

Vahefonua Tonga Education & Training Expo 2009

Ne lava lelei 'a e Fakatahataha, ngaahi Pisisimi mo e ngaahi kulupe kehekehe 'e 50, tupu na 'a nau lava na 'a e fakahoko he 'api siasi Lotofoale 'a 'i Mangere he Falaitite mo e Tokonaki 'aho 30 mo e 31 'o Sanuali 2009. Ko e fuofua taimi 'eni ke 'aho ua ai 'a e Fakatahataha ni ka na'e taki 'aho taha pe he 2007 mo e 2008. Na'e toe makehe 'a e ta'u ni he na'e toe fakatele ai mo e ngaahi workshop pe Ha'ofanga kehekehe.

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'Oku atu fakamalo lahi ki he ngaahi Kautaha

Top: Methodist vice president Ron Gibson opened Vahefonua Tonga's jobs expo on Friday, January 30th.



Pacific Affairs Minister Georgina Te Heuheu (second from left) was the guest of honour on the second day of the Expo.

mo e Ngaahi Ako'anga, ngaahi Pisisimi mo e ngaahi kulupe kehekehe 'e 50, tupu na 'a nau lava na 'a e fakahoko he 'api siasi Lotofoale 'a 'i Mangere he Falaitite mo e Tokonaki 'aho 30 mo e 31 'o Sanuali 2009. Ko e fuofua taimi 'eni ke 'aho ua ai 'a e Fakatahataha ni ka na'e taki 'aho taha pe he 2007 mo e 2008. Na'e toe makehe 'a e ta'u ni he na'e toe fakatele ai mo e ngaahi workshop pe Ha'ofanga kehekehe.

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Fakataha Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa

Na'e 'ave 'a e pepa ni 'o paaki 'oku te'eki fai 'a e fakataha 'a e Vahefonua Tonga meihe 'aho Falaitite 20 ki he Sapate 'aho 22 'o Fepuati.

'I he polokalama ni e fakahoko 'a e ouau fakanofo 'o e Faifekausa Rev Setaita Kinahoi Veikune he Falaitite pea pehe ki hono tupaaki 'o e Sekelitali, Tevita Finau mo e Sekelitali Pa'anga, Paula Taumoepeau. Ko e Palesitenti Rev Jill van de Geer na'e malanga. 'I he Sapate, ko Rev T. Kilifi heimuli na'e malanga.

'E toki 'oatu 'a e ngaahi taa mo e ngaahi ongoongo ki he Fakataha 'i he Pukolea 'o Epeleli. 'Oku 'oatu 'a e fakamalo meihe Faifekausa ki he kau faifekaupule 'o e ngaahi vahenga-ngaue Aokalani Manukau, Saione (Papatoe) mo Tokaina'ananga (Otiara) 'i he ngaahi 'ofa, taitali mo e lotu makehe na 'a mou fakahoko ma'ae Fakataha mahu'inga ni.

'Oku 'oatu mo e fakamalo makehe ki he Faifekau 'o Lotofoale ia, Rev Aisea Matangi, kae 'uma'aa 'a e lay-Pastor Moi Kaufononga mo e kaingalotu he ngaahi mohenga maafana, Lelei mo faka'ofa na 'a mou teuteu 'o fokoutua ai 'a e kau fakatofanga meihe ngaahi vaha kehe.

Geraldine CV calls it quits

From Page 2

Regarding the second point, Geraldine minister Rev Ian Hyslop says the congregation is very mission focused. It has active community, youth and children's activities and is involved in overseas mission. It saw the requirement to answer to three regional courts and three national bodies as a drain on resources.

In its report the commission countered each of these points. For example, it pointed out that there are conservative and liberal congregations in both the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, and that both partner churches seek to respect all views.

The commission also wrote that the partner churches and Uniting Congregations Aotearoa New Zealand (UCANZ), which oversees Cooperative Ventures, are moving to simplify administrative obligations and relax limits on terms of appointments.

The commission's report also addressed the financial implications of dissolution. Lyndsay says dissolution was complicated because, when the Geraldine Cooperative Venture was established, valuations of the assets contributed were not kept.

The property trustees of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches had the challenging task to determine the current ratio of ownership. By reviewing past and present government valuations, it was agreed that property ratio was 16 percent Methodist and 84 percent Presbyterian. This meant that to dissolve the CV, the parish was required to pay the Methodist Church \$142,400.

When the commission's report was put to the full parish, it indicated by a very large margin it wished to proceed with the dissolution. Ian says the Geraldine church will now call itself St Andrew's Community Church to emphasise its mission focus.

TOUCHSTONE

E whaita ana te putaketanga o nga whakapono mo tenei ao hurihuri
EXPLORING FAITH ISSUES FOR TODAY



IN FOR THE LONG HAUL

Australian churches support bushfire victims

By Paul Titus
In the aftermath of the devastating bushfires in Victoria, Uniting Church of Australia relief efforts have sought to support those affected but not overwhelm them with attention.

Uniting Church leaders also rejected outright the statements some religious figures made that the devastation caused by the bushfires was the action of a vengeful God.

The week after the bushfires destroyed towns and scorched the lives of thousands of Australians, moderator of the Uniting Church's Victoria-Tasmania Synod Rev Jason Klob toured some of the towns in the Kinglake district. He says the point was to provide visible support for the victims of the blaze but to give them the space they need to come to terms with their loss.

"The people organising the support effort said it was better to coordinate than suffocate. They were actually asking people to stop donating emergency food because there was no place to store it."

"The Uniting Church did provide some initial relief and we also provided some campgrounds and buildings for housing those who lost their homes. Organisations such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army are better equipped than we are to provide immediate aid."

"The Uniting Church will wait and focus its efforts on people's long-term needs. Once the bushfires and media hype are gone, people will be still be suffering and they will need to rebuild their lives."

Jason says many Uniting Church members lost houses, property or livestock in the fires, one church elder was killed, and the Uniting Church building at Baynton was "burned down". However, the Church made no

distinction between members and non-members in its support for those affected.

"The atmosphere was very open when we visited Kinglake," Jason says. "People were open and talked to one another. We pitched in and helped unload a truck of goods donated by the Turkish community."

Appeals, some of them backed by celebrities, raised tens of millions of dollars for the victims. Jason says how that money is used will become an issue.

Through its Uniting Care facilities the Church can provide counselling, community development and other forms of support.

Special services were held in the weeks following the fires. Uniting Church leaders were invited to take part in a massive interdenominational service of mourning at the Rod Layer Centre in Melbourne on February 22nd. Jason echoed Uniting Church

president Rev Gregor Henderson's unqualified rejection of the statements made by controversial leader of the Catch the Fire Ministries Danny Nallich. Danny said the fires were divine retribution for abortion law reforms Victoria passed last year. God had removed his protection from "the baby-killing state" and Satan was having a go at it, he claimed.

In a public statement Gregor said to "suggest that the loss of life from these bushfires is the reaction of God towards the Victorian people for decisions made by Government is not only ludicrous, it misrepresents the nature of God, the giver of life."

"God is not punishing the people of Victoria, so many of whom lost their lives, and so many more who are working day and night to fight fires, support the victims, and provide food, clothing and shelter. God is, in fact, there with the people, in the middle of their suffering." God is made

known through the love that is extended to those most in need."

Jason says when Christians put forward arguments such as Danny's it turns people away from the Church at the very time they are seeking help and support.

"Why would people turn to a god who shows his wrath in that way," he asks.

For more information about the bushfires or to contribute to the relief fund visit: www.victras.uca.org.au.

The Uniting Church in Baynton was destroyed by bushfires. Photos by Kim Goh.

Church investment funds in good heart despite downturn

Greg points out that in September the Official Cash Rate (OCR) was 8.0 percent. Now it is 3.5 percent, and there is talk it will drop to 2.5 percent. Bank deposit rates have followed the cash rate down. This affects both the individuals who belong to the Church and the Church's own investments.

"From the MTA's perspective, back in August we could see a correction was coming so we locked in our Income Funds investments for two to three years at higher interest rates. While the distribution rates from the Income Fund will track down a bit, this year we expect them to be 1.5 times higher than the OCR. The OCR is currently at 3.5 percent and we expect the

June 2008 it gave an average annual return of more than 16 percent. This compares to an average annual return of 10 percent, which was the benchmark for large investment funds such as superannuation schemes.

"Fortunately the Growth and Income Fund is well diversified and has virtually no exposure to the Collateralized Debt Obligations (CDOs) and mortgage-backed funds that are now returning 50 cents on the dollar.

"Nevertheless, we are looking at a loss of 6 to 7 percent for Growth and Income this year. We will not know the exact degree of loss for the year until June. The means anyone who wants to withdraw funds

before June is subject to a 10 percent withholding until the final evaluation is done."

The drop in the Growth and Income Funds puts it back to the point that it was two years ago. Though it is a significant dip, Greg says the world's stock exchanges are now looking at reductions of 20 to 40 percent.

"Over the long term we expect returns to Growth and Income to be positive. The Church cannot gain the benefits that are available from the commercial world without suffering the reversals that sometimes occur. In a context where many investors have seen their capital completely lost or seriously depleted, the Church's funds are in very good heart."

New governing board charts Trinity College future

A responsive, flexible and sustainable learning environment that prepares 200 to 300 people a year for lay, deaconate and presbyterial ministry in the Methodist Church. This is the vision Trinity Methodist Theological College has for itself and it aims to achieve it by 2011.

At Conference 2008 the Methodist Church reconstituted the Trinity College Council to be the board of oversight for Trinity College. Building on work that had taken place before Conference, and prior developments, the Council has drafted a strategic plan that lays out the direction the College will take over the next two years.

A key element in the strategic plan is to develop contemporary theological and ministry training programmes that can be taught at a number of locations around Aotearoa/New Zealand. This includes programmes designed to meet the needs of Maori and Pacific people in this country. The strategic plan's other goals are to partner with various theological training providers as well as synods and parishes to deliver those programmes, and to provide fair financial support to those enrolled in the programmes. Trinity College Council chair Catherine Gibson says the strategic plan aims to create a nation-wide

Methodist "learning environment" rather than narrowing the emphasis to training at Auckland campuses.

"The training can take place anywhere. Trinity College will negotiate partnerships with local parishes and other trainers around the country. "We are using the image of a learning environment to get away from the idea that Trinity College is 'that place in Auckland that trains 10 presbyters a year'. Though distance learning will be an important part of the programme, you cannot do everything at distance. It is very important to retain face-to-face work and that is why partnerships with parishes will be an important part of Trinity College's efforts."

Among the programmes Trinity College will continue to promote and develop are Lead Worship courses for lay leaders, and courses taught through the Ecumenical Institute of Distance Theological Studies (EIDTS). The College will also look at strengthening partnerships with the University of Auckland's School of Theology and the Anglican Church's St John's Theological College. "Trinity College has a commitment to working with others where possible and feasible and to fulfilling its ecumenical commitments."

Although Trinity College's Meadowbank campus will continue to be its base, the notion of a learning environment means it will offer courses at parishes and other sites around the country.

"We must also ensure the College has a good capital base and that we have financial systems for students that are fair to all. Re-establishing the Trinity College Council is a good opportunity to look at how cost-effective financial systems are and whether they are meeting the needs of students," Catherine says.

Trinity College principal, Rev Dr David Bell is now consulting with other Pacific leaders in the Church to get an idea of how the College can best meet the needs of their communities. Catherine says the college appointed Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta to its teaching staff last year, and he has brought a depth of knowledge about Pacific peoples' perspectives on theology and ministry. When Trinity College's Ministry Training Unit closed last year, the diploma programme in Practical Theology it delivered was suspended. This year the college has reinstated the diploma and attaining it will be part of the ministry training of all new Methodist presbyters.

Currently Trinity College's strategic plan for 2009-2011 has the status of a working paper. All groups within the Methodist Church will have a chance to comment on it over the next two months before it is finalised.

Visit to Methodism's NZ birthplace chance to explore Treaty



Accompanied by members of Te Taha Maori, Trinity College students and staff visited Manguku Mission Station (left) and Waitangi. On Waitangi Day Te Taha Maori tumuaki Rev Diana Tana led prayers during the ecumenical service (right).



Hokianga that operated from 1828 to 1855. It was at this site that many Hokianga chiefs gathered to sign the Treaty, more than at Waitangi.

David says Trinity College staff and students were privileged to be part of a four day event and to share Diana and Lana's personal stories and insights. Nicola noted, "We came away feeling that we had shared in a very special experience. For many of the Trinity College community this was the first time we had shared in a special celebration." Nasili says Waitangi Day is not just a holiday for New Zealanders in 2010.

They continued on through Kaikohe onto Horeke Road arriving at Manguku. After spending time at Manguku they travelled back through Horeke Road to Taheke where they viewed the site that used to be the deaconess cottage. From Taheke they moved on to visit the Waima Oak then carried on through Omanaia, Rawene, Whirinaki, Pakanui and ending at Opononi.

"On our way home to Paiaha we made a brief stop in Kaikohe to debrief about our experiences, impressions and theological understandings. On Sunday 8th February we shared in worship at Paiaha and Russell." Nicola says.

This was not the first time Trinity College had attended the Waitangi celebrations but it was the first time students and staff have gone further than Waitangi to the important Methodist sites in the Hokianga. A highlight was the visit to Manguku, a Wesleyan mission station and settlement in the eastern

part of the Treaty and help them understand our history from the perspective of Te Taha Maori.

The group attended the Waitangi celebrations on February 6th. The following day they left Paiaha and passed through Kawakawa and Moeewa on the way to Pakaraka Church, a historical Anglican

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where the Spirit is aflame

Are you interested in leading worship? Are you a lay preacher looking for new ideas?

Trinity College is offering you the opportunity to join with students of the college for a Lead Worship Year One programme. This is the first time we have been able to offer this programme in the Trinity College programme in the Auckland area with a Trinity College tutor.

The programme is a 13 week programme, to be held at Pitt Street Methodist Church and being led by Rev Dr Lynne Frith. The first session begins on 2nd March 2009.

COST: \$5.00 per week

TO REGISTER: Contact Marissa Alix

Phone: 09 521 2073 or email: malix@stjohns.auckland.ac.nz

Semester 1 - 2009 Background reading topic

2-March	Intro to the Lead Worship Year 1
9-March	Profile of a worship leader
16-March	The spirituality of the worship leader
23-March	Prayers in worship
30-March	Music in worship
6-April	Inter-semester break
13-April	Inter-semester break
20-April	Children in worship
27-April	Resources of the church year in worship
4-May	Images of God used in worship
11-May	Adults who worship
18-May	Using multi-media creatively in worship
25-May	Theology in worship
1-June	Queens Birthday
8-June	Worship as practical pastoral
15-June	Review

It's not all about us

To the editor,
I was encouraged this week to see several articles in the February edition of Touchstone relating to the environment, focusing particularly on Walk for the Planet.
The global ecological crisis is indeed one of the defining issues of our time, and the church must engage in it. Jim Stuart is right that "the realities [of the global ecological crisis] should challenge Christians to re-examine the key operative theological assumptions about God and our Christian practice that continue to permit the destruction of the earth."
Jim rightly points out that we need a broader understanding of the interdependence between the present generation, the earth and future generations. Though the worldview he describes may be more enlightened than one focusing on the salvation of individual souls, it still leaves humans at the centre.
Through the current ecological crisis, God is calling us to a deeper re-examination of the scriptures. The Bible shows that the earth belongs to God and was created to glorify God. It is not ours, and was not made primarily for our benefit. Ecologists say it

would be possible for us to engineer a world with many fewer species yet still able to sustain a sizeable human population.
In other words, if kakapo, kiwi, snow leopard or golden-rumped elephant shrew went extinct we could still survive. But how then would "the Lord rejoice in His works" (Psalm 104:31)?
The environmental movement struggles to articulate a worldview that values species apart from their use to humans yet, without this worldview, ecosystems will continue to be degraded. Because we recognise a Creator who loves his creation, Christians are in a unique position to offer a coherent environmental ethic that gives value to all creatures.
To do this, we need to remember we live among a myriad of creatures that were all declared good by their Creator (Gen 1), and recapture a vision of God's kingdom that includes a restoration of all that God made (Col 1:20). Only then will we realise the goal Jim Stuart describes, and become the agents of reconciliation that God has called us to be.
Richard Storey, Chair, A Rocha Aotearoa NZ

our house. A near neighbour has taken up the idea and she puts out a box when she too has extra vegetables.
Last autumn a lady along the street presented us with a jar of feijoa jam, which she had made with our fruit, saying she was going to do what we were doing. A month ago there was a note in our letter box accompanying six eggs from another neighbour.
There are now more smiles in our street, a tiny help in these straightening times. These days produce more opportunities for strengthening communities don't they?
Vera Dickinson, Motueka

Garden variety community building

To the editor,
Kate Kennedy's account of her enterprising actions in helping to create community in her street was warming to read. That I live in Motueka as well is purely coincidental to my message!
My husband and I are now well into our 80s, and I no longer do all the bottling and preserving needed for a larger family. However, our vegetable garden and fruit trees still produce more than we need.
So we have placed a cardboard box at the front gate with a sign on it FREE, HELP YOURSELF. In it we put our extra fruit and vegetables and bags to put them in. The result has been smiles and waves as people pass

working overtime to feed the desperate hungry of the world.
The young reporter scribbled away in shorthand and Monday morning's newspaper had a headline: 'Minister of Church hammers minister of Crown'. It was spread around the country by the Press Association and shook Parliament too.
I expressed my excitement at work on Monday morning but was told Les was just an ex-jailbird. I was very confused until I realised why.
Yes the Clements family were and are truly wonderful people.
John Miller, Christchurch

Challenging family

To the editor,
In the December issue of Touchstone, you refer to Kevin Clements becoming the chair of Peace Studies at Otago University. I will never forget his father Les Clements preaching at Central Methodist Church, Invercargill.
My late father Fred Miller MBE was New Zealand's longest serving journalist and he had brought a cub reporter to church that Sunday. In his service, Les quoted a minister of the Crown who claimed that New Zealand's consumption figures were evidence of the goodness and prosperity of the country.
Les delivered a powerful challenge to that, claiming the real goodness in New Zealand should be seen in our primary industries

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TOUCHSTONE

TOUCHSTONE

WE TOLD YOU SO!
Financial crisis stirs visions of a better global economy

By John Roberts
Secretary
Mission and Ecumenical
DAVOS – the luxury Swiss resort town that hosts the annual World Economic Forum (WEF) attended by heads of state, the world's bankers, and others sympathetic to its cause of upholding global capitalism. The WEF is an invitation-only event, and stringent measures are taken to keep the unwanted out. The 2009 event took place 28 January to 1 February with the theme Shaping the Post-Crisis World. Some 2,500 people attended. WEF founder Klaus Schwab wanted an affable event where the world's leading company executives could mingle with and lobby presidents and prime ministers.
This year the atmosphere at Davos was rather different. The much promoted Davos consensus failed. The world's leading bankers, widely held responsible for the financial crisis, mostly stayed away. Some world leaders also stayed away, including US president Barack Obama and his top officials. Entertainment celebrities such as Bono were left off the invitation list. Financial news service Bloomberg said the Davos gathering was marked by fear, anger and bitterness. Evidently little was achieved. Arif Naqvi, chief executive of Dubai-based investment company Abraaj Capital said, "People are looking for the solution but don't yet have the question formulated."
New Zealand had a presence around the edges of Davos. Trade Minister Tim Groser was there with trade ministers from around the world, lobbying for a completion of the World Trade Organisation's Doha Round of free trade negotiations. In the face of the world's economic crisis they fear many countries

will return to protecting their industrial and agricultural sectors. They may have generated a lot of words, but there was little action in response. The Doha round looks increasingly doomed to failure.
"It's a question of the market," Rogate said. "The market is a gift from God because people cannot live without a market. But that relationship must be just. It should not be dogmatised in such a way that it is left free to go without any rules. From a Christian perspective there is no system that is so sacred that it cannot be changed. It must not be left to the G20 group (made up of leading economies from the developed and developing world), because they are talking about how to stabilise the current system and not the need for a new economic architecture."
Key proposals to emerge from Belem included mechanisms to control international capital flows, an international monetary system based on regional reserve currencies, citizens' control of banks and financial institutions, progressive taxation schemes both at national and international levels, prohibition of speculative funds and non-regulated markets, eradication of speculation on primary products including food, and elimination of tax havens.
It was proposed that a reformed and democratised United Nations put reform of the financial system at the centre of its work. Belem also recognised that the crisis is not just financial. There are multiple crises affecting the environment, social and political structures, food and energy supplies. Rogate believes that in pressing for reforms at different levels, civil society organisations and churches around the world have a lot to contribute.

Head of the Methodist Church's Fijian Advisory Committee (Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi) Rev Peni Tikoinaka went to Fiji last month to be on hand when a shipment of relief supplies arrived in Suva.
The supplies consisted of clothing donated by the Hornby/Riccarton Methodist Parish and books donated by Riccarton High School. They were destined for Peni's own village of Nasautoka, outside of Suva.
Although the worst of the severe flooding took place in the western part of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu, eastern areas were also hit.
Peni says Nasautoka is near a river and though he has seen it rise many times he has never seen it reach the heights it reached in January. Two girls from the village were killed in a mudslide during the torrential rains.
"People gardens have been destroyed so their first priority will be to replant them," Peni says. "We are very grateful to the people of Hornby/Riccarton parish and Riccarton for the generosity," Peni says.
Fijian Methodists in other parts of the country also gathered money and supplies for people displaced by the flooding.
Mission and Ecumenical secretary Rev John Roberts says two containers loads of non-perishable food, clothing and school supplies were sent from Auckland with Mission and Ecumenical paying the freight costs.

to participate in several induction services in different parts of the country. However, at every point in the experience, I have been vividly reminded of the demographic transformation which characterizes contemporary New Zealand.
One of the most dramatic changes that has taken place in recent times in New Zealand is the influx of new migrants from the central Pacific – Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Niue, Rotuma, and Vanuatu in particular. In addition, and even more recently, there has been an influx of peoples from South East Asia – Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Thailand, Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong to name but a few. Others have come from Zimbabwe or South Africa or Sri Lanka as refugees from violence and political persecution.
While some have come as political refugees, others have come out of economic despair, some have come in the hope that New Zealand will provide better opportunities for their children, better health care, and new hope for a better future.
But as with all migrants, they bring with them their culture, and behaviour. Yet our new citizens remind us that there is a multiplicity of world views and a multiplicity of spiritual journeys to be followed. In a Church which is more multi-cultural and diverse than at any other time in its history in Aotearoa, we are becoming more interdependent than ever before. In a sense we are travelling towards the vision of the prophets and psalmists of ancient Israel and subsequently the early Christian vision of a time when people of all languages and nations would be gathered together into a united family. Embracing new theologies, new cultural norms and a global perspective enables us to become world citizens who live for the well-being of all humanity.
This Church is charged with making that vision happen. An inclusive Church welcomes all regardless of ethnicity, language or cultural norms. It does not seek to make us all alike – either to think alike, or behave alike, or worship alike. But at the end of the day we all stand together in acknowledging the centrality of Jesus Christ and in sharing the compassion and limitless love which is there for all of us.
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NZ Fijians send relief to flood-affected towns

Head of the Methodist Church's Fijian Advisory Committee (Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi) Rev Peni Tikoinaka went to Fiji last month to be on hand when a shipment of relief supplies arrived in Suva.
The supplies consisted of clothing donated by the Hornby/Riccarton Methodist Parish and books donated by Riccarton High School. They were destined for Peni's own village of Nasautoka, outside of Suva.
Although the worst of the severe flooding took place in the western part of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu, eastern areas were also hit.
Peni says Nasautoka is near a river and though he has seen it rise many times he has never seen it reach the heights it reached in January. Two girls from the village were killed in a mudslide during the torrential rains.
"People gardens have been destroyed so their first priority will be to replant them," Peni says. "We are very grateful to the people of Hornby/Riccarton parish and Riccarton for the generosity," Peni says.
Fijian Methodists in other parts of the country also gathered money and supplies for people displaced by the flooding.
Mission and Ecumenical secretary Rev John Roberts says two containers loads of non-perishable food, clothing and school supplies were sent from Auckland with Mission and Ecumenical paying the freight costs.

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN
The 'new' New Zealand



By Ron Gibson

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Kids Friendly churches open arms to families

By Cory Miller
Making churches friendly and inviting for children is one of the initiatives the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand is using to reverse the country's rapid decline in church attendance.

In 2004 eight Auckland churches worked under the guidance of Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser to develop the 'Kids Friendly' best practice standard. "Together we explored what it meant to be Kids Friendly, why and how it should be," says Jill Kayser. The pilot project was a success and now 39 Presbyterian and United congregations across the country bear the Kids Friendly label. Another 47 are working towards Kids Friendly status.

The initiative was the direct response to research that found New Zealanders respond positively to churches who intentionally connect with and serve their communities. The Presbyterian Church felt that a focus on children was something missing from many of its churches. "The 2006 census found that 50 percent of the population identifies as Christian, yet Church statistics have found that only five percent of the population attends church. This suggests that a potential 45 percent of our population is interested in the Christian message but are disillusioned with the institutional church," says Jill.

Kids Friendly provides resources so churches can minister effectively to children and families, and thereby increase their exposure

and participation in the Christian faith.

Jill says there are many reasons to provide a Kids Friendly environment. God's Kingdom of heaven belongs to the young children and Jesus commands us to let the children come to him and be taught about God's love. Children can also be amongst our greatest teachers. They have honesty and love for life that brings freshness to our lives and congregations.

"It is vital to intentionally minister to children and teach them through example because without them there will be no future church. Research shows that people are most likely to come to faith between the ages of five and 13. Therefore the earlier an investment is made in children's ministry the greater will be the rewards. Children must be empowered to make a difference in the world by letting them have a voice.

"Everyday, not just Sundays, offers opportunities to share faith and create a sense of belonging where young and old alike are valued. "Churches committed to children's ministry and community outreach will discover continual growth, as they dream new dreams enabling them to reach out to secular New Zealand."

The process of becoming Kids Friendly starts with a contract, although there is no single way of being a Kids Friendly church. The initiative is not prescriptive. Rather it is a guide to equip churches to



Top: Pip Kayser (left) breaks bread at a St Heliers service. With her are Allison Bliss, Fran Sawtell, and Rev Pauline Stewart.

Prayers for worms, pets & parents at kids-centred service

By Cory Miller

Beneath the warm summer sun, upon the bright green of Dingle Dell Reserve in St Heliers Bay, Auckland young and old gathered last month to share in the park-day worship led by Rev Pauline Stewart.

The Kids Friendly congregation of St Heliers Church and Community Centre believes in the vital contribution children and their families offer. Children were included in all aspects of the service and had the freedom to participate and express themselves.

Located near the heart of Auckland, St Heliers Presbyterian Church caters to the needs of its urban community. Pauline avidly supports the Kids Friendly programme, and her passion for children is evident in the rapport she has with the young people.

The mission statement of St Heliers is

'Reaching out and welcoming in' and the congregation acts it out by making welcome every child of God.

Eighteen years ago St Heliers was a quiet urban church with unfulfilled potential. It has now evolved into the Biblical ideal of a church as a source of hospitality and service, recreating the medieval image of a church at the centre, where all roads converge.

Today the church is now a bustling hive of activity with 31 employed staff, numerous volunteers and 60,000 people coming through annually. More than 70 programmes are offered through the church, as well as pastoral care and support to meet the needs of the community.

"St Heliers could not exist without the commitment, prayers, faith and generosity of those people who provide the backbone of our church," says St Heliers elder and

Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser. Church worship lies at the heart of the church's mission, yet for many worship can be inaccessible. Therefore St Heliers seeks to provide meaningful worship through a variety of services. These include a community service, a traditional service, preschool "tea party" church and teenage 'rock cafe' church.

The congregation's 9am service developed with a Kids Friendly focus. It is a growing event that is intergenerational and creates relationships between young and old. The worshipping congregation and those in contact with St Heliers through other aspects of the community centre are able to converge at this service. Despite its chaotic appearance – with children set loose, late arrivals and unpredictable music – it is a fun-filled event that is inclusive of everyone.

See Page 7

Food bank partnership delivers the goods

An exciting new partnership arrangement between LIFEWISE and the Waitakere Methodist Parish showcases the former Methodist Mission Northern's unique approach to supporting local initiatives in the community.

For 14 years, the LIFEWISE Centre food bank service has supported families in response to requests from government and community agencies, and from individuals directly. The LIFEWISE Community Services team reviewed the service in September 2008, and, in keeping with LIFEWISE's forward-looking objectives, decided the service model needed to be transformed to ensure those in need were catered to effectively and efficiently.

To achieve best results for those receiving food parcels, the review team recommended that a partnership be formed with the Waitakere Methodist Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach. The Outreach service provides around 1700 food parcels per year via an established home-delivery system, so it was the ideal partner for LIFEWISE. The food bank is now operated wholly from the Waitakere Methodist Parish, and the Parish continues to support existing LIFEWISE clients. In turn, LIFEWISE provides an annual grant to cover the costs involved.

What makes the Waitakere Community Outreach distinctive is that it delivers food parcels directly into the homes of clients, supplying food essentials to individuals and families who may not have access to transport. Delivery drivers are committed parishioner volunteers. They are also a friendly face and often make a client's day.

The collaboration has also created an important link between LIFEWISE and parish-based activities, a focus LIFEWISE would like to further develop to ensure the wider needs that lead people to the food bank are being addressed.

LIFEWISE and the Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach will review the service going forward, and the future alliance could potentially include an affiliated social worker to maximise the current services, something the parish has been unable to offer up until now. LIFEWISE community services general manager John McCarthy says, "The expertise of a shared social worker between the two services would improve the quality of life of many existing clients by ensuring the things that lead people to need food bank support in the first place are being focused on and managed. Our commitment is to turning lives around and creating independence - step one has been the collaboration with the Waitakere Methodist Parish's Waitakere Community Outreach, which we are thrilled about, and step two will ascertain how we can further develop our partnership with this parish initiative."

Parish superintendent Kenneth Smith says "The working relationship with LIFEWISE has been a positive move for the Waitakere Community Outreach. Expanding the client base with the LIFEWISE contacts has certainly strengthened the outreach programme. We enthusiastically look forward to possible new developments with LIFEWISE in the future."



WAITAKERE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

From left: LIFEWISE Centre service manager Corie Haddock, Victor Davies, Helen Smith, LIFEWISE general manager community services John McCarthy, Waitakere Parish superintendent Rev Kenneth Smith.

St Heliers Kids Friendly

From Page 6

children pray the best prayers we have ever heard uttered within these walls. Their prayers are full of simple hope and trust, and the needs of siblings, parents, teachers, things in the news and themselves. Listening to the children can be one of those this-is-why-we're-doing-it moments," says Jill.

As St Heliers' worship at Dingle Dell Reserve, a statement stood out that summarised simply the spirit of outreach that is central to the congregation's mission.

"Welcome people, welcome young and old. Share the love, enjoy each other. God's love is present in the love of other people."

Activities at St Heliers are not limited to Sunday. Every day of the week is full of programmes. The staff aim to integrate the culture and identity of the Christian Gospel into all community activities.

"Small miracles" is a pre-school programme developed in response to the need young families have for high quality early childhood care and education. Each day it includes an opportunity for children to stand in a circle with their teachers to say grace and to pray.

"Among the prayers for ants, worms and assorted household pets, I have heard these



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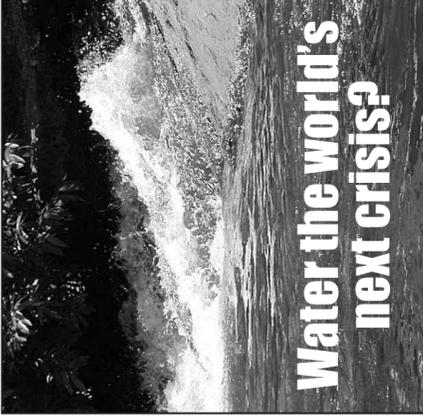
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Water the world's next crisis?

In launching Lenten worship resources for World Water Day 2009 Christian World Service is inviting congregations to reflect together on the vital part water plays in our lives and the right of all people to safe water.

The United Nations observes World Water Day on March 22 and this year is focusing on "Shared Waters - Shared Opportunities". The theme explores the rivers and lakes that are shared by two or more countries.

Nearly 40 percent of the world's population depends on trans-boundary water sources. Underneath the surface of the earth there are over 270 known trans-boundary aquifers. Many countries are facing increasing scarcity of water and unless greater efforts are made these trans-boundary waterways could spark greater conflict. The UN estimates that by 2025, 1800 million people will be living in countries and regions facing absolute water scarcity and two-thirds of the world's population could be living under stressed conditions.

Many of CWS's partners are working to protect water and ensure that water is managed in such a way that every person has what they need to survive.

The worship material entitled "For there is no food and no water" explores the experience of the Israelites struggling to survive in the wilderness and some of the concerns of these partners.

It is available from the CWS website: www.cws.org.nz or cws@cws.org.nz. CWS also has the documentary, Water, who owns it? available in VHS and DVD format. This highlights the struggle for poor people seeking to secure a safe and adequate water supply.

NEW WEBSITE CONNECTS KIWI CHRISTIAN ARTISTS

Contemporary Christian artists often find themselves isolated. Often their churches don't understand their art, and the art world doesn't understand their faith.

For more than a decade the Chrysalis Seed Trust has been trying to overcome this isolation. It has supported kiwi Christian artists and promoted their cause in the wider arts community.

The Trust provides resources, information, and inspiration for the contemporary arts community, especially artists who follow Christ. It helps organise exhibitions of their work, encourages networks and prayer groups, and has established an extensive art and faith library at its offices in the Christchurch Arts Centre.

Now Chrysalis Seed is shedding its skin and moving onto a different stage in its life.

For eight years, the Trust published the bi-monthly magazine CS Arts. The magazine carried essays, interviews with artists, and exhibition reviews. It had a circulation of 3200 and went out to artists, galleries and art schools nationwide.

The October 2008 edition of CS Arts was its last. In its place Chrysalis Seed Trust has developed a website (www.cs.org.nz) that organisers hope will generate a grassroots movement of Christian artists around New Zealand.

Chrysalis Seed Trust director Peter Crothall says, when it began, the Trust supported all contemporary artists including performance artists and writers. Now it concentrates its efforts on visual artists – painters, photographers, film makers, and installation artists.

"Much of the art that is called 'Christian' today tends to be poor

world. He cites the example of New Zealand's best known painter Colin McCahon. Colin's Christian faith is explicit in his art but it is ignored or reinterpreted by secular art theorists.

When discussing the Trust's new website Peter deploys a number of metaphors. A vision he had when he was contemplating the future of CS Arts was of a tree felled and new shoots arising from the stump that remained.

And to describe the website, he uses the image of an airport. Like an airport, it is an interactive hub where Christian artists and those interested in their work can connect up and get to where they want to be.

"An airport doesn't own the aircraft travelling in and out of its airspace. It is a means of transit from one place to another. Airports connect people, places, resources and information."

The www.cs.org.nz site carries news about exhibitions, information about competitions, residencies, and grants available to artists, and links to other art websites.

Through the website artists and others who wish to be more deeply involved can join csartspace.org.nz, an electronic social network site similar to Facebook or Bebo. At csartspace.org.nz artists can post their work, participate in online chats and forums, create interest groups, and find out about local and national events.

"We have moved our efforts into the website for several reasons," Peter says. "We could not sustain the magazine financially in the long term, and we believe this is what God wants us to do."

"The website will be much more effective in creating a grassroots movement of artists throughout Aotearoa. We expect it to be the first port of call for anyone who wants to know what Christian artists are doing in New Zealand. In January, two to five people were joining csartspace.org.nz everyday so it is taking on a life of its own."

Over the next several months Peter and Jessica Crothall are doing a networking tour around New Zealand. They will visit artists and galleries to promote the website. They can be contacted through www.cs.org.nz.

CS.org.nz
arts information and resources

FIND ARTISTS

ARTS ONLINE

csartspace.org.nz
connect with other artists

"Often churches are interested in what artists can do for them, whether it is to enhance their environment or promote their work and evangelism. The same is true for the commercial galleries."

Christian artists face more difficulties than others, Peter believes, because they are often marginalised and misunderstood by the secular art

KEEP HOPE ALIVE

Lent 6002

GIVE SOMETHING BACK THIS LENT

It's easier to give up something for Lent if you've got something to start with. Far too many people in the world are without life's basics.

- 923 million people wake up hungry
- 15 million people are homeless because of war or violence
- 40% of people don't have access to sanitation

Give something back this Lent.

- \$18 pays for a month's supply of rice
- \$128 pays for basic rations pack for emergency shelter
- \$257 pays for a toilet and sanitation

Christian World Service, PO Box 22652,
Christchurch 8142.
PH 0800 74 73 72. cws@cws.org.nz
For more information see www.cws.org.nz



Three of the artists who had work in Face to Face were Jessica Crothall (left), Joanna Osborne (middle), and Stefan Chambers (right). Janet Roberts (right).



ARTISTS EXPLORE GOD FACE TO FACE

WHAT WE SEE NOW IS LIKE A DIM IMAGE IN A MIRROR; THEN WE SHALL SEE FACE TO FACE. WHAT I KNOW NOW IS ONLY PARTIAL; THEN IT WILL BE COMPLETE – AS COMPLETE AS GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF ME (1 CORINTHIANS 13:12).

A personal encounter with God was the theme of an exhibition of contemporary Christian artists at the Centre of Contemporary Art (COCA) in Christchurch last month.

The exhibition carried the title 'Face to Face'. In various ways the artists' work attempted to express the experience of the sublime and the joy and lightness that come from knowing God.

The exhibition's curator Janet Chambers says the title refers to what can be revealed when we meet God face to face. "It begins with God's knowledge of us and our growing knowledge of God. From our relationship with God extend our face to face relationships with

other humans and our environment."

Biblical references to a 'face to face' encounter with the divine include Moses' long, almost personal relationship with God. When he returned to speak to the people after he had been in God's presence, he veiled his face because they could not bear to look at the brightness that remained on his face.

The artists who participated in the exhibition are members of a critique group brought together under the auspices of the Chrysalis Seed Trust. They meet monthly to comment on each other's work, often work in progress.

Janet says Face to Face was the group's second exhibition at COCA. The first was entitled 'Shrouded', and it explored the theme of how spiritual things are mysterious and the way God veils his face from us.

The prophet Isaiah used the metaphor of lifting a shroud to foretell Christ's coming.

The artists in Face to Face worked in several mediums. Two were photographers, two were painters, and one presented work in glass sculpture and mixed mediums.

Painter Jessica Crothall says she has experimented for years with colour, tone and texture. Her 'Symbolic Series' in the Face to Face exhibition used colour in a symbolic way.

Her work was in three parts. The first is black and chaotic representing spiritual pollution and separation from God. The second gold panel carries a stylised cross representing the bridge Jesus created to connect people with God. And the third, white image conveys a reconnection with God.

While Joanna Osborne is a photographer, her photographs were the last part of a creative process in which she constructed artificial imaginative

landscapes, and then photographed them in various perspectives.

Joanna's contribution to this exhibition was called 'The Hermeneutics of being known'. For it she constructed an island. The water imagery related to Christ and the mountain that emerges out of himself taken at night to create his images. In his photos the moon creates a bold white

stroke across the sky and is a symbol for the spirit of God. Visual references in the work are drawn from the descriptions of Moses after meeting with God on Mount Sinai.

Janet says while some of the works in Face to Face deal with serious questions, play is the watchword of contemporary art. In this exhibition artists also play, in God's sight.

NEW ZEALAND HYMNBOOK TRUST

Hope is our Song

A new publication of 150 New Zealand hymns, songs and carols for church and community, titled *Hope is our Song*

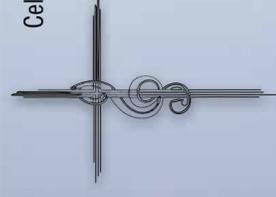
Date of publication: May 2009

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Beyond rationality



Noah's Ark. By Ann Gray

The ending to one of the greatest stories ever told – Noah's Ark – comes up in this month's lectionary readings. God says the rainbow will be the sign of the Covenant "between me and earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant."

This is a remarkable claim. But you expect that with Genesis because there is a remarkable power in this book of the Bible. It speaks to the human condition. We see God or Yahweh portrayed with every human emotion: sometimes loving, sometimes angry, sometimes swift to act, sometimes slow and sometimes contemplative, sometimes alert and sometimes forgetful.

Despite this very human picture, there is never the slightest doubt that God is also perceived as different, beyond human comprehension yet touching it at the deepest level of awareness.

Some people are turned off by this approach – they have very refined and superior notions about the nature of God. Thus, they read about Noah, and the other Genesis stories, with increasing unease and finally erupt into moral indignation. If God is

like this, they say, we want nothing to do with it. It is primitive, superstitious and horrible. It is not rational. Noah's Ark is a story far removed from a God who loves consistently.

What can we say to such accusations? They are indeed true in certain ways. Yet at more significant levels they are ignorant. Genesis is not a book of science, which is in itself is nothing more than a paper-thin veneer of 'facts as they are today'. No, Genesis is not like that at all.

Here is a book which reveals God's relationship with the being who is human, the living soul which is the image of God. And how is this living being addressed? Through dreams, visions, signs, feelings and strangely revealing conversations within the psyche.

The shutter of the modern rational mind senses that which once was alive to this kind of God, and being defensive all too easily closes off the more powerful lens of deep intuition.

So, in the contemporary world it seems that the story of Noah's Ark functions like a black hole in distant space. You come close to it and its field of gravity sorts out who you.

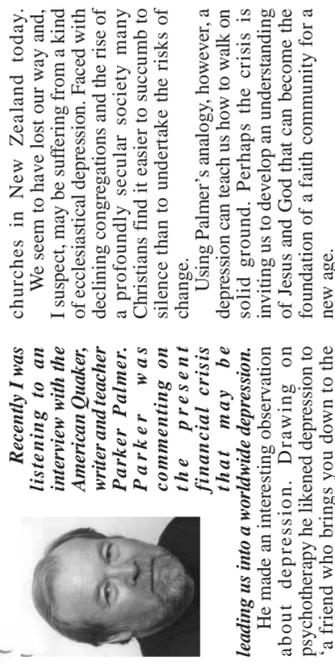
Some of us are suddenly sucked in, unable to escape its inexorable crush, and are compressed into its pinhole centre – just like the camel going through the eye of the needle, only infinitely more so. And then out, out into a universe of faith and knowing and believing. But only after having the life in us compressed to a shocking weight, crushed into incomprehension, dead with no light in us able to escape. Out into the bow. The bow in the sky is the sign of imaginative insight, a release from literalism into Yahweh's story.

But for those left on the other side, who feared to wander near the vortex, all of that is invisible, a mere fiction. You have disappeared from their rationality. They think your sanity has gone. They warn others to stay away from the black hole of Noah's Ark and Genesis. They fear the truth of this story not because it is untrue because it is too overwhelmingly true, too close to the truth for comfort.

Noah, God's chosen representative of human perfection, lands his ark and the world is saved. Then, to his shame, he gets drunk, his son sees him naked and a terrible curse is uttered. Perfection is something, it seems, that God can never get right in the human soul.

That is the real reason that, like all good and true stories, Noah's Ark continues to get told, and probably will do so until the end of time itself, when all will fall into its abyss.

Secrets hidden in plain sight



Recently I was listening to an interview with the American Quaker, writer and teacher Parker Palmer. Parker was commenting on the present financial crisis that may be leading us into a worldwide depression.

He made an interesting observation about depression. Drawing on psychotherapy he likened depression to 'a friend who brings you down to the earth and teaches you how to walk on solid ground.' The analogy, I thought, was insightful. Many of us have been living way beyond our means captive to the illusion of endless growth. Sooner or later things were going to unravel.

But then, Parker added, every crisis in life has embedded within it new opportunities. I thought the same could be said about the crisis which faces

churches in New Zealand today. We seem to have lost our way and, I suspect, may be suffering from a kind of ecclesiastical depression. Faced with declining congregations and the rise of a profoundly secular society many Christians find it easier to succumb to silence than to undertake the risks of change.

Using Palmer's analogy, however, a depression can teach us how to walk on solid ground. Perhaps the crisis is inviting us to develop an understanding of Jesus and God that can become the foundation of a faith community for a new age.

Someone once said, 'there are secrets hidden in plain sight' but to be able to see them we have to change our way of seeing things. The history of Methodist origins seems to confirm this. Wesley had to step outside the traditional theology, polity and practice of the Church of England and engage in what he initially called his 'horror at this strange way of preaching in the fields'

In other words, Bristol opened

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart

Wesley's eyes to secrets hidden in plain sight. The proclamation of the Gospel doesn't belong to the Church, it belongs to the whole world.

This truth in plain sight changed Wesley's life and as a consequence transformed the religious landscape of England. If the Church would not go to the poor, Wesley and his band of preachers would. Even if the bishops declared it irregular and closed the doors of their parishes to the Methodist preachers.

As I see it, a clear choice stands before the Church: hold on to what has been or step out of that security and trust the call of God. It's that simple and yet so threatening. But as the Canadian singer and songwriter Leonard Cohen reminds us in his song 'Anthem', "Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

Let's let the light in!

Northland churches living example of unity

Based on Jim Strathdee's hymn, 'I am the light of the world', we now find ourselves in that space where the song of the angels is stilled, the star has gone from atop our Christmas trees, and the kings and shepherds have found their way home. We have all returned to our places of work and responsibility again, and the work of Christmas has begun.

As we follow the image of the star – as we follow Jesus – we realise that we cannot do it alone. We need each other. I count it a privilege to be part of the Standing Committee of Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa NZ, a privilege to be working together with such fine people from across the five denominations of UCANZ. Being part of Churches Together

By Beverley Deverell,
UCANZ Standing Committee member

not without some difficulties and disagreements to be worked and being brought but that's part of the family.

During his visit to Northland last year UCANZ executive officer Rev Peter MacKenzie moved around our parishes, from the urban parishes of Whangarei to the remote rural parishes of North and South Hokianga. He wanted time to explore the diversity. He inspired and challenged us to build on what we are doing.

We have given up on our elderly parents marrying. We are mature adults now and 'uniting' is what is happening at the grass roots. It is a work in progress. May Uniting Congregations of NZ go from strength to strength following the way of Jesus.

The Bible Society is called by God to get Bibles into the hands and hearts of people in New Zealand and worldwide. We're constantly looking for new ways to increase the number of people, here and overseas, who own, use, value, and share the Bible with others.

To find out more or to donate, visit www.biblesociety.org.nz

NEW ZEALAND
BIBLE SOCIETY

CWS AT PARACHUTE 2009

These questions were met with many a startled look as young Christian World Service volunteers



CWS volunteers challenged Parachute punters to think about world poverty.

approached people at Parachute 2009. The aim was to educate and engage young and old on issues of poverty, and the factors that link the lives of us all.

Taking their blood pressure was a pretext for reading some horrifying facts about world poverty. Dr Nick immediately diagnosed high blood pressure and prescribed a course of treatment that suggested they should join a movement to help others to have a better life.

The most telling statistic for the many young people who owned cell phones was from the Congo: "In the Congo thousands

are dying as a result of the mining of coltan. Coltan is used to make the cell phones that we use every day. The demand is so great that a lot of money can be made. Humans exploit and kill others to get coltan so you can have two mobile phones, a laptop and a desktop computer."

This really made the unsuspecting punters stop and think. The intention was not to make them feel guilty but rather to consider the way our lives are intertwined with the poorest people and whether or not they really needed two cell phones or might make a donation to local

groups working to end poverty in the Congo. The young people displayed a strong sense of justice and a real need to do something to stop the actions that keep people poor. This was in spite of the heat and the great music that was being played.

Some 25,000 people gathered at Mystery Creek over the Auckland Anniversary weekend. Christian World Service can always be found there challenging young people to live more justly.

Young People

Doctor's orders: change the world

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NOW AND THEN

Coasters celebrate their servants
Two pivotal figures in the live of the Church on the South Island West Coast – Elva Reynolds and Rev John Drylie – marked major anniversaries early this year. It was a chance to acknowledge their lives of service.

John Drylie's 25 years of ministry

Sunday 1 February was a day of celebration for West Coasters who marked Rev John and Jan Drylie's 25 years of ministry to the parish of St Andrew's United Church of Hokitika-Ross-South Westland.



Jan and John Drylie

About 150 guests, members of the congregation, and former parishioners who now live in other parts of New Zealand took part in the celebration. The event began with a communion service followed by the cutting of a special cake, morning tea, and a lunch. Chris Auchinvole spoke on behalf of the wider church. Jan Davidson from Reefton spoke about John's work on the West Coast. Jan Harrison spoke on behalf of the St Andrew's, and Brenda Twidle from Haritari spoke about John and Jan's relationship with the South Westland part of St Andrew's United Parish.

In her talk Janice said over the years a number of other larger parishes sought John for their ministry but fortunately for the people of the West Coast, he and his family remained there. "John's knowledge of theology and his ability to deliver, unaided by notes, and without repetition, a thoughtful and provoking sermon, often with a fresh slant is something that we have taken for granted but would be the envy of many other parishes. People have stated that this is a very inclusive ministry where people are encouraged to participate at what ever level they feel comfortable with," Janice said. John committed himself to the 4th

Elva Reynolds – deacon extraordinary

By Ken Russell
When Elva Reynolds of Hokitika offered herself as a candidate for ordination as a deacon about 25 years ago, it continued a lifetime of service. Indeed, when Elva began her diaconate ministry in 1986, she was already past the commonly accepted retirement age.



Elva Reynolds

Westland Boys' Brigade. He also ran Education for Ministers, an inter-denominational group for ministry in local churches, as well as innumerable discussion groups. He led a worship team, and gave them the skills to lead services. Janice said during John's ministry a number of uniquely West Coast Flavours were introduced to St Andrew's. They include waving of palm leaves in the church on Palm Sunday and the Good Friday service with the cross having nails hammered into it, then on Easter Sunday after the sunrise service and breakfast bufferies are attached to the cross.

Jan has also been very active in the church, including Sunday Time, Youth Group and all the woman's groups that were part of this church as well as a mother and a wife! She has been a mover and shaker with special events such as St Andrew's nights, bring on the haggis, Olympics, church Christmas lunch and more recently your involvement in the Garden Rumble. "An important part of the Drylies' life has been their active involvement in our community. John was on WHS Board of Trustees, in the orchestra as a flautist, a chairman of Coast Care Trust, and a committee member of Presbyterian Support. Of course many of us remember the highs and lows of the six years that Jan and John were the civic leaders of Hokitika and they have remained as loyal as ever to this place," Janice said.

regional liaison officer for Presbyterian Support and Methodist Social Services. She also served with Citizens Advice Bureau, Age Concern, and Prisoners Aid – to name only some. During her diaconate years Elva, was a foundation member of Coast Care Trust, which oversees the community care of psychiatric patients throughout the region.

Elva's 90th birthday coincided with another anniversary in Hokitika, the 25th anniversary of the ministry of Rev John Drylie at St Andrews United Parish. John too is a former mayor, and, during their long association in the parish, he and Elva created a very strong team of presbyteral and diaconal ministry.

Yet it was a mistake to identify Elva solely with a ceaseless round of community appointments. She reads the bible every day with growing discernment. Her bible sits alongside a library that features the work of Borg, Armstrong, Geering, Spong, Brueggemann, Harper and others. And she likes a good murder mystery too!

Appropriately, Elva has been recognized for her community service. In 1976 she was named West Coast Woman of the year. She was awarded the Queens Service Medal in 1993, and in 1999 she received the Tower Senior Achievers Award. Those of us fortunate enough to join Elva for her big event were amazed to find her sparkling and lively as ever. During our visit to Hokitika, we dropped into a fast food place on Revell St for one of their special pies. When we were in town for a 90th birthday, the guy behind the counter asked us with typical Coast-bonhomie, whose birthday? When I named Elva his face lit up. "Mrs Reynolds! I'll send her a card. She's one special lady!" Amen to that.

Rainbow Church

Young people at St John's Methodist Church in Hamilton East come from many different countries as well as New Zealand. One of them wants to share with you something about herself and her family.

Hello, my name is Doris Pita. I am seven years old and come from the Solomon Islands. I have friends in church from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malaysia, New Zealand and other places.

My family is in New Zealand because my dad is studying at Waikato University. I love coming to Sunday school because where I live in Honiara is a long way away from the church. Sunday School starts at 8:00 in the morning and it is too early for me to get there. I just go to church later with my family. In the photo you can see my brothers, Stephen and Peter and my mum and dad. I will let Stephen tell you all about our church.

Hi, I'm Stephen. Our church is a lot bigger than St John's with heaps more people coming to church each week. It was built by our local people in Honiara when the church built by the missionaries became too small. We have up to three hundred people there. We sing the same hymns because we are Methodists. At school we speak English but at home we speak pidgin as well. Pidgin is another form of English. We like living in New Zealand even though it was really cold last winter.

It would be really good to hear about your church and Sunday School. Write to Doreen and tell her about yourselves. She would also like a photo.



Stephen, Doris, and Peter Pita with their parents.

The Zoo

"The Zoo" is an original Christmas play by Derek Kingsbury and it was performed by the Sunday School at Chartwell Church, Hamilton last December. The animals of the zoo want to know why the zoo will be closed on Christmas Day so they go to the wisest animal they know, the tuatara, to find out.

As she tells them about the nativity story they decide that it would be fun to act it out. In their own way the animals learn about what happened and put their own spin on it.



The cast of The Zoo. Author Derek Kingsbury is at the back in a black shirt.

Book Review Friends of God: My First Bible Activity Book

By Leena Lane and Roma Bishop
Word Among Us Press, 32 pages
Reviewer: Patrick (10 years)

This is a book full of stories and activities. I especially liked the story of Joshua and how the walls of Jericho came tumbling down and the story of Elijah with the word puzzle. There are dot to dot pictures to join up and colour and matching and counting activities.

The book is full of fun things for young children. I'm ten years old and enjoyed it. Mums and dads could read the stories to younger children and then they could do the activities. A book for wet days or lying in the sun!



THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION

This month we have something different:

- Get out your colouring pencils, felts, paints
- Do you have a favourite Bible story?
- Draw a picture about it. Use A4 size paper.
- There are two age groups, 8 years and under and 9-14 years.
- Give your picture a title, write your name and age on the back and send it to: Doreen Lennox, 4/22 Wellington Street, Hamilton 3216.
- There is a prize for each age group.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

I had to change my e-mail address and so the time for sending in the answer to last month's competition has been extended. You can still enter and send the answer to me at the above address or e-mail me, dlennox@xtra.co.nz. Winners of both competitions will be announced in April.

Collection details Dutch immigrant experience

By Yvonne Wilkie



The New Settlers Committee collection details the experience of post-WWII immigrants to NZ. Most were Dutch but this photo shows White Russian refugees beside an OAC-Viscount plane, possibly at Invercargill Airport, 1966.

In 1952 a collection of records began to accumulate. It grew for 31 years and now offers a fascinating insight into the experience of immigration and settlement into New Zealand.

The New Settlers Committee collection covers the years 1952 to 1983 and mainly deals with Dutch immigration. It consists of lists of Dutch immigrants, correspondence between Dutch chaplains and government officials in New Zealand and the Netherlands, and personal correspondence between the new settlers and their families in the Netherlands. It also has a complete run – 1954 to 1981 – of the newsletter 'Protestant Contact', and cine films of camps and fairs. Up to 80 percent of the papers are written in Dutch.

The 1949 visit of the World Council of Churches' director of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid Rev Dr Hutchison Cockburn brought the urgency of the situation of 'displaced' persons to the New Zealand churches attention. The National Council of Churches which represented the main stream protestant denominations encouraged churches to offer practical support. It appears to be the arrival of 932 European immigrants in 1949 that reinforced a sense of responsibility from the Presbyterian General Assembly to support the 'new settlers'.

In 1950, the New Zealand and Netherlands governments signed an immigration agreement. Each year, New Zealand was to take 2000 single migrants aged between 18 and 35. With the arrival of 1000 Dutch immigrants under this agreement in June 1950 the Reformed Church of the Netherlands requested that they send a minister to assist their members resettle. Rev Wilheim van Wijmegen was received as a minister in full standing at the 1951 General Assembly. He worked from the Wangarua Presbytery and assisted Dutch settlers come to terms with a new country whose mores and faith differed from their own.

Eventually the General Assembly agreed that a committee be formed to support parishes with the oversight

Between 1945 and 1968 about 24,000 Dutch residents settled in New Zealand. Approximately 25 percent of them belonged to the Reformed Church. Unlike in Australia, the agreement between the Reformed Church of the Netherlands and the NZ Presbyterian Church was to encourage the new settlers to assimilate into New Zealand congregations rather than have Dutch congregations develop independently.

Not all Dutch settlers felt comfortable with New Zealand Presbyterianism however. They believed it fell short of traditional reformed doctrines and practices. The Church in the Netherlands was more formal, sermons in New Zealand did not have the 'depth' they were used to and the religious festivals such as Christmas appeared too 'social'. A number of new settlers also found a lack of pastoral care disturbing.

In 1953 a group finally withdrew from the NZPC and formed the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. The papers relating to the withdrawal highlight the misunderstandings from both sides. New Zealand Presbyterians had difficulty grasping that assimilation and integration implies 'giving and receiving'. The papers also reveal how theological interpretation so often cannot be reconciled.

Miss Kos Goldschmidt was employed as a social worker in the mid-1960s and undertook much of the support work previously carried out by the chaplains. Her outstanding work over 20 years was recognised in 1984 when the Queen of the Netherlands created her a Knight of the Order of Nassau.

The Committee's work gradually expanded into refugee work supporting Eastern European and Asian settlement in New Zealand.

NB: The correspondence files are restricted from general use because of the personal nature of the material. If any bona fide family members wish to access material please contact the archivist, Yvonne Wilkie.