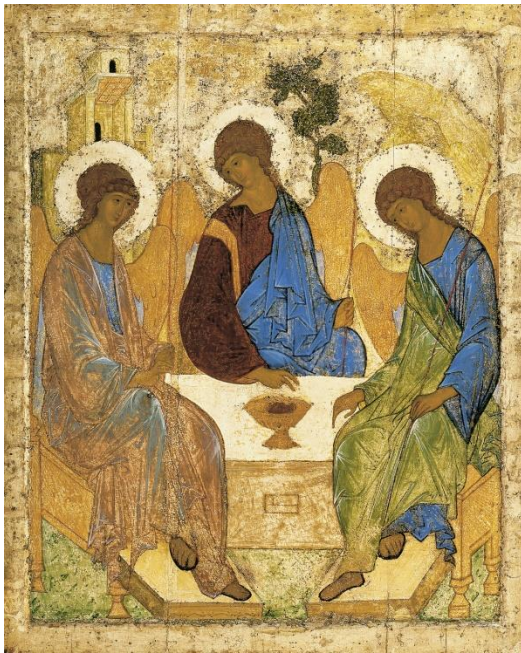
Antje Duda

Thu 29 May, 9:30 - 2:30

- a quiet day of reflection, prayer, silence, and sharing.

This day is a simple retreat, but a special treat for yourself.

Theme for this month: *The Trinity* [More info and registration](#)



Participating in the Trinity - 17 - 21/23 August 2025

Antje Duda

Join Donald and Janice Scott at Sister Eveleen Retreat House for this opportunity to draw aside to spend time together largely in silence, inviting contemplative reflection on the Trinity, utilising various prayer methods, Scripture readings highlighting the Trinity, as well as 'gazing upon' Andrei Rublev's 15th Century icon of the Trinity, all inviting participation/communion with this glorious Trinitarian understanding and encounter with God.

This is 5-day or 7-day Retreat your choice

The **5-day** retreat concludes on **Thursday, 21st August**, at 2 pm, offering a profound immersion in the topic.

For those seeking a more extended period of spiritual reflection, the **7-day** retreat concludes on **Saturday, 23rd August**, at 2 pm, providing additional moments for prayer and contemplation. (*Please let us know your*

choice upon registering.)

[More info and registration](#)

Here is also:

Link for a [short clip](#)

Link for the [retreat](#)



Upcoming: "This is our nation, not theirs": The threat of Christian nationalism

Dark Times Academy

Starts May 9, Saturdays 1:00-2:30pm (NZDT), 26 April-14 June 2025

"This is our nation, not theirs": The threat of Christian nationalism

Why have right-wing Christians declared war on the rest of us? What is a "Christian nation" and why is this idea gaining power around the world today?

Join Dr Eric Repphun and Dark Times Academy for this eight-week course as we use an interdisciplinary lens to unpick these complex questions about religion, politics, history, culture, language, bodies, and violence. We will explore who Christian nationalists are, what they believe, and the stories they tell about faith and its rightful place in human society.

Learn what Christian nationalism is, where it comes from, where it might be going, and what we can do to fight back.

9 May – 28 June 2025

Saturdays:

NZST: 12:00 – 1:30pm

AST: 10:00 – 11:30 am

Fridays:

EDT: 8:00 – 9:30pm

PDT: 5:00 – 6:30 pm

[More information](#) | Register [here](#)



**Instructor profile: Eric Repphun**

Dr. Eric Repphun has worked as a university lecturer, an instructional designer, and journal co-editor, among many other things. He has a PhD in Religious Studies and has published original research on Mormonism in *Battlestar Galactica*, religion in the work of Douglas Coupland and Chuck Palahniuk, and different ways to understand the perverse biblical story of the sacrifice of Isaac. He has spent way too much time thinking about the idea of re-

enchantment, or how modernity produces its own monsters and its own forms of unreason.

Can you tell me more about your background and what led you to want to teach a class on Christian Nationalism?

I have a somewhat bonkers professional background and have done everything from owning a cafe (the iconic Governor's if we have any Dunedin heads out the audience) to working as an instructional designer to spending four years making tourist tchotchkes at a small factory. I am also a recovering academic and spent six or so years teaching university-level Religious Studies (not theology!) in person and online in Aotearoa New Zealand.

While I've been out of the academy for more than a decade now and have been very busy happily raising my kids, skateboarding, riding my bikes, and taking pictures, I have always missed teaching. I didn't miss the marking, for the most part. I didn't miss the pressure to publish work I wasn't proud of, and I didn't miss scrabbling for another semester of work as an adjunct lecturer. I missed *teaching*, getting up in front of a group of students and trying to get them to expand their minds and their worlds. I missed watching young - and not so young - people start to look at things in a different way and start to question what they'd always been told. In a Religious Studies setting, where plenty of the students had grown up in churches or other religious institutions, this could be particularly rewarding, if also really challenging because this kind of learning often butted heads with people's very ingrained, very core beliefs about the world and their place within it.

For the past decade, I have been watching the world move towards a resurgence in popular religion in ways that most early sociologists would not have believed possible, and I never lost my curiosity about how religion shapes the world and about what religion *is* in more abstract terms.

Now that my kids are older, I find myself with more free time and when I stumbled upon Dark Times Academy, it looked like the perfect opportunity to get back into teaching and to find an outlet for my desire to be more active in social-justice work. I pitched a number of courses, but I think the one about Christian nationalism was the one I was most keen to dig into, largely because it is such a rich, almost inexhaustible topic, and one that people desperately need to understand because it threatens so many things that so many people value. Researching right-wing American Christianity and the damage it can cause, especially to those on the outside, also gives me an excuse to listen to way too much Ethel Cain.

Do you see the current situation in the US linked to Christian Nationalism?

Absolutely. I actually think it is impossible to really understand the world we are all living in without understanding Christian nationalism, especially as it manifests in the United States. It is a crucial part of the story of how we got to where we are, a story that is both shockingly new and hundreds if not thousands of years in the making. Christian nationalism is both a core cause of and an accelerant of many of the serious threats to social justice and social cohesion that are plaguing the world right now.

While we are doubtless witnessing the end of the long American Century, the US is still one of the core drivers of and dominant forces shaping twenty-first century life around the globe, both culturally and financially. What the writer Talia Lavin calls America's "strange, God-soaked





soil” has become part of the soil we all grow in, even on the other side of the planet, living in what look, for all purposes, to be secular societies.

Is Christian Nationalism a global political movement and how does it play out differently in different countries?

Christian nationalism, like almost every manifestation of religion, takes on different forms and flavours and emphases wherever it takes root. So, while there are things that unite the religious and political figures like Trump in the US, Putin in Russia, Orban in Hungary, Bolsonaro (good riddance) in Brazil, the movements they lead are not precisely the same.

Christian nationalism and the ideas that lie behind it are woven into the rise of far-right politics in every corner of the globe, though other religious nationalisms, like Modi’s anti-Muslim *Hindutva* in India, also play their part. There is even an argument to be made that the more extreme forms of Christian nationalism very closely resemble political forms of Islamism in terms of their epistemology and their ideas about who does and who does not deserve to have authority over other people. Both sides of this equation would probably loudly denounce this idea, but that does not make it any less true.

Christian nationalist ideas about power, authority, purity, and pollution drive bans on abortion, attacks on the rights of queer people, book bans, the erosion of public schools and honest accounts of history, resistance to vaccines, and wider denials of science. No matter how much Christian nationalism sells itself as a return to tradition - and often as an outright rejection of modernity - it represents a distinctly modern fusion of religion, politics, and economics.

This is really heavy stuff. How do you find joy in times like these?

While this might not speak entirely well about my sanity, I actually find a lot of joy in digging into this stuff, horrific as much of it is. There is a complexity and perversity to it that appeals to some dark corner of my brain. There is also a kind of fierce joy in understanding the truth of something, even if it is deeply unpleasant, even repellent on a moral and human level.

I also find it incredibly valuable to be able to explain this stuff coherently to people who might not understand how serious it is and how much of a threat it poses to the people that Christian nationalists have decided are their enemies. Knowing what these ideas, beliefs, and practices are and where they come from is also crucial to protecting the marginalised, including transgender and gender non-conforming people in my own whānau, and there is joy in that as well. On a slightly more sane front, though it is a horrible cliché, I have ways to unwind and unthink these dark thoughts, like riding bikes and skateboards, reading horror and science fiction, tramping with my kids and teaching them critical-thinking skills, taking photos, and petting the dog, which is our household’s version of touching grass. If nothing else, like the great Søren Kierkegaard wrote about a long time ago, there is no underestimating the value of a good, long, aimless walk.

What about teaching a community education class appeals to you and why do you think community education is important?

I come from a family of educators and have done all sorts of work in education over the years, but this is really the first time I have done community education, but I am really looking forward to being able to focus on the raw act of teaching while having minimal distractions from things like marking exams. Designing this course without needing to worry about KPIs and the other frustrations of more formal institutional or for-profit education settings has been an immense pleasure. I think *all* education is important right now, especially as fascists - yes, they *are* fascists and some of them can rightly be described as Christofascists - coordinate to suppress and destroy knowledge they find disagreeable. A diversity of tactics means finding new ways - or reviving old ways - of disseminating and protecting knowledge and I think community education is going to be an increasingly important part of the fight for our collective future. Decentralised and often flying under the radar, small community-education organisations like Dark Times Academy are ideal outposts in a world that is growing ever more hostile to the notion that learning should be aimed at the whole person, not just an instrument to increase someone’s utility and their economic value. We need more education focused on humans, not on human capital.





Worship at Hand: Complete Lectionary-Based Worship Services for Sundays in the Church Year

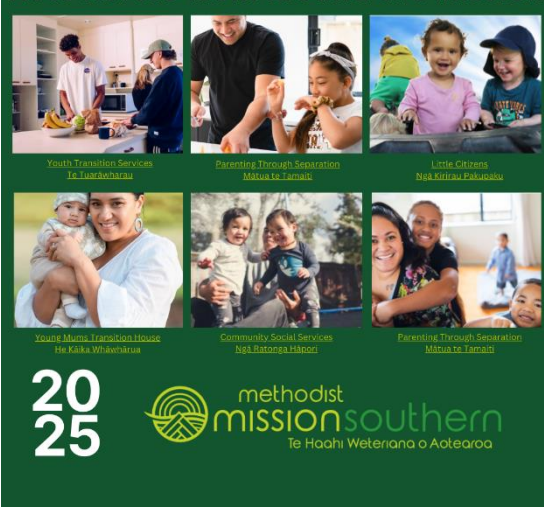
Philip Garside Publishing Ltd

Philip Garside Books is offering a new weekly worship resource – **Worship at Hand** – that includes:

- A complete liturgy
 - A 1000-word sermon
 - 10 engaging "Introducing the Theme / Story Time" ideas
 - 20 hymn suggestions from NZ Hymnbook Trust music books and other trusted sources
 - A royalty free image illustrating the theme to use on the cover of the Order of Service, PowerPoint slides etc.
- You can buy materials Sunday by Sunday, monthly (May and June 2025 now available) and as an annual subscription. Click here for more info and to order:

<https://philipgarsidebooks.com/collections/worship-at-hand>

Kete Kōrero from around the Mission



Methodist Mission Southern: Depth of purpose.

Julie Roberts

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." – Pablo Picasso

There's something deeply grounding about watching purpose quietly unfold in the everyday moments. Each month, we see these glimpses across MMS — in our Youth Transition Houses, Young Mums' House, and Little Citizens Early Learning Centre. They aren't always dramatic, but they're full of meaning: the slow and steady steps that build a resilient life.

One of our rangatahi started their very first job. When asked how their first day went, they said with wide eyes and a big grin, "I love it so much — I

can't believe I get paid to do it." They've already picked up more shifts, and it's clear they've made a real impression. Another resident, after many applications and knock-backs, secured a volunteer role that could lead to paid work. It's in the very sector they hope to train in, and the confidence boost from being trusted and welcomed is already visible.

Others are finding their feet in different ways. A few rangatahi have been working quietly in the background on their housing goals — and just this month, three have transitioned to their own independent accommodation. This is a huge step, and one they've reached by showing real determination and openness to support.

To mark these shared achievements, one resident spent the whole day in the kitchen preparing a special dinner. Staff on shift were invited to join — and all agreed the meal was amazing! More than the food, though, it was the sense of celebration, pride, and community that filled the house that night.



In the Young Mums' house, anticipation is building with two pēpi expected in the coming months. The planning, excitement, second-hand shopping, and resource sharing has created a real sense of anticipation and connection. Baking has also been a theme — cakes, breads, shared treats — each one an act of generosity and care that lifts the whole whare.

At Little Citizens, MMS's Early Learning Centre, Holi was celebrated with music, colour, and dance. This year, more non-Indian whānau joined the joy — throwing colours, laughing with their tamariki, and dancing in the playground to music led by our kaiako Meenakshi. It was a true celebration of light, renewal, and shared joy.

What we see again and again is that purpose doesn't have to be loud. Sometimes it looks like a good meal, a clean flat, a baby blanket found at the op shop, or a shift at a new job. It's easy to measure change in milestones — a job, a flat, a birth — but the real transformation happens in the texture of daily life: in generosity, in shared effort, in the discovery of gifts and the courage to give them. That's where purpose lives. And when that purpose has depth — rooted in love, community, and care — it lasts. It reminds us of what it is to live meaningfully, and to help others do the same.

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



Serving the Kaurihohore and Te Kamo communities

Mike Nielsen

The team at Kaurihohore / Kamo Co-operating Parish values being a local church embedded within our local communities. This was highlighted in April with two opportunities for our congregation to serve and give back to the Kaurihohore and Te Kamo communities in the north of Whangārei.

In the last week of Term 1 we continued an emerging tradition of giving packets of hot cross buns to families picking up their children from Kaurihohore School, the primary school next to the church. After running out of buns last year, this year we gave out 120 packets of hot cross buns, including providing buns to the teachers for morning tea. The buns were well received, with smiles and big "Thank you's" from all the families and teachers.

On April 25th we continued a more longstanding tradition of facilitating and leading the Te Kamo Community ANZAC Day service at the local War Memorial Hall. The Vietnam War was the focus of this year's service, with a special opportunity to acknowledge the service of Arthur Bermingham,



Galaxy S20 FE
23 April 2025 10:17 am



who grew up in Te Kamo and was one of the casualties of the war. It was special to have Arthur's family attend.

The ANZAC Day service is emerging as a focal point for the community, with over 400 people attending the service this year (double the number who attended in 2024). We intentionally involved some of the younger members of our community in the service, with representatives from Te Kamo Intermediate, Te Kamo High School, and the Whangārei Cadet Forces having speaking roles.

We look forward to being able to continue to serve the Kaurihohore and Te Kamo communities in the coming months with further events like our community craft Monday markets held on King's Birthday and Labour weekend.



**Wasewase Ko Viti e Niu
Siladi – Mataveitokani
Theme: Don't Just Change,
But Be Transformed
Foxton Camp 24th -28th
April 2025**

Wasewase Youth

The vibrant echoes of our Foxton camp in April 2025! It was a truly powerful and transformative gathering, building beautifully upon the seeds planted in Drury the year 2024. The journey from pondering "**How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?**" to embracing the call to "**Don't just change; Transform**" speaks volumes

about the thoughtful evolution of our Wasewase Youth ministry.

Lights in the Hearts is the choice from **Roy T. Bennett's** quote, "**Don't just change, transform!**" as a guiding principle for the 2025 camp resonates deeply. The emphasis on uplifting spirits and fostering self-belief clearly set a positive and growth-oriented tone for the event.

The massive turnout in Foxton on that Thursday have been incredibly heartening! To see such enthusiasm and commitment from our young people is a testament to the vibrant spirit within the Wasewase.

Friday's session with **Dr. Edmond Fehoko** and **Bale Kito**, from Otago University, focusing on genuine connection and the powerful question, "**How are you Really?**", sounds profoundly impactful. In a world that often encourages superficial interactions, creating a space for authentic sharing and deep listening is a vital step towards true transformation.





The choir competition that evening must have been a deeply moving experience. The dedication and effort our youth poured into their performances, culminating in Auckland Youth's heartfelt and classy presentation, truly embodies the idea that '**what comes from the heart cannot be challenged**'. It speaks to the power of collective expression and the beauty of shared purpose.



The early morning *Lotu masumasu*, guided by your youth minister with the wisdom of 2 Timothy, provided a crucial spiritual grounding for the weekend. The military leadership quote, "**Hard man brings good times; good times bring soft man; soft man brings bad times,**" offered a compelling framework for reflection on preserving and proclaiming the Gospel truth and enduring the inevitable challenges that follow. This sets a strong foundation for the theme of transformation.

Day two, brimming with energy, fun, and care, saw Mr. Maciu Vucago ignite minds with his insightful exploration of change and transformation through the lens of "**Beard and Bra.**" This unconventional approach likely sparked engaging conversations and challenged preconceived notions, paving the way for a deeper understanding of personal and collective growth within the church. The immense and encouraging response across the room speaks to the power of Mr. Vucago's message.





Mr. Maikali Bulicakau's open offer of assistance and counselling created a vital space of support and care, ensuring that the journey of transformation is one where no one feels alone.



Rev. Qalo Seniceva's session on taboos in the church and homes, using the poignant narrative of 2 Samuel 13 and the probing questions "How are you?" and "How's your Soul?", sounds like it delved into the very core of individual and communal well-being. Connecting the "**Beard and Bra**" concept to the call to be "**Bold and Born Again**" beautifully encapsulates the journey from outward change to inner transformation. It's clear that our youth were challenged to re-examine their thinking, communication, relationships, and their vision for the future of the church.

The presence of parents that night, witnessing the vibrant expression of your youth through **meke** and traditional songs, further strengthened the bonds of community and celebrated the rich heritage that underpins your identity. Auckland Youth's continued powerful performance undoubtedly filled their parishes with immense pride.



Knowing that Auckland, with its two parishes, set such a high standard for the four other multi-congregation parishes highlights the diverse yet unified spirit of our **Wasewase**.

As we look ahead to our next camp in Nelson, the desire to achieve deeper changes and a more profound transformation within our youth is inspiring. It's evident that the seeds of growth and renewal planted in Drury and nurtured in Foxton are ready to blossom even further. May our journey in Nelson be filled with continued connection, profound learning, and a deepening of the transformative work that has already begun.

The camp concluded with a farewell church service on Sunday, featuring a critical sermon on transformation, drawing from Acts 5:27-32, John 20:19-31, and Revelation 1:4-8, and focusing on these key aspects of transformation:

1. Transformation of allegiance.
2. Transformation of identity and mission.
3. Transformation of their understanding of who Jesus truly is.

The service included Holy Communion, further deepening the spiritual connection among the attendees. The farewell was described as very emotional, as everyone prepared to return home.



Thankfully, all attendees arrived home safely, and the camp was followed by positive feedback from various parishes, indicating the significant impact of the event.



Tabacakacaka Veiwekani Ceva



Tabacakacaka Jesireli



Tabacakacaka Ko Viti e Okaladi kei na Tabacakacaka o Okaladi e Loma



Tabacakacaka Waikato, Waiariki kei Tarawhiti





The Lifewise Big Sleepout is back!

CHA CLARINO

After a hiatus of five years initially due to COVID-19, we are thrilled to announce that the Big Sleepout (BSO) is back this 10 July 2025. Launched in New Zealand by Lifewise in 2010, the event has been a powerful force for raising awareness and funds to tackle homelessness in New Zealand.

The aim of the Big Sleepout is simple: to bring the issue of homelessness and those suffering from trauma, mental health issues, and poverty into the

hearts and minds of the wider public.

Leaders and influencers from the business and community sectors in Auckland are invited to spend one night sleeping rough to gain a first-hand understanding of homelessness. Their commitment is supported by encouraging donations to Lifewise using their respective network of family, friends, colleagues, and the public. This immersive experience not only humanises the issue but also helps to inspire the donations and engagement needed to make real change happen.

Where will the funds raised in the BSO go to?

Funds raised will go directly to Lifewise Merge Café and Community. Merge Café is more than just a cafe serving meals – it's a place where people nurture connections, reach out to get support, and a space where everyone is welcome. Merge Café acts as a crucial first point of contact for street whānau during crises, offering not only hot meals but also a warm, engaging korero with friendly staff, peer support workers and volunteers. An integrated support system is also in place to connect individuals with Lifewise's expanded social services, empowering them to thrive.

And what can you do today?

You can donate to the Big Sleepout via our [website](#) which will go live on 20 May 2025. For more information, [contact](#) or phone Karen Coleman on 021 241 1839.

5 things I love about Wesley College		
What Staff said:	Whaanau:	Students:
Students	Cultural Diversity	Opportunities
Colleagues	Staff	Staff
Food	Food	Food
Family	Family	Family
Special Character	Special Character	Special Character

Principals Report to Wesley College Trust Board, May 1, 2025

Jan Tasker

Our Principal of Wesley College, Dr Brian Evans, is sharing his report to the Trust Board with all members of the Methodist Church as an update of things happening in the school.

As term 2 begins, it is rewarding to reflect on the wonderful tone around our school, the hard work, and growth we've experienced as a school community.

Hostel License

The hostel has been granted a 3-year license, however it is crucial to note there are still 5 ongoing Special Conditions set by the Ministry of Education to be met.

Positive feedback

At the start of the school year we asked our whaanau, staff and students the question; What are the 5 things you love about Wesley College? Here are the collated responses, in no particular order. It seems like the school has a strong sense of community and a lot of positive qualities. The fact that we enjoy coming together for kai, our special character, staff, and family are top favourites, shows how much the school values a nurturing environment, both academically and personally.



Academic Achievement - NCEA 2024

Academic Year	Wesley College				National				More Socioeconomic Barriers (School Equity Index Group)			
	Year 11 NCEA L1	Year 12 NCEA L2	Year 13 NCEA L3	Year 13 UE	Year 11 NCEA L1	Year 12 NCEA L2	Year 13 NCEA L3	Year 13 UE	Year 11 NCEA L1	Year 12 NCEA L2	Year 13 NCEA L3	Year 13 UE
2020	68.9	81.7	90.4	57.7	71.8	80.1	72.1	53.4	62.1	71.9	63.8	28.4
2021	69.9	66.2	70.7	31.0	69.2	77.9	70.5	51.9	57.4	67.5	60.9	25.7
2022	77.0	73.3	64.4	23.7	64.9	74.9	68.2	50.3	53.7	64.0	56.9	23.5
2023	78.3	72.1	70.5	26.2	61.7	73.2	67.7	49.7	51.0	62.4	57.1	23.1
2024	76.3	79.4	82.0	41.0	45.9	73.6	69.4	50.6	41.1	62.6	60.2	25.6

Some 'gold nuggets':

- **Māori Students:** Wesley College Māori students are 41% above National Average for Māori at Level 1, 18% and 24% above at L2 and L3 respectively.
- **Pasifika Students:** 40% above National Average for Pasifika students, 10% above at L2, 16% at L3.
- **Male Students:** 28% above National Average for males at L1, 4% and 18% at L2 and L3.
- **Female Students:** 44% above at National Average for girls at Level 1, 13% and 5% above at L2 and L3.

These results are excellent, and achievement is tracking upwards each year after the struggles of the Covid period and a fair bit of other trauma.

Safeguarding

Our Safeguarding programme continues to grow and is becoming embedded in our school culture.

One very noticeable aspect is the changing from a hierarchical, power-based student leadership role to a more collaborative, inclusive style in our school setting. This can be a powerful transformation for teenage school leaders. It encourages teamwork, respect, and shared decision-making, which can create a more positive and supportive environment for both leaders and their peers. By making these changes, our student leaders are moving away from traditional power dynamics and towards a more effective style of leadership that benefits everyone involved.

Polyfest

A great event to mark 50 years of Polyfest Our Kapa Haka group won their division for the first time, and our Tongan group won the Ma'ulu'ulu section, also for the first time, fantastic results.



The Kapa Haka group also did an end of term performance to raucous support from the school. For further information please check in with our [website](#).



Rekindle the Va of Papatuanuku Grant fund

Marion Hines

The opportunity to apply for funding to support climate related initiatives was distributed to the Connexion in March this year. An article by Mark Gibson appeared in Touchstone in April. This initiative aims

to support parishes, rohe and Methodist communities in taking meaningful action for climate justice.

About the Fund

"Rekindle the Vā of Papatūānuku" calls us to restore and nurture our sacred connection with the land, waters, and all living beings. This fund will support projects that embody this spirit through ecological restoration, sustainability initiatives, and theological reflection on our role as kaitiaki of creation.

Who Can Apply?

All Methodist parishes, rohe, synods, and church entities in Aotearoa are eligible to apply for funding to support projects that align with the Climate Justice Decade and contribute to environmental care and renewal.

What Kind of Projects Will Be Supported?

The fund welcomes a variety of initiatives, including:

- Sustainable Church Practices – Zero waste systems, energy efficiency improvements, and carbon footprint reduction.
- Ecological Restoration – Tree planting, wetland restoration, native plant regeneration, and community gardens.
- Theological Education & Advocacy – Climate justice workshops, liturgical resource development, and intergenerational education programs.
- Community-Based Initiatives – Local sustainability projects, partnerships with environmental groups, recycling, and composting programs.
- Creative Expressions – Murals, music, storytelling, and other artistic projects that inspire environmental stewardship.
- Sustainable Transport Solutions – Carpooling initiatives, cycling promotion, and EV charging stations for church communities.

Application Process

- Deadline: **4 July 2025** (Late applications will not be considered).
- Maximum Grant per Project: \$15,000.
- Submission: Email applications to [Lucille](#).
- Review & Reporting: Applications will be assessed by the Climate Justice Working Group. Successful applicants must submit a short progress report within six months.

[Click here for application.](#)

Climate-induced Displacement Policy

A major focus for our work this year will be to finalise a policy around climate-induced migrants. This work is being led by [Dr Elisapesi Havea](#).

The idea of developing the climate-induced migrant policy emerged from the 2021 Conference workshop facilitated by the Climate Justice Working Group (CJWG). In these group discussions, four main action plans were proposed by the CJWG based on feedback from Conference members, and developing a policy on climate-induced displacement and migration was one of them.

Feedback on the draft policy will be sought from all Synods and Rohe before a final draft is submitted for Conference approval in 2025.



CJWG membership for 2025

Mark Gibson, Iriana Rountree, Gillian Laird. Joeli Ducivaki, Elisapesi Havea, George Zachariah, Peter Lane, Alilia Molitika, Siniva Isaia, Siutaisa Tukutau and Marion Hines.

Enquiries: [Email](#) or Ph 021 053 2053



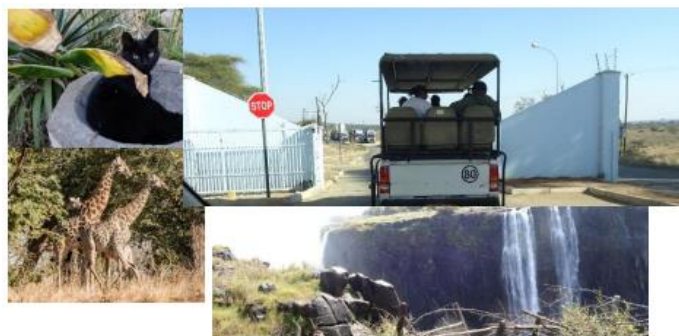
The Generations Who Stole the Sun

Norbert Nziramasanga Wellington Parish

Where does the sun go when it sets? The answer is 'it doesn't go anywhere; it stays where it is.' It's us moving around the Sun. Each and all having an opportunity to bask in the light and warmth in turn, sharing days and seasons.

To nature equity is not about being the same. Equity is about each having a fighting chance given ability and availability of resources. One can say the Sun gives us culture. It allows some to grow accustomed to long, dark winters, while others thrive in hot, sunny days year-round. I am glad there are some things that happen without needing approval from a committee, convention, or treaty. One can only imagine what it would have been, otherwise, given our success with governance and individual choices. Nature offers each of us a chance to share the energy that we need for life.

So, what is energy? I ask my high school students this question and the answer is often fossil fuels, wind power, hydro power, or electricity. To nature, energy is about finding stability in a changing pattern. Rain, wind, and tides are all ways in which energy is shifted as our planet journeys around the Sun. A wobbly path around the Sun and a life measured in aeons (million years) is not something that we are aware of or equipped to discern. Long slow changes allow all life to adapt. Trees have leaves or needles, and giraffes have long necks because nature gradually shaped them that way as a means to balance natural energy.



To us energy is about change. Hence, we talk of energy as the ability to change or the fuels that allow us to make those changes. Our lives are now shaped by boundaries, rules, norms, and values based on knowledge and experiences of life and how we innovate. Without boundaries, norms, and values it would be challenging to maintain social Health and Security which are the main objectives of successful life. On the other hand, we seem not to like staying the same. We seem to change for the sake of being different without considering the effects on our Health and Security. However, we are able to adapt quicker through modern technology solutions. Families are more connected, and many aspects of life are more accessible to all because we like to innovate.



It takes energy to cause or make change. Technology is a competitor for the planet's energy resources. The changes we make through resource extraction and the production of goods and services alter how natural energy is distributed among the various natural life processes. Incoming solar energy is surprisingly low when seen as an average. It is on about 300 [watts](#) per square meter (less than 1/6 what an electric kettle uses). This is what Earth needs to power all life and life supporting systems. If it sounds a lot, consider how long it takes to grow a tree, most occupy several square meters, draw water and air from wide catchment, and coexist with countless other life forms beneath their canopies. One can also imagine the territory a small animal needs to survive. Different life forms use only a portion of the available energy and that makes them more sensitive to change.

The distribution of solar energy is high along the equator and lower towards the polar regions. The climate system helps spread some of this energy. This means we all depend on each other, and equality is not defined by having the same energy but allowing each other a fighting chance. In using modern energy, we reshape our space and, often unknowingly, affect the lives and environments of others far away. We are continually finding it harder to take others into account when we consume commercial goods or services. The key measure of monetary cost often overlooks natural capital in places far removed from us. We tend to assume that nature provides its resources for free.

Surprisingly, our attempts at fixing environmental problems are centred around technology. This invariably places an added burden on nature, unless it is aligned with consumption patterns that prioritises long-term health and multi-generational security. That is, we plan to share resources with future generations at a cost they can afford. Technology absorbs energy to exist and absorbs energy to function. In general, technology alters how resources are distributed, and this redistribution is often used to justify the human and manufactured capital required for development. The challenge to society is not to alter the balance of carbon or other waste, but to achieve equity in a healthy and secure environment. Carbon is an energy carrier that plays a role in both renewal and waste.

However, we don't need to understand the science behind it, and buying a coffee or building shelter does not require detailed calculations determine carbon emissions. The energy balance relies on our commitment to prioritizing Health and Security as central goals. Each of us depends on all of us because nature made us Equal but Not The Same. We all know when we are healthy and secure, and we are aware of what makes us feel that way. That should be our focus, each in our own way. When we consume a lot, we seldom feel well. Many live remarkably busy lives in the interest of making ends meet. That means energy consumption is high, and benefits are contradictory to a healthy and secure life. It appears the modern goal is about living on the edge where health and security are expensive 'commodities.' We need to discuss energy efficiency in its true sense, as the ability to change, rather than simply as the capacity to make change. Efficiency, in this context, is about optimizing how we create and use that change

Being content is synonymous with low energy demand. Helping others feel healthy and secure in their own way is a way to secure ourselves. Energy demand is lower when we are more content. We empathise with others, and positive experiences shared by them tend to make us feel uplifted. Each is like an oasis, having learnt from our experiences yesterday or last decade in our little space here. That is why a smile a casual greeting or a stop and chat to a stranger renews the spirit. Shared space and time are important, so we should strive to maintain a sense that this space continues even after we are no-longer there. We do not want to be **The Generation that stole the Sun.**



Minister for Housing to do the honours at sod-turning ceremony for \$7.8m social housing building project at Wesley Rātā Village

Ruth Nichol

A sod-turning ceremony on May 23 will mark another step forward in the transformation of Wesley Community Action's former aged-care facility in Naenae into a vibrant, intergenerational community.

Chris Bishop, the Minister of Housing, is scheduled to do the honours at the sod-turning ceremony for Pohutukawa Apartments, a \$7.8m building project that will see a 50-bed rest home at Wesley Rātā Village (previously Wesley haven) converted into 16 affordable rental apartments.

Work on Pohutukawa Apartments, which will be located in the former Strand building, is expected to start in July. Once the 16 apartments are completed, they will be rented at a discounted rate to people who do not qualify for social housing but who cannot afford market rents. As well as Pohutukawa Apartments, work is now almost finished on a \$4.8m building project to turn the former hospital wing into 15 small apartments. They will be known as Kowhai Court and will be made available to people on the social housing waiting list, with a particular focus on older people.

The 31 new apartments will take the total number of affordable rental homes at the village to 86. They include 30 independent-living villas that had been on the site for many years, as well as 25 new social houses that were completed in 2021. Wesley Community Action provided aged residential care on the beautiful, 60-hectare site for more than 60 years before making the difficult decision to stop providing the service in 2017. However, as difficult as that decision was it also marked the start of a new chapter that has seen Wesley haven reborn as Wesley Rātā Village. This rebirth followed conversations with the local community about how to develop the site into a community asset while respecting its historical association with older people. Working together they came up with a vision to create a place that weaves community and enhances wellbeing.

Almost eight years later that vision is well on the way to being achieved. As well as providing warm, dry, affordable rental homes for around 70 mostly older people (that number will increase to more than 100 once the apartments are built) the village has also become a hub for a range of community activities, all of which help create a sense of connection and belonging for residents. They include programmes for older people as well as activities for parents, babies and children. There's also a community food garden and a recently established community composting scheme. Wesley Community Action director David Hanna says it's very satisfying to see the transformation taking place at the village. "In 2017 we took a leap of faith and decided to shift our focus from institutional care to helping create a village of people wanting to live in their own place surrounded by opportunities to engage, contribute, and retreat. It's very exciting to see that now happening."





Geoff and Delphine Ryan

Jay Venables

Here at St Paul's Methodist Church, Remuera, we have two much loved and treasured people who are celebrating their 75th wedding anniversary on 27 May. That is certainly a milestone not many people reach, but the secret is that you marry in your early twenties, then live a long, loving and happy life!

Geoff was born in September 1927 when his father Rev Harry Ryan was the St Paul's parish minister. So, Geoff was baptised in the church where he still regularly attends worship. Geoff's and Delphine's presence at St Paul's centenary celebration in November 2022 was very significant, making that contact with the earliest days. Delphine's family (Penney) were farming people originally from Kaitia.

Delphine was born in the Mangonui hospital in 1929. She and Geoff met at Waiheke in 1949 and married in 1950 at the Mt Albert Methodist Church, the service being conducted by Geoff's father. Upon

leaving school, Geoff was apprenticed to the manufacturing jewellery trade for six years. After marrying, they worked together to start a small manufacturing jewellery business, with great success. They had two sons, Brett and Chris. Both Geoff and Delphine were involved with Sunday School and Bible Class at Mt Albert and Mt Eden Methodist churches.

In the early 1970s Geoff sold the business and the family started an adventurous time in USA. Geoff's job involved much travelling which created opportunities for extensive exploration, though a favourite area was Maryland. Further business opportunities took Geoff and Delphine to be based in Hong Kong, a totally different environment, but one they greatly enjoyed.

In the mid-1980s, Geoff and Delphine returned to New Zealand to settle in their Remuera home and established their church membership at St Paul's. Delphine is a very gifted floral artist, and her handiwork was always much admired. Geoff's business acumen has been appreciated in decision making over the years.

We all join in wishing them God's richest blessings on their special anniversary.