

TOUCHSTONE

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

Youth Court finds home at Auckland church



Auckland's Pacific Island Youth Court sits at Avondale Union Parish's Rosebank Church.

By Paul Titus

Justice is one of the core values of Christianity, and this has taken on a new meaning for a church in West Auckland.

Every two weeks the Rosebank Peninsula Church undergoes a transformation and becomes a courthouse, where the Waitakere and Auckland Pacific Island Youth Court deals with young offenders.

Rev Alisa Lasi is minister of the English-speaking fellowship at the Avondale Union Parish. She currently co chairs the management committee that oversees the uses of Rosebank Peninsula Church.

Alisa says the congregation is excited that the Justice Department has found the premise suitable for the purpose of developing a family and community-based approach to dealing with young people.

“The prayer of our church is that ‘justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream’ during the court sessions. We pray that the justice of our God will reign within the building, and in all those who worship here on Sunday through to those who use it during the week.”

The Rosebank Peninsula Church has been used as a youth court since September last year.

Chair of the Auckland City Council's Pacific People's Advisory Panel, Rev Uesifili Unasa attended the opening of the Pacific Youth Court, which was led by then Pacific Island Affairs Minister Georgina te Heuheu.

Uesifili says the Pacific Youth Court is based on the Maori Rangatahi Courts that provide whanau and community support for young people who find themselves in the judicial system.

“Through this process the community is involved in the life of the young person. The fact that Court is held at a church is



important because churches are where Pacific people congregate and it is where they are comfortable. Churches are the place where people find spiritual nurturing, which is integral to the Pacific way of life,” Uesifili says.

“The Pacific Youth Court is not a soft option. The young people who are before the Court are supported, so they experience the legal system in a way that is not simply hostile and all about punishment.

“They are there with their families so

the seriousness of the situation is clear. It is a chance for them to acknowledge they have made mistakes but they can see those mistakes are not the end of their lives.”

Judge Ida Malosi sits at the Pacific Youth Court. Ida is New Zealand's first woman Pacific Island judge and she believes elders are the essence of the Pacific Youth Court.

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New book critiques Pacific cultures of exclusion

By Paul Titus

Vahefonua Tonga's synod in Mangere last month provided the ideal setting to launch two new books that deal with Pacific Island cultures and the Church by Auckland University and Trinity College lecturer Rev Dr Nasili Vaka'uta.

Nasili is the author of one of the books, 'Reading Ezra 9-10 Tu'a-wise', and he is editor of the other, 'Talanoa Rhythms: Voices from Oceania'.

Head of Auckland University's School of Theology Prof Elaine Wainwright spoke at the book launch. In her comments Elaine said

Reading Ezra 9-10 Tu'a-wise is an innovative and courageous book that brings an Oceanic perspective to Biblical Studies and provides a new and liberating way to read the Bible.

Nasili explains that the book takes a contextual approach, which recognises that everyone reads the Bible from his or her own perspective or context. The context he has written from is that of his own position as a Tongan 'commoner' or tu'a.

"In Tonga, tu'a have quite low status. In the Tongan language we are classified along with slaves and animals while there is a whole set of other terms that are used to refer to gods and chiefs. Tu'a do not really belong to Tongan society except by virtue of the service they provide.

"I have entered the world of Biblical studies from the position of the tu'a and looked at aspects of Scripture that are often ignored by those in dominant positions," Nasili says.



Nasili Vaka'uta

His book explores the Biblical passages Ezra 9-10, which focus on the return of the exiled Judaeans from Babylon and the harsh attitude they adopted toward the Jews who had remained in the Persian Yehud. Those who had remained interacted openly and intermarried with their non-Jewish neighbours. Those who returned from exile, led by Ezra, took a very exclusive

attitude toward them and forced them to give up their foreign wives and the children born to them.

Nasili uses this reading to take a critical view of social and cultural institutions that treat some people as outsiders. In particular, he addresses the inequalities in Pacific cultures.

"Pacific cultures are patriarchal and hierarchical. I want to urge Tongans and other Pacific people not to take their cultures at face value but to critique them. We should ask whose interest we are serving when we promote particular versions of our cultures.

"No culture is innocent and all should be scrutinised. We are very good at blaming colonialism for our problems but we are

not so good at examining ourselves."

Christianity provides a means to critique those in power but in Pacific cultures it has been incorporated into the hierarchy.

"When Christianity first came to Tonga, commoners hoped it would bring real change but the missionaries worked alongside the chiefs so they could carry out their work. They provided legitimacy to the unequal social structure rather than liberation.

"The inclusion of native ministers created a new chiefly class that worked alongside the chiefs. The Church should be able to critique those in power but this is very difficult in Tonga, where, for example, the president of the Free Wesleyan Church is also the royal chaplain."

Similar dynamics are at work in the New Zealand Methodist Church's Vahefonua Tonga, which upholds traditional chiefly status. This has led to some groups breaking away and forming independent congregations.

Nasili believes this will change as more New Zealand-trained Tongan presbyters enter the church. He would like to see Tongan Methodist parishes being more welcoming to their young people, however.

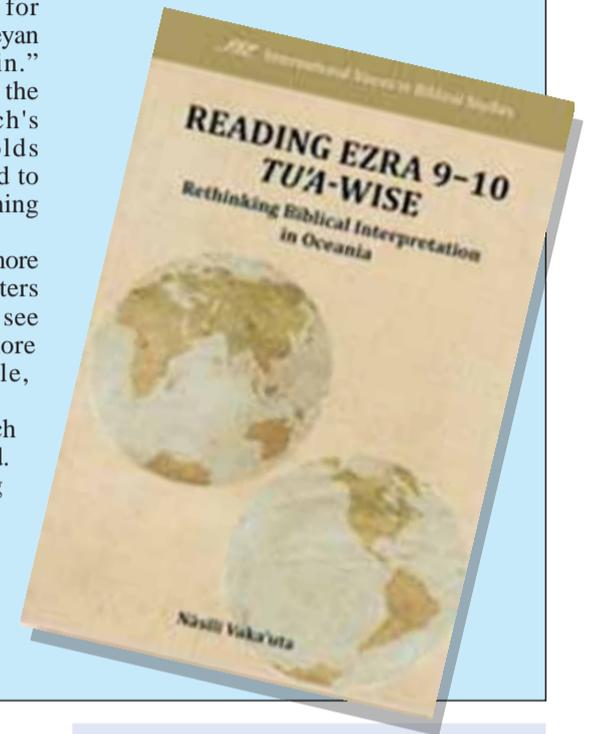
"Many youth are leaving the church because their voices are not being heard. We have even seen the tragedy of young people in the church committing suicide.

"It is important that we create spaces for different views and voices in our churches, especially for young voices. It would be very valuable if,

for example, the Auckland-Manukau Parish devoted one Sunday a month to youth and allowed young people to organise worship as they want."

Nasili says while his book is critical of some aspects of Tongan culture, it is respectful. He thinks some of his colleagues will be disappointed in its approach but he welcomes discussion and debate.

His edited volume is a collection of essays on Christianity and culture. It is the product of the on-going Talanoa Oceania series of scholarly conferences held alternatively in Australia and New Zealand to explore contemporary Pacific life.



Youth Courts chart positive paths for offenders

Auckland's Pacific Island Youth Court has proved to be a successful way to get young people back on track, says a Methodist church leader who works with them.

Paula Taumoepeau is Methodist Vahefonua Tonga financial secretary and he serves as a lay advocate for the Manukau Pacific Island Youth Court.

His role is to be part of the teams that design plans for young offenders to make



Paula Taumoepeau

amends for their wrong-doing and chart a positive way forward.

"The Youth Court was established nearly two years ago. It is for young people from 11 to 17 years old who have committed minor to moderate crimes such as tagging, burglary, stealing a car, being drunk and disorderly, or fighting.

"They do not receive sentences. Instead a group is put together to work with the young person and create a plan for them to follow.

"The group might include the parents, a social worker, a youth advocate, a representative from Child Youth and Family, someone from their school, and the pastor from the family church. Once the group designs a plan, the judge

passes a directive and it is enforced. Then the young person and the advocates have to report to the judge on its progress."

Paula says the Youth Court tries to avoid giving young people convictions but this does not mean they avoid responsibility for the harm they have done.

"The young offenders must apologise to their victim in writing and often face-to-face. They may also have to pay a fine or do community service, and their family will give the family of the victim traditional Pacific gifts such as mats.

"The Youth Courts are nearly 100 percent successful in getting young people out of trouble. We have a saying in Tonga that when a dispute comes up the people roll out the mats and sit down and talk about it. When there is a resolution, the mats are rolled up and that is the end of the issue. This is how the Youth Court works."

Youth Court at Avondale

From Page 1

Alisa says the Rosebank Peninsula Pacific Youth Court is certainly not your standard courtroom.

"During breaks a guitar comes out and relaxing melodies including gospel songs in English and Pacific languages are heard. Respected elders are here along with the young. The other day a six month baby was present with the family supporting a young person. It is all part of the communal setting that this venue strives to enhance," Alisa says.

"Recently I spoke casually to a family member as I was leaving. She asked to use my park because her car was parked down the road and she wanted to get some flowers out of her car for the judge. You don't get that in a normal courtroom! It is a real privilege to be hosting the second Pasifika youth courtroom in Auckland.

"We are very aware of all those who have worshipped at this church in years gone by. We value its history and more importantly the people who made up the church, and the prayers that were prayed by many before us."

Two church groups use Rosebank Church for Sunday worship services. Avondale EFKS (Samoan Congregational Christian Church) led by Rev Auva'a Eneliko, and the Auckland Christian Deaf Fellowship led by Rev Sandra Gibbons.

Auva'a and Sandra also serve on the management committee, for the Rosebank Peninsula Church.

Parish Vacancy

DUNEDIN METHODIST PARISH



Methodist Church of NZ

Dunedin Methodist Parish is seeking a suitably qualified ordained or lay minister (1/4 time) to become part of the ministry leadership team in this energetic and forward looking parish.

The Parish is looking for someone who is passionate about preaching and pastoral care in a team ministry, and can assist in the growth of lay ministry.

The successful applicant would work under Methodist oversight alongside the full time parish superintendent.

A profile of the parish is available on request.

Responses should go to:

Nigel Hanscamp

Director English speaking Ministries

Mission Resourcing

Private Bag 11903, Ellerslie, Auckland 1542

Phone 021 570 385 • Email: nigel@missionresourcing.org.nz

AMURI COOPERATING PARISH (Rural North Canterbury)

SEEKING A MINISTER

Are you a dedicated biblical preacher, a person who will lead and work with the existing team, a good communicator, and a person able to get on with a variety of others who will help our church continue to serve our community?

We invite you to consider contacting us and expressing your interest.

We are serious about being a church family, wanting to reach families and individuals in our community and to minister effectively to those families already part of the church. We need leadership and encouragement from an ordained minister to fulfil our potential in this area.

Do you share a similar passion for Jesus, a heart for people and a desire to preach the Word?

Please give us a call: Rev Martin Stewart, 021 308 519
martin@ststephens.co.nz

March to highlight Pacific community's concerns

By Paul Titus

An organiser of the first protest march to highlight the concerns of Pacific Island New Zealanders says better resourced churches could help Pacific communities overcome the difficulties they face.

On June 16th Pacific community groups, unionists and students will stage a march from Auckland University down Queens Street to rally at Aotea Square. The purpose is to express the political and economic concerns of Pacific people in Auckland and around the country.

Auckland University chaplain and Methodist minister Rev Uesifili Unasa chairs the Auckland City Council's Pacific Peoples' Advisory Committee. The role of the Advisory Committee is to communicate the concerns of Auckland's Pacific residents to the City Council.

Uesifili says a number of people approached him as chair of the Advisory Committee to help organise a march to increase awareness about problems Pasifika New Zealanders face.

"This is a very important step in terms of solidarity for Pacific people. We are making a political statement about our rightful place in New Zealand society. For the first time, we are standing up and finding our own voice.

"It is a voice that comes from the community and it shows the emerging confidence of Pacific Island people. We are saying we are ready to lead ourselves, give voice to our own aspirations, and assume responsibility for our own future.

"There has never been a Pacific people's

march in New Zealand to express political demands. Respect for authority is an inherent part of Pacific society, so in many ways we are doing something that is exactly the opposite of what we have been taught and believe."

Population figures show Pacific people will play an increasingly important role in Auckland in the very near future, Uesifili says.

Over the next 10 years the proportion of Maori, Pacific Island, and Asian New Zealanders in the city is expected to increase by 19 percent. In that same period the percentage of Pakeha residents will drop to less than half.

"The main migration of Pacific people to New Zealand was in the 1950s and 1960s. Most Pacific people here are now second or third generation. One of the things the march will say is that we are not immigrants or aliens. We are true blue authentic Kiwis.

"But the problems we face are immense, and we don't have the resource base or the political clout to address them. Health, education and youth unemployment are major issues. Without jobs young people become vulnerable to crime, drugs,

gambling and alcohol," he says.

Along with raising awareness about status of Pacific people, the march will put forth some specific demands. These include a more effective voice in Auckland City Council, greater say in the how the city's assets are used, and more affordable housing.

"The City Council is developing a 'southern initiative' to promote the development of South Auckland. Because this is a predominantly Pacific part of the city, we are asking that Pacific people be in the leadership of the initiative.

"We also want to see a stronger Pacific voice in the planning stage of projects designed to help Pacific peoples. We want development that is Pacific designed, Pacific driven and Pacific delivered, not more trickle down

initiatives.

"And we are saying we want the Pacific community to have a bigger role in decision making about how Auckland handles its assets and investments. Currently the bi-cultural structure of decision making favours Pakeha and Maori but effectively excludes other peoples.

"Maori have a unique voice as tangata

whenua, and that is appropriate. But the Treaty partnership also means Pacific people are not well represented on decision-making bodies. This deprives minority communities of resources and political power."

Uesifili says these are social justice issues, and, for him, it is a Gospel imperative to challenge them. He also believes the churches can help address them.

"The Pacific community gathers in its churches. The churches want to work with the City Council to solve the problems the community faces. The Council should be more actively looking to the churches to find solutions.

"For example, churches run childcare centres and have developed some community housing projects but they are often under-resourced. If land and resources were available these programmes could be much more effective."

Uesifili says a number of church bodies have voiced their support for the march including the Methodist Church's Sinoti Samoa and Vahefonua Tonga as well as the moderator of the Auckland Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church.

Auckland mayor Len Brown and leaders of the major political parties will be invited to meet the march and hear the concerns of the Pacific community. A meeting between the mayor and the city council and Pacific community will follow the march.



Uesifili Unasa

10 MINUTES EXPANDS

'10 Minutes on a Tuesday' is a weekly Methodist resource that provides a smorgasbord of worship ideas around the lectionary readings. It is now used by church leaders from many denominations.

The idea behind the name is that those preparing Sunday worship will receive an email on the preceding Tuesday. By spending 10 minutes scrolling through the material, they can find ideas that stimulate their own thoughts, and suggestions from which they can pick and choose.

The vision was originally that of the late Rev Andre le Roux. Andre aimed to take pressure off church leaders by providing resources and ideas that would communicate the gospel in an inspirational, creative manner and bridge the gap between the church and contemporary Kiwi culture.

The first edition of '10 Minutes on a Tuesday' was produced on 21 February 2010. After just a few months of publication Andre's failing health prevented him from continuing, and Mission Resourcing asked Rev Andrew Gamman to take over production.

The style of writing is intentionally down-to-earth. Newspapers, movies, secular music and literature are used to illustrate the weekly themes.

"I receive a lot of emails from people in New Zealand and even overseas," says Andrew. "The weekly resource is now

longer than it used to be. But the big change is that it is now full of hyperlinks that take you to other web resources.

"To my surprise, what I write for worship services is now put to other uses as well. Some have said that it has become the basis for their Bible study groups and others use it for their private devotions."

Andrew says he also designs



Andrew Gamman

services that can be used for outreach into the community. '10 Minutes on a Tuesday' includes outlines of services with an outreach thrust, and they include templates for advertising.

"Providing suggestions for worship in song is not as straight-forward as it used to be. In a survey of Methodist churches to see what music books they were using, the first 30 responses listed 30 different



books. '10 Minutes on a Tuesday' makes songs recommendations from 14 of the most popular in addition to giving links to on-line score sheets," he says.

Another emphasis has been to provide worship resources that are visual, interactive and multi-sensory. Often included are suggestions for setting up 'stations' as part of worship. A station is a place to stop, think and interact in a hands-on way with a biblical concept.

Andrew is currently developing another survey to get feedback on how the resource is being used and how it could be improved.

He says there are several ways that people can help with '10 minutes on a Tuesday'. Local church worship teams can take a turn at writing '10 minutes on a Tuesday'. Submissions from people who can provide original prayers and ideas are always welcome and financial contributions can be made to Methodist Mission Resourcing to help with the on-going costs.

'10 Minutes on a Tuesday' is available from the New Zealand Methodist website. Currently around 960 people receive it directly by a weekly email.

PAC funds to make good things happen

Applications are now open for funding from the Prince Albert College (PAC) Distribution group.

Church or community groups who want to pursue innovative and creative approaches to ministry are encouraged to apply.

Methodist general secretary Rev David Bush says the PAC board has changed the way it makes its funding decisions.

Rather than focus each year's funding round on a theme, allocations will be based on whether the project meets PAC touchstones.

These touchstones are 1) the Methodist Church's mission priorities, 2) Biblical teachings related to the use of money, 3) John

Wesley's sermons on wealth, 4) The Methodist Church's commitment to a bi-cultural church and society.

The PAC Board allocates 60 percent of its funds for endowments to major bodies within the Methodist Church, 25 percent to grants to Methodist and Uniting parishes, and 15 percent to groups outside the church.

The application process consists of telling your dream or vision and how a PAC grant might help make it happen.

A cover sheet to accompany applications is at www.pac.methodist.org.nz.

Applications close June 30th.



PAC Distribution Group

Share your dream or story

Grant requests close on 30 June 2012

See <http://pac.methodist.org.nz>

or email

Wendy Keir wendyk@methodist.org.nz

Jesus' message of grace

To the editor,

Are we a church with a message and is that message second to none? To me it's the message of grace.

Grace may be the way Jesus lived his life and the way the church tries to live its life. Like marriage, grace goes all the way in living your life for another.

In April, we said 'goodbye' to Margaret Gordon. Now that was someone who lived her life for others.

Perhaps grace is living fully, being fully, totally giving and totally forgiving.

Has grace power and is it empowering? Yep, it's about 2000 years of sustained power. But it eludes us if we don't open the door to it.

Sadly, this message of Jesus was hijacked by well-intentioned gentiles who didn't understand the message. They cloaked the teaching of Jesus in a dualism more akin to the dualism of the pagans.

Where Jesus spoke of the immanence of being with this Parent, 'Our Father', they cloaked God in their dualism and supernaturalism thus

betraying Jesus and placing God at a distance.

The non-dualistic message of Jesus is a good 'match' with the 21st century. Jesus was dead against defying natural law as is evident in The Temptations. In those stories he shows himself to be utterly against calling on superpowers. He judges them as tempting and so seductive that he calls them satanic (a personification).

He made a stand saying that all was perfectly natural to him after the crucifixion. He said he wasn't a ghost or ethereal spirit but someone who, after being crucified, ate grilled fish.

Jesus said to the faithless disciples that there was nothing supernatural or spooky about what they were seeing, and encouraged their rebirth and resurrection with him in a new body.

He made a metaphoric claim about living, saying nothing about a dead and decaying body. Therein is his message of grace for us today.

I'd love to hear from you. Email me at btasker@xtra.co.nz.

Bruce Tasker, Mt. Albert

Eternal life is the crux

To the editor,

Every Easter Satan seems to indulge his favourite hobby of discrediting Jesus' resurrection and appearance on earth before ascending to heaven.

He finds a suitable intellectual, preferably a minister of religion, who has a following.

His technique is simple. The Bible is

discredited as something of a historical novel about tribal customs and myths but is handy for quotations that can be taken out of context to suit one's purpose.

Christianity is presented as being good to one's neighbour but no eternal life.

Ivan Harper, Tauranga

Gambling with our future

To the editor,

Like Warren Buffett, Rev Norman Brookes did not shirk from using the word 'evil' in his contribution entitled 'Ten Commandments for the business world' in last month's Touchstone.

Norman's opinion piece originally appeared in the NZ Herald. Importantly, Norman has placed a Christian perspective in the media.

In response to it, the Herald website received some favourable blogs, and not least from Michael in Germany. Michael tells how nearly 40 years ago Norman Kirk was taken to the spot in India where Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated.

There Kirk found Gandhi's version of the seven deadly sins: 1) Wealth without work; 2) Politics without principle; 3) Commerce without morality; 4) Knowledge without character; 5) Science without humanity; 6) Worship without sacrifice; 7) Pleasure without conscience.

I have voted in 19 general elections and I cannot avoid this as a message for me, my nation, and especially our leaders.

We are at a low point as a nation when financial expediency rules over morality in the shape of amending the Gaming Act 2003.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to increase the number of machines at the Auckland Casino from its present 1647 in order to fund the building of a conference centre in Auckland. This proposal is happening over the

heads of the Auckland City Council, the elected representatives of the citizens of that city.

Such an intrusion of a national government into the affairs of a city is a 'big brother' precedent of enormous proportion. Auckland has not suffered a major disaster such as Christchurch, yet our government seems intent on created disastrous consequences in our city.

The Gambling Foundation estimates that for every 10 machines, eight problem gamblers are created.

The Auckland Casino has a poor stewardship record in this regard. Its management is tardy with reviews. Last year, 265 gamblers previously banned were found on its premises, and 101 neglected children were found within its precincts.

The consequences of this Casino's management are to be found in family break-ups, our courts and prisons. The Gambling Foundation, the Department of Work and Income, our health services and other counselling agencies pick up the pieces.

It is time to challenge the denials, rationalisations and prevarications of our politicians.

Stop evading responsibility for governing for the good of all.

Stop attacking the human dignity of the vulnerable citizens of our nation.

Laurie Michie, North Shore

**Got a bee in your bonnet?
Something in Touchstone get under
your skin?**

**Have an opinion about the issues
of the day?**

**Put your fingers on your keyboard
and write a letter to the editor.**



Therefore anyone who hears these words of mine and does them is like a wise man who built his house upon the rock... pursuant to Building Code regulations subsection B, paragraph one, stating that natural conditions affecting the dwelling shall be taken into account regarding stability and soundness of



Jim.

FROM THE BACKYARD

Leaving home, finding home

Gillian Watkin

Autumn comes with a rush, disregarding the politics of climate change.

In our garden we follow the plants and clear up leaves, pull weeds, shake off the frost cloth and provide extra for the birds now that the seed heads have finished.

It is four years since we moved here, to the Hawkes Bay. At the heart of our move was a spiritual journey from long held patterns to something completely new.

We had been married and lived in the same house for 40 years. We raised our children and worked diligently but after three years of holidaying in the Bay we listened to our hearts and decided to make a break.

It was a shock to our enthusiasm that many family members and friends thought we were stark raving mad or at least a tiny bit bonkers. What we didn't appreciate was that some were frightened. How would they manage without us?

'Why?' is always a spiritual question, the late Enid Bennett taught me that at College. When we headed south from Auckland, we found and clarified our 'why' questions and sailed over the hills. We never imagined how familiar that SH5 would become to us.

The first week here was madness, our bank and solicitor managed to remove every cent from our bank accounts and send the proceeds of our house sale to another bank in cyber space. No one ever said life is easy.

Still, when that was rectified we were debt-free and taking a deep breath in a new place. I don't think

that you really name some of the deepest journeys until you are on the way.

We began exploring and came to love the landscape first, the wide breadth of the plains, looking far out into the Pacific Ocean and being able to see the far curve of the horizon. We loved the changing patterns of agriculture, and we city people began to understand rural realities.

Our house was a solid wooden house built in three parts 1954, 1970 and then 1974. The décor brought back memories and the promise of lots of work in due course. We had the bones of a garden. Every tree was either a fruit tree or a flowering tree, like the wonderful almost luminous rhododendron beginning to flower now at the front door.

Today we are settled, driving over the hills from Taupo is always coming home. The spiritual journey is always the one of going home to the heart place, and of becoming more at home in this big wide world and knowing that wherever we go, there is God.

Last week we spent the day catching up in the garden and realised that we were not developing a garden any more, it was established and now we maintain the rhythm.

Maintenance is one of those words that get a bad press. People think in life we should be doing other stuff, and maintenance holds us back. But you know the maintenance of ourselves, our lives, our families and our property is what holds us stable, feet firmly on this flat earth. A day in the garden reminds us that the bare earth truly is holy ground.



Be an encourager and reflect Jesus in the world

A reflection
by Vice President
Olive Tanielu

Kia ora, Malo e lelei, Bula vinaka, Talofa lava and Greetings to all the Touchstone readers from Hawkes Bay. I am writing this on a very cold winter morning. We give praise to our Lord for His warmth and His love that embraces us all.

I would like to pay special tribute to Aunty Pari Waaka. Aunty Pari once walked a pilgrim's journey, and now her feet are safely home. She was a woman of wisdom and a great encourager, who served her God through the Methodist church with love, passion and faith.

There have been a lot of things going on in our wider society and within our Methodist church. Some can be quite disheartening and some are very encouraging and positive.

Just as in playing sport, players need cheering up so they are encouraged to keep up. That extra encouragement can affect the outcome of game. Sometimes we step back when things get tough, or we discourage others by our attitude, our approach and our old habits.

After Easter weekend leaders of the Sinoti Samoa's Women Fellowship had their biannual fono (meeting) at the Silver Stream Retreat. The highlights of the gathering were the young women from each Fellowship within Sinoti Samoa who attended as observers. It was encouraging to see the leadership skills and the potential these young women displayed. These young women blended in well with the older women and worked together as a team and in groups.

Encouraging others requires action. It is challenging and hard work but it is a necessary part of becoming all God wants us to be. It is time to start recruiting for more disciples to carry on God's mission.

I was invited to the Waikato Waiariki Synod's Youth service that was held in Tauranga. The main purpose of this service is to bring the young people together and encourage them to share their faith in worship and get to each other.

It was well attended by young people and adults from Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Matamata and Tauranga. The synod has supported its youth and encouraged them to do God's mission.

It was great to see the young people from different ethnic groups working together, and encouraging each other,

sharing their talents, skills, ideas and their faith in God. Our young people face a lot of challenges in life and they really need our support and prayers to help them make the right decisions.

In our walks with God we too need to be cheered on by our Christian friends, our leaders, our church and our families. We also need to cheer others on and affirm those around us. The way to do this is to focus our attention on people's positive qualities and build them up.

Every time you help someone else feel worthwhile the encouragement comes back to you. The great encouragement Jesus gave us was when we sacrificed His life for us on the cross. Let us ask God to help us to encourage others in a positive way, be an encourager and reflect Jesus in the world.

Confessions of a Christian humanist

Auckland Methodist lay preacher David Hines was guest speaker at the NZ Association of Rationalists and Humanists in February. He received a warm welcome, and after attending a couple more NZARH meetings, he has become a member. This is a summary of his February talk.

I've called this talk 'Confessions of a Christian humanist' because I have effectively been a humanist all my life but I've never used that label before.

I started changing when I heard one of your leaders, Dr Bill Cooke, on radio last year, talking about atheist spirituality. I realised his position was little different from my own. I invited him to a discussion, in Pitt St Methodist Church, and the idea has been developing ever since.

So far I've identified five goals that add up to Christian humanism.

1. Reconciliation

This is the most important goal of Christianity.

The best example is Jesus' parable of the prodigal son. Jesus wanted to build a society where no-one was treated as an outcast.

Liberal churches today promote this goal, campaigning for equal rights for women, black South Africans and gay people, and promoting friendship with people from other religions.

So, I submit, it's not a departure from Christianity to want to be a humanist. This goal of reconciliation itself is humanist.

2. Humans are the yardstick

Many Christians support the idea of an inclusive society but in practice they regard people who are not Christians as junior partners, who must

submit to church rules and beliefs.

The opposite view was expressed by atheist, Sam Harris, in *The Moral Landscape* (2010).

He said moral values should be based on a scientific study of human nature, because morality is about human welfare. So he says it cannot be left to religious experts.

But the same idea has been expressed by Christians. Methodist founder John Wesley preached a sermon on bigotry, and came to the conclusion that God can give ethical advice through people who don't believe in a personal god.

Jesus said the Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. In the context of this story, I think it means that humans have a right to change the Sabbath rules, when they have become unhelpful.

3. Belief in God can be harmful

I don't think it matters greatly whether people believe in God, though others strongly disagree. Atheist author Christopher Hitchens gives a horrific list of things done by religious people, and doesn't mention a single good thing they have done.

This shocked me, because I know many open-minded Christians who break that generalisation. However, Hitchens and other atheists make the point that evil can arise directly from a belief in God. For example:

- people believe they are favourites of God and he does miracles to help them;
- people think they are experts on how the universe began, without reading any scientific information;

- people believe in hell;
- people put pressure on others to go against their conscience;
- Islamic suicide bombers.
- even liberal religious people keep defending God, so they soft-sell the evils that arise from belief in God.

I reluctantly agree with Hitchens, that belief in God can be poison. Some Christians avoid the poison, by softening the idea of God, but if you take it at its face value, belief in God is harmful.

We should not take the idea of God at its face value. There isn't a real personal god up in the sky. Some religious stories portray God as a good role model; many don't. But even the 'good' role models, are just human ideas, and should not be accepted uncritically.

4. Secular prayer

I apply a similar guideline to the use of prayer. In composing public prayers I avoid suggesting there is a literal God, I try not to ask for magic, and I avoid suggesting that we get infallible advice from praying.

I notice that most prayers in church follow a similar guideline - even people who believe in miracles hardly ever ask for one!

I value prayer as a way of sorting my feelings out. I see it as a kind of meditation, not a kind of magic.

5. Sharing

I also value the idea of sharing between Christians and humanists. We already have similar ideas on ethics, and the promotion of science. We could promote them better if we occasionally swapped notes, and saw each other as allies, rather than enemies.

David's full talk is at <http://www.wesleyschair.com/god/humanists.html>

Stories of light and truth

By John Meredith

There is profound insight in the old hymn that says, 'God has given us a book full of stories'. That's what the Bible is, a book filled with stories, stories of faith we have neither to prove nor disprove but to which we are invited to listen and from which we are invited to learn.

This was pretty much how the Bible was regarded for the first 1700 years of Christian history. No one would have thought of asking the question, 'Is it true?' Of course it was true.

In the 18th century, however, a movement developed that has come to be known as the Enlightenment. Led by scientists and philosophers, reason and logic were promoted as the key to unlocking the secrets of the universe and dispelling ignorance, superstition and fear. The Enlightenment thinkers began to challenge stories in the Bible such as the waters of the sea rolling back to allow the Israelites dry passage, or Jesus feeding a crowd of 5000 from five loaves and two fish.

What was needed, it was claimed, was a rational explanation. Interpretations were presented such as the Israelites crossing on a causeway like that between St Michael's Mount and the mainland of Cornwall. It was not the action of God but the returning tide that would have swept away the pursuing Egyptians. The feeding of the 5000 could be explained by people in the crowd inspired to generosity when they saw one boy willing to share his lunch.

Right from the beginning these ideas had their opponents. This was focused in a very direct way in the first decade of the 20th century. In 1910 two American evangelical writers edited and published a series of essays, later issued as free booklets, under the title *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. The writers, who came to be known as fundamentalists, affirmed that whatever the Bible said was literally true.

If the Bible said that God rolled the sea back to allow the Israelites to walk through, that was that. No explanation was needed. If the Bible said that Jesus fed a crowd with five loaves and two fish, then that was to be accepted without question.

In this, the fundamentalists were expressing opposition to the enlightenment thinkers, an opposition that had been growing stronger over the years. While they may have been mistaken in saying that everything in the

Bible must be accepted as literal truth, they were correct in saying that the Bible must be interpreted by faith, not explained by reason.

The preoccupation of both enlightenment and fundamentalist thinkers was with how truth is to be understood. The enlightenment thinkers held that biblical stories could not be accepted as true unless they could be explained in a way consistent with our modern understanding of the world. The fundamentalist thinkers held that the stories were to be accepted as literally true because the Bible came from God and was not to be questioned.

In adopting these positions, both enlightenment and fundamentalist thinkers had moved away from the understanding of the Bible as a book full of stories that need neither to be explained rationally nor accepted uncritically.

In his gospel, John highlights that the biblical stories are invitations to faith when he says, "These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ". This is true of the gospel stories and the stories from the Hebrew scriptures.

They are not written to prove anything: Speaking of the gospel John says, "These things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that through faith in him you may have life in his name".

In 1620, the Mayflower pilgrims, whom history has termed the Pilgrim Fathers, were preparing to sail from Leyden in the Netherlands for a new life in the place they would name Plymouth in Massachusetts. They were farewelled by their pastor, John Robinson (1575-1625).

Pastor Robinson urged them to have minds open to truth, and to be ready to accept that, from God's word, there is always more light and truth to be discovered than has yet been revealed.

Accepting that there is always more light and truth to break forth from God's word is a wholesome approach to the Bible. For us, much of this truth will be revealed in the light that Jesus of Nazareth sheds upon its pages, and through the grace and compassion of God we see in him. We best understand the Bible, not when we can quote chapter and verse, but when we let Jesus think through our minds and work through our hands.

This opinion piece originally appeared in Music in the Air.



Christine Knock attended the Methodist Church in Skopje, Macedonia during her latest foray onto the world stage.



Christine Knock was recently acknowledged for her 30 years of service to Girls' Brigade.

Girls' Brigade takes veteran from Papatoetoe to the world stage

By Joanna Ibell

Christine Knock started going to Girls' Brigade when she was six. The skills and confidence she learned there that led her to where she is now, a leader in the International Council of Women (ICW), and New Zealand representative at Girls' Brigade International Council.

Christine has been a leader in Girls' Brigade for 30 years. That service was recently recognised in a ceremony at her church, Wesley Methodist Papatoetoe. The service award was presented by Val Watson, who was captain of the company, when it started 58 years ago.

Christine feels very strongly that it was God's calling which led her to Girls' Brigade, and provided so many opportunities for her to grow and to help others.

"God has led me that way. I had opportunities to change direction but I felt this is where God was leading me."

Times have changed since Christine started.

"It was pretty basic," she says. "Psalm 121 is the first thing I remember learning and have never forgotten. I was in the Swiss Alps recently and that verse reflects on you."

Christine went to the International Girls' Brigade Centennial Conference in Dublin, Ireland in 1993.

"It's was still very traditional over there, as it used to be here. We'd have church and Girls' Brigade parades up Queen Street, and around the streets of our South Auckland area. Now there are so many options for girls, so we have to ensure that we have a programme that's geared towards them."

An important change over the years has been the move towards multi-culturalism. Brigades were once predominantly Pakeha. Now Christine's company of 26 is a vibrant mix of girls aged five to 18 years from a variety of countries including Fiji, India, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, China, Tonga and Samoa.

But some things haven't changed. Girls are still developing into capable, confident young

women.

"In March, a young woman who has been in the company for six years was commissioned as a leader. It's rewarding to see that."

The company fully participates in the community they live in; for example attending Anzac Day ceremonies and visiting rest homes and taking part in church services.

It gives the girls a sense of belonging, an understanding of service, and a sense of confidence.

One girl in her company Christine acknowledges came from a non-Christian background. "She attended from age five to 18. It was a challenge for her to get her Brigadier brooch, which she had to achieve by going to church. But she found the time and the way, and did it."

Christine first attended the St John's Presbyterian Church in Mt Roskill. When a new Girls Brigade company began at the new Wesley Methodist Church in Mt Roskill she went along there.

Her family then moved to Papatoetoe and she began her long association with the 5th Papatoetoe Girls' Brigade Company. She went through to Pioneers, then became a leader, then Captain.

Since 1985 she's been a representative on the South Auckland area executive in different capacities. She is presently the Queen's Award co-ordinator.

"Girls' Brigade's many-sided programme gives girls a good balance for life. It covers physical, social and spiritual education and gives a good base. We support them and give encouragement and opportunities to learn and grow. There are so many organisations out there but having that spiritual input as well is something they have for the future."

Christine received a Queen's Honour award an MNZM in 2002 for services to women, youth and the community. "I felt quite honoured to receive an honour in my younger years, as it is quite often services are recognised when you much older."

That year she also received an award from Girls' Brigade for outstanding service, and an award

for outstanding service to the National Council of Women of New Zealand.

Christine started with the National Council of Women 28 years ago, she went from being a local representative, to the national level, then as a New Zealand representative and is now on the international stage as a member of the on the ICW world board and standing for vice-president this year.

You have to wonder how she finds time to sleep as she also works full time in the finance sector, is training to be a lay preacher, has been a chorister in the Pakuranga Choral Society for 32 years, and is a trustee on various community trusts. Singing is where she recharges.

"It's time for myself On weekends I try to go for a walk for an hour or so and spend time with family - with my nieces and nephews and my mother."

Christine recently returned from an international trip. It started with ICW meetings and she then set off on her own adventures. This included a friend's wedding in China, a church service in Switzerland, and following the footsteps of St Paul in Macedonia.

"I like archaeology and anthropology, so I've been on holidays to many of the places the apostle Paul travelled, like Turkey and Greece."

On this trip she stayed with a friend in Skopje, Macedonia she met through the ICW. While there she attended the local Methodist Church. They welcomed her and gave her a message to take back to her church in Papatoetoe.

She tries to attend church in whatever country she is in for the sense of connection and community.

And it all began with Girls' Brigade.

"As an organisation it gives a good grounding to girls. It's not suited to everyone. Some come and go, and yet some girls stay many years. It and the National Council of Women have helped me get where I am - confident to speak at an international level."

Time to stop believing... and have faith

At one point in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass, Alice exclaims "One can't believe impossible things", only to have the Queen of Hearts assure her that it was all a matter of practice.

"When I was your age," she said, "I always did it for half an

hour a day. Why, sometimes I believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

For some people looking in on Christianity, that's what being Christian seems to amount to. They see churches asserting things that stretch the credulity of the modern mind - and if you believe them you're in, if you don't you're out.

In my view, those who think that Christianity is beyond belief are quite right. However, it was never meant to be believed. It was meant to offer a way of faith, which is quite another matter.

The source of confusion lies buried deep in the English language, for 'believe' has changed its meaning radically over the past 400 years. Up to around 1600 'believe' meant to 'hold dear' or to 'love' - in fact the lieve of believe is a close cousin of love. (There also used to be a verb 'belove', meaning to love, but that has dropped out of the language except in the vestigial 'beloved'.)

The noun 'belief' carried a similar meaning. It meant holding as beloved, staking one's confidence on, or putting one's trust in. So a preacher around 1300 warned his congregation that "Christian men should not set their belief on worldly goods". He meant they should not put their trust in them.

About the same time another word with the same meaning was entering the language from French. This was 'faith', meaning loyalty or fidelity; and gradually it edged out 'belief' in that original sense of the word. By the time the translators of the King James Bible set to work in 1604, the switch was virtually complete: 'faith' occurs 246 times in that version, 'belief' only once.

But there was a problem. Unlike belief/believe, 'faith' had no matching verb, so the translators continued to use 'believe' in its old sense of 'hold dear, give one's heart to, commit yourself to'. Thus when Jesus says: "Don't be afraid, only believe", he means 'have faith', 'trust', 'commit yourself'.

At the same time another

important shift was occurring. For most of the world's history, and in nearly all religions, faith (or belief in the old sense) was

assumed to be in relation to a transcendental reality where God was taken for granted. You might commit yourself to this reality, or you might not. But you didn't question the

fact of it.

Then people did begin to question it. Instead of a focus on faith in relation to what was generally assumed to be true, people began to discuss the framework of faith itself. In other words, the debate centred on whether that framework was valid. Consequently 'believing' became a matter of assenting to propositions.

Take, for example, the statement that God exists. From being a fact accepted by nearly everyone, this moved to being a proposition: maybe he does, maybe he doesn't. People could come to their own conclusion either way.

The upshot was that by the 19th century, in common usage 'believing' had lost all sense of trust or commitment. It had been watered down to merely having an opinion.

This was dynamite for Christianity because, more than other religions, it has expressed its faith through statements of belief. As those beliefs came under critical scrutiny, and as churches insisted that belief (in the new sense of accepting the propositions) was not only a condition of membership but fundamental to faith, more and more people quietly dropped out of the church.

In our secular world, beliefs formulated in terms of a pre-modern era are proving obstacles to faith. Many people have the impression that 'believing' is primarily what religious people do, and the churches haven't done a lot to correct that. In my view, it would be a major step forward if they were to stop using the words 'believe' and 'belief' altogether.

Of course there is an intellectual dimension to faith, which means a trusting orientation to life and its possibilities. But that dimension might be more readily explored if the churches were to put less emphasis on what people must 'believe', and more on insisting that Christian faith centres on the Christ they commit themselves to, in full trust and without reservation. It's a world away from believing impossible things.



Ian Harris

God's Kingdom is with us here and now

MARY STANTON REFLECTS
ON THE PARABLES

Don't we all like a story. A good story provokes thinking, and it has been interesting for me to reflect on my current reading of the parables and their meanings in Mark Chapters 3 and 4.

Parables are great stories, very readable, short and easily understood by most (Or are they?). Ones that relate to the past and present, and clearly illustrate spiritual and/or moral truths that are great for Christians and non Christians alike to fathom - easy and familiar stuff.

However, Jesus also talked about complex ideas and the difficult things that underlay a wealth of purpose. He told parables to demonstrate the nature and values of the Kingdom, and the requirements of those who were committed to be his disciples.

Many who heard did not understand

(the principle of where the seed was sown) or they only partially comprehended the essential truth within. Their thinking was not stimulated and spiritual perception did not occur.

This happens; it is an accepted part of the story. But by telling stories about everyday people doing everyday things, in everyday situations, Jesus cleverly let us know that the Kingdom God is here with us - here and now. They are not just another tale.

So how do we tell our stories? Over the past 20 months in Christchurch we have seen a huge rise in story-telling. Whenever we get together, it is a common way to communicate about our lives within our city in a whole new way. 'The Earthquakes' still dominate our conversation - 'Did you feel that one this

morning?', 'Only three today'...

Many of our stories since September 2010 demonstrate the nature and values of God's kingdom here all around us. They are stories of everyday life in extraordinary circumstances and extraordinary responses to the need for comfort and help.

These circumstances evoke emotive responses. Those responses - compassion, community spirit, caring - are life changing acts. Generosity and active response were the new norm. Kingdom work amply illustrated.

How powerful the stories were then. How people saw their community change, and the Church responding in a different way. We all listened and helped as we could. We were eager to share our stories too.

But are we still listening to each other's

stories with that same intensity? I don't know that we are any more. Have we made the best of this amazing opportunity to be good disciples...I wonder.

Now 20 months later and in amongst the rubble and the rebuild, our reactions are different as some have reverted to impatience, anger, frustration, tiredness etc. (sometimes justifiably). We are returning to our own places and spaces, and the stories too are different. Some are of gain and greed, some of devastation and injustice. Jesus said Those who hear and fail to respond will remain ignorant of the Kingdom here.

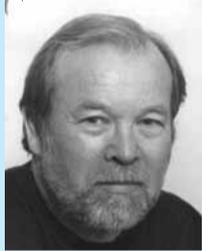
I wonder what parables Jesus would tell us today if he were here? Did some of us 'get' the meaning totally? I wonder.

Mary is president of the New Zealand Lay Preachers Association.

Courage for the road ahead

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



Philosopher Will Durant once observed that "civilisation exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice". Durant's observation is much more complex and disturbing than we first realise.

One moment we are casually getting on with our lives, raising our families, building our homes, pursuing our dreams and suddenly everything has changed. The familiar is gone, our comfort zones are shattered, buildings collapse around us, and lives are forever lost. In the blink of an eye - a moment in time. Those of us living in Christchurch are painfully aware of this: we live on earth in extremis!

According to a friend of mind in the salvage and demolition business, it will

take 20 or more years for the city to be rebuilt. He tells me this is an optimistic estimate. No one really knows what Christchurch will look like in 10, 20 or a 100 years. The Portuguese writer José Saramago reminds us, "There is no point arguing with earthquakes".

In the meantime the Central South Island Synod along with other church bodies is trying to develop a strategic recovery plan that reflects the church communities desires, not something imposed on them. It is a huge task and will require extraordinary fortitude and vision. But it is also a unique opportunity to do something extraordinary to restore hope and heal a broken community.

The human inclination, however, is to put everything back together again - the way things were before. But this is a dangerous path to follow - especially in response to the faith we profess and seek

to live. Christianity is about resurrection not restoration, transformation not uniformity. It is about making a difference.

How we respond to earthquakes says a lot about the character and integrity of our faith.

In 1739 Wesley reluctantly decided to do something he seriously doubted. Against his better judgement at the request of his colleague George Whitefield he journeyed to Bristol to assist Whitefield in his new ministry preaching in the fields. Initially Wesley pleaded prior commitments and too much work in London. But Whitefield persisted. Wesley said, "he was pulled along by an irresistible tide".

When he arrived in Bristol he reacted with horror at Whitefield's new method of preaching in the fields. "I could scarcely reconcile myself at first", he wrote in his journal, "to this strange way of

preaching... having been all my life so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

According to Wesley's estimate for that period, he preached to approximately 27,000 miners and others, averaging about 3,000 every time. In the course of one month Methodist field preaching was born and the Methodist movement began building a church today that comprises approximately 75 million adherents worldwide.

My point: Wesley chose the road less travelled, he followed 'the irresistible tide' and the Methodist Church was born. That was then. Will the Central South Island Synod and the wider church take the time and find the courage to strike out on a new path?

Our churches have their seasons

By Peter MacKenzie,
UCANZ executive officer

I recently visited a retired couple whose garden was looking a bit neglected. It had no signs of recent activity and the chill of winter was encroaching. I looked out the window to see seeding plants, flourishing weeds, and a lot of work to be done.

They were not ready for winter - there was no green crop to be dug in and they hadn't turned over the soil to break down in winter's frost. They were hoping for a sunny Saturday in June.

Shirley Murray wrote "Our life has its seasons", with images that continue to enlighten me. The idea of the seasons of life is rich and, at times, encouraging. At other times it is a reminder of who we are and what can be done. As I look around the churches in our UCANZ family there are many that talk about the feel of winter coming - if not already here.

These are churches that have an older age profile, a declining

membership, and a lack of energy or vision for the future. Their buildings and grounds are looking tired and neglected. The worship is traditional and focussed on the familiar and safe.

The finances, dwindling as they are, are principally used to maintain the status quo and are not being directed to new opportunities. Such churches are similar to the garden I visited, in that they still bear witness to a fruitful summer, a rich soil and the need of some labour.

In the pastoral setting what can be done with a couple who have an overgrown garden? They can hire someone in to do the work, lease out their garden to someone without land,

turn it over and make an easy-to-mow lawn, or sell the house and downsize both land and buildings.

Their current option is simply to do nothing and be frustrated each day as they look out the window. They

know that inaction creates more work when the estate is settled and fret about their sense of doing the right thing. Their conversation is on-going.

So what of churches living in the season of winter? Is there a possibility they could prepare the soil for others to work? Are there options for establishing a different sort of crop? Is there a commitment to make an easy care lawn and just hold on? Is

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know that inaction creates more work when the estate is settled and fret about their sense of doing the right thing. Their conversation is on-going.

there a sense of spring and optimism for the work of God in that place? Or is there a realisation that it is time to downsize and move on?

None of the options are easy, particularly a decision to close a worship centre. But these are questions that we are being forced to ask as churches in 21st century New Zealand. Life has its seasons and each season has its challenges.

What season is your church in? How well are you prepared to face the reality of the season? What challenges are you willing to face to plant the Gospel where you live?

May God's blessing be with your local church, wherever you are planted, in whatever season you are facing, may the Spirit of God encourage and strengthen you.

MWF officers serve with big hearts and busy lives

By Cory Miller

Being a member of the New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship (NZMWF) national executive is a big job, and one volunteers do on top of already busy lives.

Two members of the current NZMWF executive say it links women in fellowship and connects them to the church and international community.

Leu Pupulu

Samoa-born Leu works as an accountant by day and has been a member of MWF since 2003. She is both co-vice president for the NZMWF and the World Federation Link.

Being a part of the group has been an honour. "There are so many wonderful ladies that have helped me and have become my mentors."

Becoming a part of the executive body was something she never dreamt possible. She attributes her success and ability to fulfil her roles within the NZMWF team, to the support of the many women within the NZMWF.

Leu first came on board the NZMWF executive team as treasurer in the 2008-2010 team. This experience gave her the "courage, understanding and the confidence," to accept the invitation to become co-vice president and the NZMWF link to the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

"My role is to gather information from the World Federation and report to NZMWF, which also includes the distribution of the World Federation's quarterly newsletter (The Tree of Life).

As part of her role Leu travelled to South Africa in August 2011 for the 12th WFMUCW World Assembly.

"I saw a lot of differences there," she says. "I saw for myself how fortunate we are that we live in New Zealand. We complain there is not enough money to cater for our needs but in South Africa some don't even have water."

At the 12th World Assembly of WFMUCW Leu was honoured further with election to the role of World Treasurer for the 2011- 2016 term.

"The WFMUCW is working

towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals which work towards helping vulnerable women. I brought back to New Zealand what I had learnt over there," she says. "At the moment the NZMWF is helping to make a difference by fundraising towards a specific special project. This year's project is about helping Christian World Service with providing for women's maternal health in Palestine.

"The fellowship and all the different ladies have motivated me to do the best I can to serve."

Kerry Upson

Kerry is one of the two NZMWF co-vice presidents. She says the national executive creates links in the wider community and raises MWF's profile.

"One of the best things about the job is visits to NZMWF districts. We get to see first-hand the work that the districts do and meet women who have wonderful stories to tell of their time in MWF."

One of Kerry's other roles within the fellowship is as Diaconate Link. She provides support to the deacons through the NZMWF.

"Deacons do vital work. They are the church looking outwards in a way many of us would wish to do but

cannot. NZMWF can play an important part in supporting and encouraging deacons as they undertake such work."

Kerry also holds the role of NZMWF chaplain. "Our theme is 'Don't Give Up - Engage'. My role is to help the executive and MWF members explore this theme through devotional and worship materials."

Being a chaplain was a new job for Kerry. "I had to work at developing relationships and finding ways to support the team," she says.

Being a part of the executive team is also about fulfilling their roles to benefit the team. Together the Executive Team works to "further, support and resource" NZMWF districts and local groups.

Kerry juggles her three NZMWF roles with a full-time job as an associate principal and teacher of 5-year olds, as well as studying to become a teacher of English as an additional language.



Kerry Upson



Leu Pupulu

Talk to your child about sex and sexuality

Parents can help their children develop healthy attitudes by talking with them about sex, says Family Planning.

Family Planning is a charitable organisation that promotes a positive view of sexuality so people can make informed choices about sex and reproduction.

Family Planning has been operating for 75 years and provides clinical services, education and research to people of any gender, age, nationality or sexual orientation.

Among its services are free 'Open and Honest' workshops for parents that can be run through churches.

Why talk about sex? It is important that children feel that sex and sexuality are a normal part of family life. We are all sexual beings from birth to death. Sexuality is a natural part of us and includes the biological, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of ourselves.

Family Planning says international evidence shows that when parents talk with their children about sexuality and relationships, it can delay the age of first intercourse and prevent risky sexual behaviour.

Open and honest discussion about sexuality is not the same thing as permission to be sexually active.

"If you would like your children, whatever their ages, to come to you for correct information, guidance and advice, this is more likely to happen where patterns of openness have been established

early."

Here are some suggestions for talking to children about sex and sexuality:

- Start talking when your child is young;
 - Use everyday situations to start conversations;
 - Talk a little at a time and talk often;
 - Be open and honest - it builds trust;
 - Read stories and discuss them, including your values and beliefs;
 - Talk about sensitive issues when you are doing something else e.g. doing dishes, washing the car;
 - Check out what they already know;
 - Ask open ended questions such as 'What do you think/feel/like/know?' rather than questions that get a 'yes' or 'no' response;
 - Try not to panic if you find your child exploring his or her body or a similar aged child's body. Acknowledge their curiosity, and suggest you learn more about bodies e.g. by getting a book together;
 - It's okay if you get it wrong or feel embarrassed, the more you talk about it with your children the easier it will become.
- Family Planning supports parents as the first sexuality educators of their children. Check out their website to learn how to contact a health promoter in your area or to download more information on talking to your children about sex and sexuality - www.familyplanning.org.nz.

Public Questions resource on stewardship

Act to renew our covenant with Creation

Public Questions is distributing a resource on stewardship to parishes. This is to coincide with the UN Conference on Sustainability, Rio+20 which will be convened in Brazil this month.

The resource is a small booklet and a DVD with snapshots of parish actions for stewardship, which Methodist Vahefonua Tonga financial secretary Paula Taumoepeau describes as "taking responsibility for the future".

The resource is called 'What Are We Doing as Stewards of Creation?' The DVD and booklet are to assist parish groups with activities for stewardship in a variety of ways.

They suggest you start with neighbours and parishes and locally based initiatives. And they give examples of actions you can take at a number of levels, with do-able possibilities at small and larger scales.

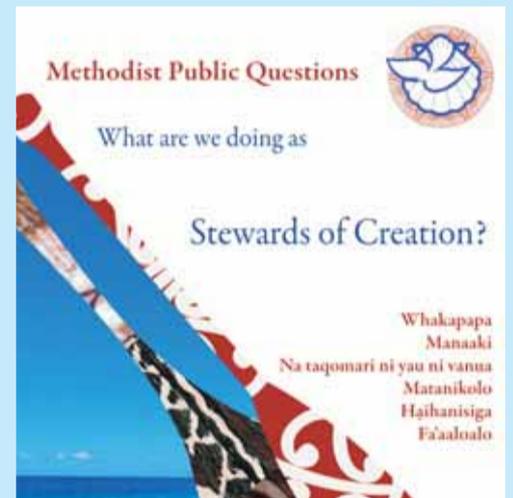
Public Questions coordinator Rev Dr Betsan Martin says opportunities to be stewards of creation are in our homes and families, our communities and landscapes. They are beside us in our everyday lives.

"Stewardship is a biblical idea of economy as ensuring wellbeing of people and place - and imparts compelling wisdom for today," Betsan says.

"Acting as stewards is a way to bridge the gap between our intentions and our actions. Acting as stewards is a way to reconcile economic and social needs with environmental demands.

"Stewardship is the art of ensuring general wellbeing while making optimal use of limited natural resources. Stewardship is really about economy - how we use and exchange resources and how we provide wellbeing for people. It comes from the older term oeconomia, or oikonomia, the stewardship of a household."

Betsan says the Rio+20 UN Conference on sustainability may seem remote. This is because people have become disenchanted with the seeming failure of global agreements, and because the crises in Europe and the US dominate international news.



"Besides, we have so many pressing campaigns locally - the AFFCO workers, the sale of State assets, inequality, the reduction of jobs in the government sector. The news media have finally highlighted the negative impacts of the Trans Pacific Partnership. "All these causes are signs that point to the need to undertake a great transition and assume responsibility for the natural processes that sustain and renew our lives."

Rio+20 takes place 20 years after the 1992 Earth Summit when sustainability was put on the agenda of the global community.

Betsan says calls for sustainable development resonate with church people's covenant of stewardship and our reciprocal relationship with God that calls us to engage with the people and place around us.

"Stewardship in our time includes responsibility for the future of creation. This is presented in many ways: as protection of biodiversity, as nature conservation, as kaitiakitanga, and manaakitanga - taking care of land and people with generosity.

"The economy of today is parching our land, poisoning the air and polluting our water. Actions for stewardship bring springs of water to over-exploited land, cleansing to air and revival to rivers. They enable us to turn from the lament to re-creation," Betsan concludes.



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Quake-prone church buildings close in three North Island centres

By David Hill

Engineering reports have led Methodist parishes around the North Island to close church buildings.

At its 2011 Conference the Methodist Church of NZ approved a recommendation from its Connexional Property Committee to strengthen all church buildings to 67 percent of local seismic codes for new buildings.

This will pose some major challenges for the Methodist Church in the future. Congregations that have not suffered earthquake damage are not eligible for insurance payments if their buildings are faced with closure for repairs or demolition.

Hamilton

Hamilton Methodists have suffered a double blow with two earthquake prone church buildings recently closed.

Waikato-Wairariki Synod superintendent Rev Dr Susan Thompson says St Pauls Methodist Church in London Street and St Johns Hamilton East Methodist Church were closed after engineering assessments deemed them both to be under the seismic strength code.

“Both parishes have asked for a second, more detailed engineering report that would give an idea of what needs to be repaired, what work needs to be done and the costings.”

Susan says St Pauls was built in 1904 and the St Johns congregation celebrated its centennial in 2010.

“St Johns was built of concrete block at a time when buildings weren't reinforced like they are now. St Pauls is wooden but hasn't got the right bracing so it wouldn't hold up in an earthquake.

“The Canterbury earthquakes



St Paul's, London Street, Hamilton.

have made us take the issue seriously because we realise if it can happen in Christchurch it can happen in other parts of the country. So making our buildings safe for people to use is our first priority.”

There is no insurance funding to pay for the work.

“No-one wants to go through what Christchurch has gone through but it will be a lot more complicated for other areas to deal with these issues.

“The congregations have found the news hard. Both have other places to worship, so they're able to continue their worship life. They are getting good support from Synod and the wider church.

“The President has written to both congregations with his support and offering the prayers of the wider church.”

Both congregations face an uncertain future for their buildings. For now the St Pauls congregation is meeting in its Methodist Centre and St Johns in its hall.

Palmerston North

Palmerston North's 100-year-old St Pauls Methodist church building has been closed and the adjacent hall and lounge building

faces an uncertain future.

Manawatu Methodist minister Rev Bob Franklin says an engineering assessment has found the hall and lounge building is below the 33 percent threshold but it is safe to use for now.

“We are awaiting a more detailed report at this stage. We are holding our breath.

“The buildings here are in three parts: the old worship area which has been mainly used as an arts and theology centre, the hall and lounge, and the new worship centre.”

Bob says the new worship centre has been deemed to be more than 67 percent of the building code. The fate of the hall and lounge is the most concerning as it is so well used by both church and community.

Until a more detailed engineering assessment is completed the congregation will not know the fate of either building. However, Bob says this is a good opportunity to look to the future.

“The reality is 67 percent is going to be the benchmark. It is no good just repairing a building to 33 percent.

“As churches we need to have



St Paul's, Broadway Avenue, Palmerston North.

a good hard look at our buildings and ask what is going to be functional for ourselves and for our communities in the future. If the space is only used once a week is it the best use of God's resources?

“The closure is going to be a major financial strain. We have groups here that work in the community and use our facilities so it is going to be a bit of a challenge all around.”

Napier

Napier's Trinity Methodist Church Sunday School building survived the 1931 Napier Earthquake but the latest building codes will soon see its demise.

Trinity minister Rev Tony Franklin says the 83-year-old building was officially closed at the end of April after an engineering assessment deemed it unsafe. It will be demolished.

“It did survive the Napier earthquake, but the building apparently did endure some damage. The conjecture is it was probably never built up to standard in the first place.

“The main thing now is to demolish the building and then the question after that is 'what do we do with the site?' What are the

needs of the church and the community in the medium term?”

Tony says the building was primarily used as a community space, so its demise will not be a big disruption on parish life.

“It was getting negligible use. A couple of groups did use it but it probably wasn't the best utilisation of resources.”

No insurance pay-out is pending.

“Doing a \$1 million repair job for a building you rent out at \$10 an hour is not a very good use of resources. So we will have to weigh up the needs of the parish and the community and what we can afford.

“We have got some money invested, but we are mindful of not using too much of that because it is helping our ministry stream.”

Luckily for the congregation, the parish's historic 1876 wooden church building more than meets the building codes, Tony says.

“It will now be the only building in central Napier that predates the 1931 Napier earthquake. Ironically the city is more interested in its art deco buildings!”

Methodists and Catholics continue conversation

By Terry Wall

The national Church to Church dialogue between Catholics and Methodists met in Hamilton in March. We gave further attention to 'The Grace Given You In Christ', the 2006 statement of the international commission for dialogue between The Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council.

In chapter four the commission expresses the conviction that it has now arrived at principles that should guide the deepening relation between us.

Among the 12 principles articulated are the following: that dialogue will proceed on the basis of our common baptism; that Catholics and Methodists are committed to the goal of “full communion in faith, mission and sacramental life”; each accepts the members of the other church as fellow Christians and their churches as “ecclesial communities in which the grace of salvation is present and effective”; and each church “respects each other's ecclesial life and discipline, instruments of authority and ordained ministries, and therefore extend due courtesy in their mutual relations at every level”.

The document then goes on to identify practical proposals based on the existing degree of shared belief, the existing degree of mutual recognition and for the mutual exchange of gifts in relation to full communion in faith, in sacramental life and in mission.

Discussion was animated and it is hoped that the New Zealand conversations will be able to bring specific proposals to our two Churches.

Rev David Poultney offered a stimulating paper on mission in a post-Christian milieu. He traced the

process of secularisation in Western societies and demonstrated how the church's position had changed. With patterns of disengagement unparalleled Christians in the West will be able to tell the Christian story to people for whom it is entirely unknown. This presents an opportunity.

David argued that “in mission we are acting in a certain way because we believe this conveys something of what God is like.”

For the first time since the early church we can see ourselves as truly countercultural. David says for mission in our context we will need to take into account a series of moves: from the centre to the margins, from majority to minority, from settlers to sojourners, from privilege to plurality, from control to witness, and from institution to movement. Both Churches in the dialogue recognised these challenges.

Fr Merv Duffy was invited to the dialogue to speak on the sacrificial aspects of eucharist from a Catholic point of view. In an entertaining address he surveyed sacrificial language in the New Testament related to eucharist and then went on to show how this has remained a part of Catholic theology.

In the latter part of his address he considered the work of the Catholic missionary to New Zealand Fr J. A. M. Chouvet in the 1840s. Through his research Merv uncovered an early chart entitled 'The True Vine' used in early Catholic catechesis in New Zealand. Being a family tree of the Church from a Catholic perspective it demonstrated relationships and the apostolic inheritance. Methodists had no part in The True Vine!

This reminded us of how far the dialogue and relationship between our two Churches had come.



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Vision for Canterbury rebuild begins to take shape



Jill Hawkey presents her suggestions for the Central South Island Synod's rebuild.

Central South Island Synod presbyters, superintendents and lay people gathered at red-zoned Wainoni Methodist Church last month to discuss a preliminary strategic plan for their post-earthquake future.

Strategic Planning Coordinator Jill Hawkey presented a discussion document based on the consultations and 'visioning sessions' she has held with congregations, youth groups, ministers and other denominations over the past eight months.

After her presentation, those attending the hui broke into discussion groups to discuss the thrust of the document. Jill and

general secretary Rev David Bush say the feedback afterwards indicates most people are in favour of proceeding as the discussion document suggests.

Jill says the core of the document is that the focus of efforts to rebuild the Methodist Church's damaged buildings should be on strengthening local community churches. The emphasis will be on multipurpose buildings that are appropriate for the congregation and can be used for community programmes run by the church or other groups.

The preliminary plan also calls for the Synod to support a small number of

gathered congregations that serve people who come from across the city such as the current Tongan and Fijian congregations, or where the ministry has a particular focus, which might include ministry to the inner city.

"Some denominations want to engage in church planting in the new housing areas that are being developed around Christchurch. My talks with people in the Connexion indicate Methodists want to stay and rebuild their presence in the communities they are in.

"Some congregations near the new suburbs may certainly want to look at mission there but it will not be through building new churches," Jill says.

While the emphasis is on local congregations, the strategic plan does not see them operating as independent units.

Rather they are encouraged to look at ways they can cooperate and share resources with other Methodist and Uniting congregations as well as congregations from other denominations in their part of the city.

"It is important that change is not imposed on people. No congregations will be forced to merge. I think Christchurch

churches will undertake some exciting initiatives but these cannot be imposed on them from above or people will simply vote with their feet and leave," Jill says.

Other points that came through the discussion were the needs to support young people and develop better bi-cultural ties.

Another was that the Synod's insurance money should be shared so no congregations are left to carry large financial burdens they cannot afford.

The case in point is Christchurch's Tongan congregation. They have had to leave their church building, not because of earthquake damage but because it does not meet the building code, a situation that is not covered by insurance payouts.

The next step is for Canterbury churches to develop vision statements that give a sense of their ministry and mission plans for the next 10 years and the resources required to fulfill these plans. Churches will define themselves and how they see their role in their communities. This will include people and financial resources they have and how they might join with others to build their ministry.

Jill says any buildings or complexes the Synod approves will be based on how they meet the needs of the parishes in relation to their vision statements.

"It is imperative that the types of facilities we build are in line with the mission plans for the church and the rebuild does not simply recreate what was there before."

Morley House moves from red to green



Badly shaken Morley House is no longer in the red zone.

Connexional staff took a small step toward recovery from the earthquakes last month when the Methodist office building Morley House was taken out of the red zone in Christchurch's CBD.

General secretary Rev David Bush says Morley House came out of the red zone on Saturday May 18th, and on the 21st Connexional staff gathered there to start the clean up.

Although there have been a few visits to the offices to get essential items, this was the first time many staff had returned since February 2011.

"We did tidying and preparation work prior to commercial movers coming in to remove everything," David says. "Nothing of note was

seriously damaged.

"There is not a lot left standing around Morley House now. It is one of the few remaining buildings on its block."

One of the key tasks will be to remove all material in the archives to a storage facility. Archivist Jo Smith says it will not be an easy job because the mobile shelving has been knocked off its tracks.

David says the Church is now awaiting engineering reports that will determine whether Morley House is to be repaired or rebuilt. If it is repaired, the ground floor will be removed so deep piles can be dug and the foundation strengthened.

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Pharmacy outreach avenue for trainee deacon

By Hilaire Campbell
For probationary deacon Megan Whitehouse working in a pharmacy is also a means of outreach and pastoral care.



Megan Whitehouse

Megan grew up in Devonport in a large churchgoing family where outreach was second nature. She had been a member of the Birkenhead Methodist parish for nearly 10 years when Trinity College principal Rev Dr David Bell suggested she do a one year training course to become a deacon.

In 2011 Megan trained with two other aspiring deacons, Mary Nicholas and Foata Tu'ipulotu, but they later changed track to become presbyters. That left Megan to be the first Methodist deacon to qualify in the 21st century.

She is spending her probationary year at the Beach Haven Church and she hopes to be ordained in November. Her supervisor is the Rev Sui Te'o from Zion Hill Church. "We have a good relationship and I meet

with her once a month to talk and plan."

Megan preaches several times a month and often takes a whole service. "I do anything and everything," she says, "except communion. For that you need special dispensation." She also runs the Worship in Life Committee and is on the Parish Council.

"My life has been very busy the last two years," she says. "Deacons aren't paid, so I work four afternoons a week at the local pharmacy. It's difficult because I'm not 9:00 to 5:00 like a presbyter. I'm more like the Vicar of Dibley, out all hours. I just wish the situations I'm called to could be resolved as harmoniously as hers."

Deacons build bridges between church and community, and Megan has a role in pastoral care through her employment at Beach Haven pharmacy, befriending people and helping avert crises. She recently dissuaded a 70 year old from suicide whose counselling appointment was weeks away.

"Megan has the backing of her congregation for this outreach ministry, and the pharmacy deserves congratulations for making it possible," says David. "Megan's ministry as a Methodist deacon has clear parameters but also positive benefits for the very small congregation in this needy area."

For six years she has been involved with a Mainly Music program at the local Anglican Church. It teaches parents how to interact with their kids, and Megan says a big draw card is her baking.

"Wherever I am I like to help, and that's what a deacon should be able to do." She says many people have deacon hearts, they just don't know it.

She shares with other deacons through email and convocation and says she forged strong friendships during training. She was inspired by many people including Tumuaki Rev Diana Tana, for her depth of knowledge and understanding. This year she's looking forward to the retreat at Wellspring as part of her preparation for ordination.

Many parishes are restricted by a chronic shortage of volunteers, Megan says.

"Congregations are aging, especially our Palangi ones, and they need young life

to nourish them. Samoan folk are somewhat better off in my area as they have a huge youth following. They are very resourceful with fundraising, and have lots of fun doing things like car washing."

She thinks if the family benefit was reinstated, mothers and fathers at home with kids might do more volunteer work. "At the moment they can't unless they've got a partner earning heaps. It's a bizarre situation."

The biggest problem Megan encounters is poverty. "People can't make ends meet," she says. Many depend on hand outs and they don't understand how the benefit system works.

"I see diabetics who need regular food but are without money for months at a time. Also, the suicide rate is high among our Pacific people because they feel too much pressure to succeed."

That's only part of the picture, but Megan says a deacon has fantastic opportunities for outreach. "It's what I want, and it's what God wants."

'Holy stirrers' gather to reflect on diaconal ministry

Methodist deacons gathered for a time of reflection, contemplation and discussion at a retreat in April.

Diaconate Task Group secretary Edna Evans says the retreat was held at Vaughan Park Anglican Centre on the North Shore, which is an ideal location because it is right on the beach. Trinity College chaplain Rev Liz Hopner led the retreat, assisted by Rev Val Nicholls.

Six deacons and one probationer deacon were present. Visitors included a former deaconess, and a presbyter probationer.

"Our time together was intentionally a quiet and reflective time and arose from conversations at Convocation in 2011," Edna says.

"Liz led us through devotional times, taught us to reflect, think

and feel through creative drawing, as well as in contemplative walks. She gave her time in personal spiritual direction.

"There were conversations on caring for ourselves so that we are more able to care for others. All of these were enriching in a time of change for us."

John and Brenda Fawcner presented a reflection on the pingao plant as metaphor for the diaconate.

They wrote that like the pingao, the diaconate thrives on the margin and has a protective role as an interface between the Church and the world. It sends its roots down deeply, drawing on deep spiritual resources that help to bring stability to the margin of the Church.

Edna says the deacons talked about being 'holy stirrers', dancing on the edge of the church, facing



Methodist deacons gathered to explore their ministry at a retreat in April.

outwards, building bridges.

"With Liz's help, we talked about how God speaks through our deepest feelings and yearnings. This helps connect us with God and the universe. We also reflected on anger and its impact on our

integrity."

Mission Resourcing director Rev Nigel Hanscamp joined the group on Saturday and facilitated discussion on the diaconate and diaconal ministry.

"We told him diaconal ministry is an aspect of church ministry that is crucial for the church's way forward. We understand church as offering worship, discipleship, service, witness and leadership. Deacons engage in ministry as servants and leaders to congregations.

"We noted that there has been

a shift in ministry boundaries over the last few years and the roles of presbyter, deacon and lay ministries are no longer so defined. We are hopeful these discussions will spark new life and clarify the direction we as a church will take in strengthening the diaconate."

Edna says the deacons are concerned that most parishes don't know what a deacon is or what their focus is to the wider community. A new brochure is being prepared and will be available soon.

Trinity College fashions learning for deacons

Trinity College offers several options for people who want to train to become a deacon.

These include the certificate program and the Licentiate in Ministry studies, LiMS.

Trinity College principal Rev Dr David Bell says deacons take on very specific community facing ministry.

"Deacons are on the cutting edge, doing tasks that are vital yet few others would want to tackle. It is not necessarily transferable. For example, Megan Whitehouse's diaconal ministry occurs within clear parameters.

"Diaconal ministry is very different from presbyteral ministry. The presbyter of a congregation is the one who faces the congregation, leads the congregation, represents the congregation, and is involved with the community life and fellowship of the congregation. He or she is the sacramental minister of the congregation.

"A deacon, however, serves a congregation by representing it in the wider community. Not

necessarily called to preach or celebrate sacraments or play the presbyter's leading role, a deacon serves anywhere and everywhere in the wider community," he says.

Both ministries must be accountable to their congregation, synod and the wider Connexion.

Why are there so few deacons? That's an interesting question, David says.

"Maybe the church hasn't quite understood the role and functions of diaconal ministry. Maybe deacons haven't had sufficient space and resources to properly explain their ministries.

"One thing is certain - in the United Methodist Church in the United States, the ministry of the deacon is flourishing. You can be an evangelist or a preacher, a prophet or a teacher but we're especially interested in deacons and miracle workers."

To learn more about the ministry of deacon, contact Trinity College and ask to enrol in the intensive course WS106 Christian Vocations in the 21st century.



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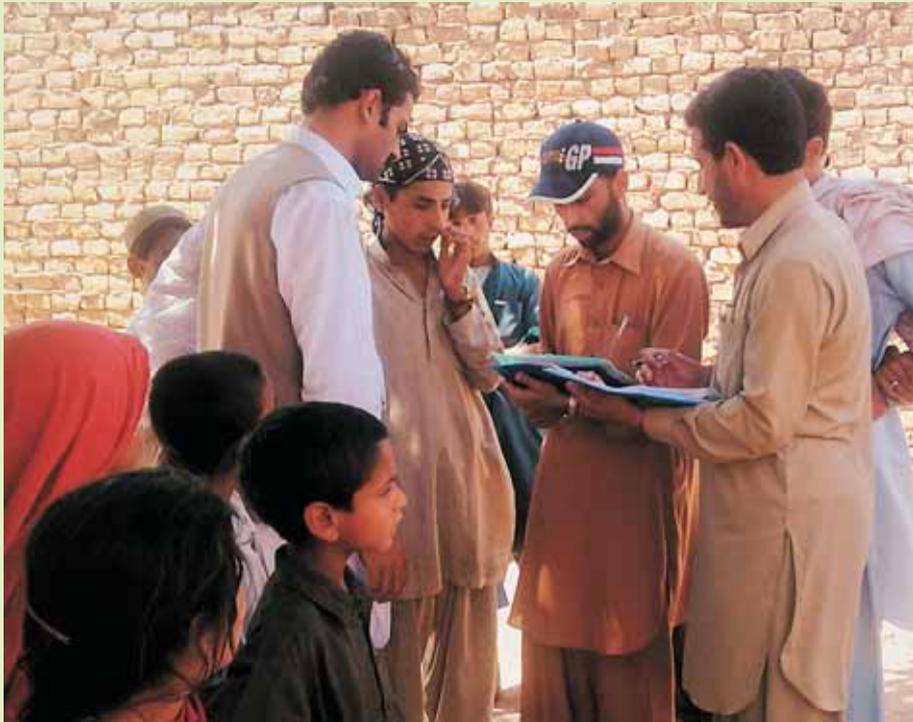
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Review shows CWS part of effective response



An independent review found the response by Christian aid agencies to the devastating 2010 floods in Pakistan was largely effective.

Emergencies flicker across our television screens and then they are gone but organisations like Christian World Service are keenly interested in what happens next.

Evaluation of the emergency response is an opportunity to learn lessons, work

out what communities still need, and make contingency plans for next time disaster strikes. The best humanitarian response focuses on the needs of those affected, and make sure that communities are put on a sound footing for the future. CWS has received the findings of an

independent evaluation carried out in Pakistan for the Action by Church Together (ACT) Alliance of which it is a member, the first step in this review process.

In July 2010 Pakistan experienced record flooding that affected 18 million people - more than the 2005 Pakistan Earthquake, the 2004 Asian tsunami and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti combined. The death toll was quite low but the damage extensive. Delivering assistance was made more difficult because of the destruction of roads, bureaucratic delays, threats of terrorist attacks and the initial mistrust of nongovernmental agencies by some parts of society.

The independent review found that the overall effectiveness of the programmes was high and communities expressed a high level of satisfaction and impact. The coordination between the three ACT Alliance members was good but there was room for more collaboration.

They noted some weaknesses in providing targeted assistance including to minorities and good work with local groups. Most communities received initial help within a month - remarkable in an emergency where the world was slow to respond.

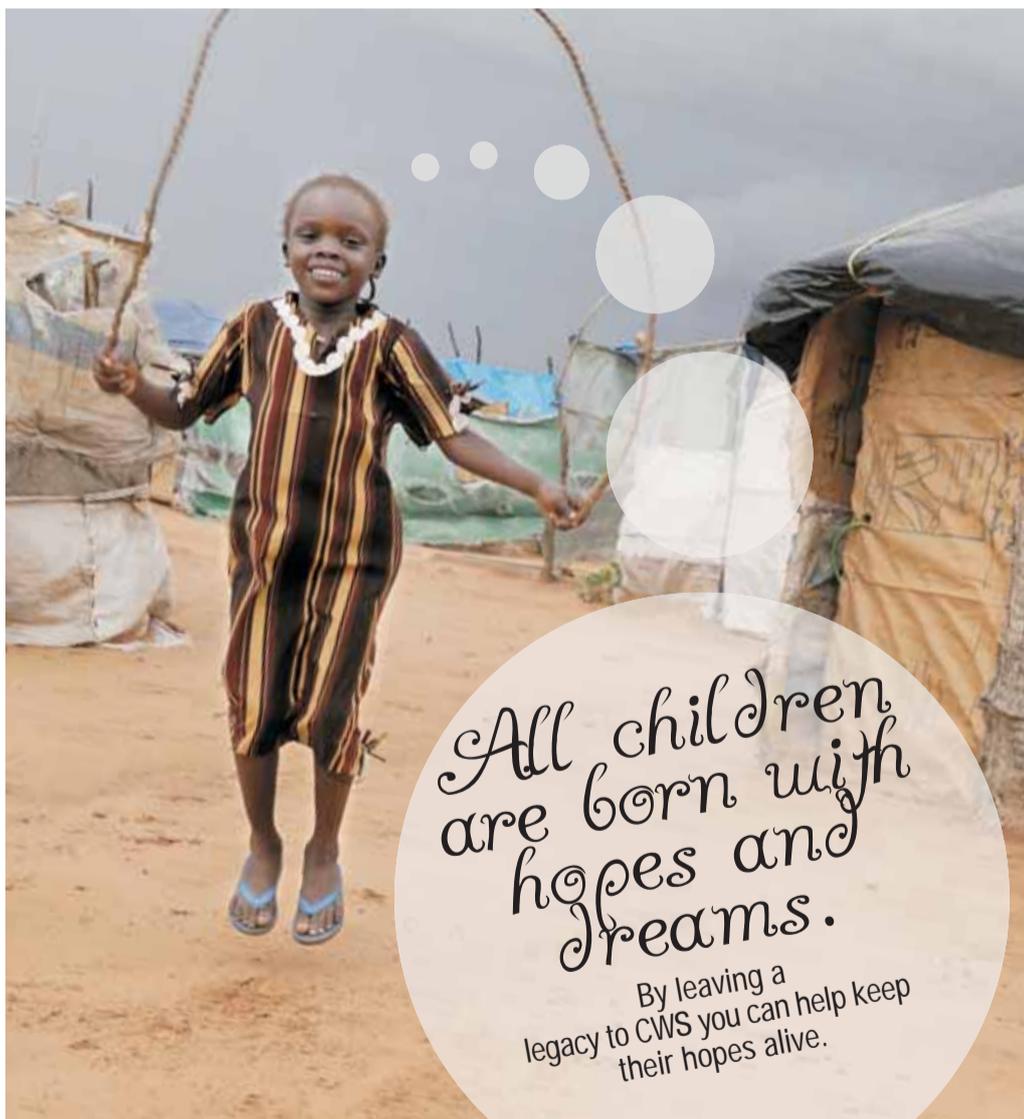
However, more assistance could have

been given in the recovery period where families needed extra help to get back on their feet. Two key areas where more work needs to be done are on gender and disaster risk reduction.

In reporting back the reviewers noted that the people had not all recovered from the disaster. Farmers have not been able to replenish their herds, communities have lost local shops and services, and the impact on the local and household economies has been huge. Disasters of this magnitude have a huge developmental impact that goes beyond the US\$10 billion economic cost.

The ACT Alliance members launched an appeal before the United Nations. The three member agencies provided: food, non-food items like blankets, temporary shelter, water, sanitation, health, hygiene and livelihoods for around 100,000 families.

CWS is grateful to church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs support which enabled \$242,707.05 to be sent for the response. Worldwide the ACT Alliance appeal raised more than US\$14 million providing much needed assistance in the four provinces affected.



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Faith-based development faces hurdles worldwide

Christian World Service is not alone in the challenges it faces as a faith-based aid and development agency says national director Pauline McKay.

This was one of the main themes to emerge from a recent World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting at the Chateau de Bossey in Switzerland.

Pauline attended the meeting in her capacity as the Heads of Agency Core Group member representing Canada, Australia, United States, and New Zealand (CAUSNZ). The trip was paid for by the WCC.

The meeting looked at recent developments in the WCC and introduced the programme for 2013.

Members also took time to look back and note that the international benchmark for Overseas Development Aid (ODA) of 0.7 percent of GDP was originally proposed at the fourth WCC Assembly held in Uppsala in 1968.

This benchmark target has since been adopted by the UN as a guideline for ODA. New Zealand's current level of ODA is 0.28 per cent.

"By far the most interesting part of these meetings for me is not just the historical achievements but when we share what we are doing as agencies in the present," Pauline says.

The feeling of isolation that New Zealand faith based agencies like Christian World Service can experience was dispelled at the meeting.

One of the catalysts for the sharing was discussion of the role of the specialised ministries in Assembly. The scene setter for this was a talk from ACT Alliance deputy director, Rebecca Larson on the changing development scene.

She laid out six key challenges including the global one of the shrinking of the democratic space for civil society in many countries.

Along with this decreased area for open debate of ideas were other deeper demographic challenges like the fact that the global population is becoming younger overall.

How to deal with climate change pragmatically and with their future interests in mind was another related challenge.

Then there was the hefty challenge for the aid and development community which had been traditionally dominated and driven by the northern hemisphere nations to adapt to economic and political change.

The emergence of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) was a developing challenge to how aid and development was provided and received.

It is worth noting that recently one of the leaders of a major Indian political party, Finance Minister, Pranab Mukherjee stated that his party did not want future aid from Britain. It was "peanuts".

Balancing out the assertive emergence of India as an emergent economic powerhouse it should be noted that 20 per cent of India's population still lives in poverty.

The meeting acknowledged that negotiating challenges like this will transform the face of aid and development in future years.

Pauline said that the final challenge many participants could identify with was the loud and public questioning from traditional funders of ODA programmes about whether ODA was needed at all.

Attempts to reshape aid and development policy to better serve national, not recipient interests coupled with calls for vastly increased private sector participation were not confined to Aotearoa/New Zealand.

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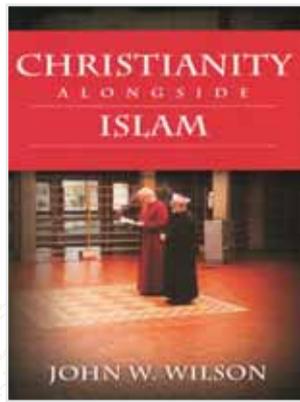
Christian World Service is the development, justice & aid programme of New Zealand Churches.

Christianity alongside Islam

In this very readable and beautifully illustrated book, Dr John Wilson has provided us with an excellent introduction to the history, practice and modern day interaction of Christianity and Islam. There are scholarly and extensively referenced chapters on Jesus and Muhammad, Jesus in the Bible and the Qur'an, Confessing God in Islam and Christianity, Conversion, Faith and Politics, Human Rights and Women in Christianity and Islam.

John served as assistant Anglican Bishop in the Diocese of Melbourne from 1985-2007. He has travelled widely and takes a great interest in the Churches of Africa, Asia and the Pacific. He writes as both a committed Christian, and as someone with a well-informed respect for Islam.

He highlights the immense political significance of both Christianity and Islam, the two largest world religious communities. He states that his book "has been written to help people move beyond prejudice into a genuine understanding of Islam. We do not need any more hate in



the world; there is a surplus already".

The daunting issue of Islamic terrorism is explored in depth and put in context in an excellent chapter entitled 'Religion, violence and peacemaking'.

A highlight for me was the reminders this book provides of how much Christians and Muslims share in common. Both faiths, in their purest forms, cry out for humankind to return to God, be obedient to God, and work for peace and justice in our world.

In his final chapter, John writes, "Both Christians and Muslims believe that there is a divine providence at work in the world, demonstrated by its bounty and beauty, and also in historical events. Believers have a sense of who they are in the Universe and the kind of life God intends them to live."

Although John is a Christian there is no sense in which he would seek to intentionally convert individual Muslims to the Christian faith. His focus here is on increasing understanding and building respect between members of

these two great world religions, rather than resourcing or encouraging the Christian evangelisation of Muslims.

His overview of history is honest in its portrayal of the mistakes made by members of each faith. The diversity of belief present in each faith is highlighted as an explanation for some of the violence between Christians and Muslims in the past.

Appendix 1 supplies a helpful list of books for inclusion in personal, school and University libraries. Appendix 2 provides a wonderful glossary of Arabic and Islamic terminology. Muslim readers will find the "Glossary of Christian terms in common use" in Appendix 3 useful.

There is a wealth of material here for both personal and group study. To live harmoniously alongside each other, Christians and Muslims need to be more informed about one another's faith. If you are looking for a good place to start to help you explore the historical interrelationship and modern day interaction of Christianity and Islam in some depth, this is the book for you. Highly recommended.

Rev Greg Hughson belongs to the Dunedin Abrahamic Interfaith Group. See www.dunedininterfaith.net.nz.

By John Wilson
2010, Acorn Press, 410 pages,
Reviewer: Greg Hughson

Being Gay, Being Christian - You Can Be Both

By Stuart Edser
2012, Exisle Publishing, 248 pages
Reviewer: David Poultney

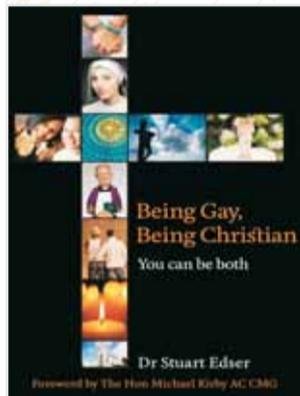
There are now a number of books that address the situation of lesbian and gay Christians. This reflects the prominence of the on-going debates about homosexuality in the churches. Stuart Edser's book is the latest edition to this body of work.

An Australian psychologist, a gay man and a Christian; his personal journey is compelling and sets the tone for this book. He started off life as a Roman Catholic and was very devout as a child, to the point where he spent some of his school years in a school that prepares boys to candidate for ordination.

In his late teens he was attracted to Evangelicalism and joined the Uniting Church before becoming involved in the establishment of an independent charismatic church. He was involved in church leadership and was a popular preacher. However, he was aware that he was attracted to men and he sought deliverance through prayer and exorcism which simply compounded his self-loathing to the point where he contemplated suicide.

This prompted him to engage in psychotherapy and to reconstruct his life.

Stuart offers a passionate affirmation that yes you can



be gay and Christian and that gay Christians should be able to take as full role as their straight co-religionists. He condemns what he describes as the violence, disdain and contempt that characterises Christian attitudes both to the gay community and to lesbians and gays in the churches.

He also condemns the aversion therapy that used to be offered by psychiatrists to 'cure' homosexuality and the reparative therapies offered by some Christian groups as forms of abuse. He offers a thorough account of biological research on homosexuality to demonstrate that that same sex attraction is a part of the human

condition and is therefore natural.

This is an important reiteration as some Christians regard homosexuality as a wilful deviance and as something unnatural. He engages with the biblical texts cited frequently in Christian deliberations about homosexuality. The interpretations he offers are generally familiar to biblical scholars.

He occasionally slips into polemic; for example he questions why conservative Christians have generally made

peace with divorce despite biblical injunctions but are so unmoving on homosexuality.

Stuart also critiques Roman Catholic arguments rooted in the Natural Law tradition. He is particularly scathing about a letter from Pope Benedict (then Cardinal Ratzinger) which described homosexual orientation as "an intrinsic moral disorder."

This is an eloquent, powerful book that I would recommend particularly to a gay or lesbian Christian struggling with coming out. Yet I would offer a note of caution: while Stuart is powerful and eloquent, his anger often surfaces as sarcasm.

Part of the problem with this debate is each side draws on its own resources when they need to listen civilly to each other.

I disagree with an observation Stuart makes that informs his book. He says that in the term 'gay Christian' gay precedes Christian and that we cannot change sexual orientation though we can leave our religion behind. Well yes; however I would argue passionately that the great defining truth of any Christian's life is their Christian identity. I am a Christian who happens - amongst many other things - to be gay; a subtle but crucial difference.

Sing Along with the Yoots

The Yoots
2011, Economy Records, 12 songs
Reviewer: John Thornley

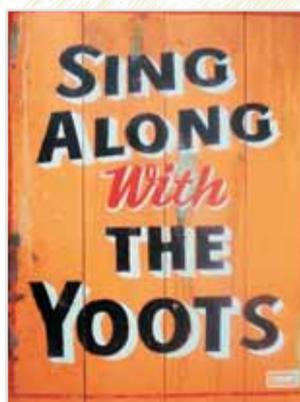
The Yoots are a 12-piece Wellington instrumental group whose latest CD, Sing Along with the Yoots, covers 12 classic songs taken from what its leader, Joe Lindsay, describes as 'the Maori NZ Song Book'.

The songs include many that will be much-loved waiata/himene for readers of Touchstone: Nga Iwi E, E Te Ariki, Hoki Mai, Tutira Mai and Po Atarau, to name five of the songs.

The group performs the songs at festivals, outdoor celebrations including Waitangi Day, and early this year, were guests at the Womad festival in New Plymouth.

The words in te reo Maori are put on a board held up on the stage, and the audience are invited to join in singing.

Joe Lindsay was asked how well the festival folk respond to joining in the singing, and he replied, "Yeah, it's a perfect



fit. Just depends on whether people bring their singing voices and get into the whole spirit of it. We want everyone to sing and sing with their kids. Benjamin, my son, has got the right idea. He just grabs the mic and there's no holding him back."

The Yoots' music draws on Caribbean and southern US styles (the group defines their sounds as 'something between Calypso-Ska and Country-Soul'). A variety of rhythms reflect the changing moods in the lyrics, covering key human themes for NZers: the importance of having a family/whanau base, knowing your past,

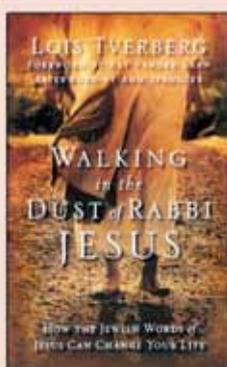
honouring the Treaty, giving praise to God, thanks for those who served in war and pleas for peace, working cooperatively not individually, importance of love between two people, and the pleasures of poi and dancing.

For the faster tracks, the band provides excellent music for community dancing but quieter tracks invite solitude and more sombre reflection. A good example of this is Pupu Ake Mai, a stick-game song, whose words in the English paraphrase say: 'The holy spring burst forth / just like the old lady sitting here / Of whom do we speak?' Papatuanuku / an eponymous entity / sheltering from the tears.'

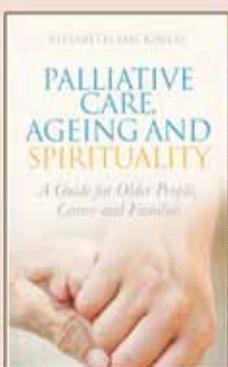
The rituals of contemporary rock events occasionally display evidence of the spiritual realm, and this is certainly true of the Yoots artistic contribution. The inclusion of the lyrics in both te reo Maori and with paraphrases in English is a valued component to the CD package.

The bicultural foundations of our country are celebrated in an engaging style.

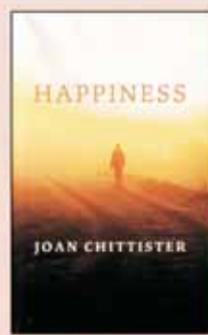
So far, as Bob Marley said, I've just been 'dancing from within' with the speakers playing the Yoots in my home lounge. I look forward to joining the next outdoor event where they are the guest performers!



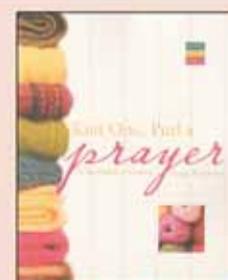
Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus
Lois Tverberg helps us gain a richer, deeper understanding of Jesus' ministry by examining his key teachings in their Jewish context. Engaging. Hbk. \$37.99*



Palliative Care, Ageing and Spirituality
Elizabeth MacKinlay provides people nearing the end of life, their loved ones, and those who work with them, with a new understanding of the spiritual issues around death & dying. \$39.00*



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ON SCREEN

A film review by Steve Taylor

KONY 12

An optimist, a cynic and a theologian sat down to share a latte and change the world.

The optimist wanted to do something...anything. He left the cafe and flew to Africa. His heart broke, bled in a thousand pieces in a country he didn't understand, among a culture that was never his.

Being a Westerner, he came armed with a video camera. He used it to shoot footage of crying children, dense bush, and men with guns.

He returned to form an organization, and coined it 'Invisible Children'. He gathered donations - a third for film, a third for expenses, a third for programmes grounded in Africa.*

He began to recruit, drawing together a staff skilled in film-making and media industries. Carefully they edited the video, manipulated the sound bites, added graphics and sourced the emotional background music. And so was born Kony 12.

The cynic snorted when he saw it. A lifetime exposed to world hunger and media manipulation had left a well-practised sneer. He googled 'Kony 12' and pressed 'like' on all the criticisms.

What is the budget? Who funded this? Where is the conspiracy? What if it fails? Is the US there simply because of oil? Will this simply inoculate people against the next tragedy?

While he complained, 'Kony 12' became a media sensation, watched on the Internet by nearly 90 million views.

The theologian's teenage child suggested she watch the video on YouTube. Pressing play, she smiled at the gospel echoes in the sound bites - 'the value of all human life', 'a bunch of little could make a huge difference', 'the unseen became visible'.

She pondered the difficulty of fitting story, slogan, sound bite into the words 'nuance' and 'complexity'. She recalled the words of challenge from African youth leader Teddy Ruge: "Did I ask you to sell my story for an action kit to make uninformed college students feel good?"

Time went by and later, the optimist, the cynic and the theologian bumped into each other once again in a crowded city.

Proudly, the optimist noted how Kony was now a household name. 'We're making the world a better place,' he said.

The cynic was unconvinced. 'Surely there must be more to life than making Facebook a better world.' He mentioned the 'S' word - 'slacktivism' - the idea that sharing, liking or re-tweeting across the social web will solve a problem.

The theologian pulled a book from her handbag and read from Teresa of Avila. "I particularly notice in certain persons ... that the further they advance ... the more attentive they are to the needs of their neighbours."

Which means, suggested the theologian, that Kony serves a purpose. It is a way to pay attention to the needs of our neighbour.

Yet Kony must advance. Eyes that watch a video, and hands that 'like' a link, need feet that carry them to meet their needy neighbours face to face. Wouldn't that be a video worth making!

*Publicly available financial accounts of Invisible Children suggest nearly 25 percent of its

\$8.8m income last year was spent on travel and film-making and about 30 percent went toward programmes in Africa.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is Director of Missiology, Uniting College, Adelaide. He writes widely in areas of theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.



THINKING ABOUT PENTECOST

Pentecost is one of three mega-festivals of the Liturgical Year. As at Easter and Christmas, something life-changing occurred, exactly what is mystery, and can only be described by story and symbols.

There would be no Christian Church had the followers of Jesus not been changed from a group of mourners to an inspired group of visionaries. It was once traditional to wear white clothes to celebrate Pentecost as a time for baptism but now some congregations advocate wearing red, yellow or orange to symbolise being 'on fire' with the Holy Spirit.

This puzzle differs slightly from usual. The clue words, though found in the references given, are not (for the first two words) taken from the actual Pentecost story.

Bible Challenge

Pent = 5; Pentecost was ___ days after Easter
 Pentecost is called the ___ of the Church
 Traditionally Pentecost was a time for ___
 Pentecost was ___ days after the Ascension
 Some bystanders thought the disciples were ___
 Europeans wore ___ clothes for Whitsun marches
 The Season of Pentecost is also called ___ Time
 Red is the ___ colour for Pentecost

Red reminds of ___ and the blood of martyrs
 Pentecost was the opposite of what happened at ___
 Christian festivals should be celebrated with ___
 Joel prophesied God would ___ out the Spirit on everyone
 The Sunday after Pentecost is called ___ Sunday

___ assumed the leadership role at Pentecost
 All the ___ were gathered together
 They heard the noise of a strong ___
 The Holy ___ enabled them to speak fluently
 ___ of fire appeared to touch each person
 A large crowd gathered, all were ___
 The people were filled with amazement and ___
 All understood the ___ speech
 Each heard in their own ___ language

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 ___ C ___
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 ___ T ___

GNB
 Gn 18:24
 Mt 14:6
 Ac 19:3
 Lk 15:8
 1Sm 25:36
 Mt 5:36
 Ac 4:13
 in intro
 Dn 3:22
 Gn 11:9, RSV
 Ps 5:11
 Jo 2:28
 2Cor 13:13
 Ac 2:14
 Ac 2:1
 Ac 2:2
 Ac 2:4
 Ac 2:3
 Ac 2:6
 Ac 2:7
 Ac 2:7
 Ac 2:8

Answers: fifty, birthday, baptism, ten, drunk, white, Ordinary, liturgical, flames, Babel, joy, pour, Trinity; Peter, believers, wind, Spirit, tongues, excited, wonder, Galileans, native

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Smethurst Trust supports NZ women

The Smethurst Trust Fund is a valuable financial resource administered by the New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship. It is available to women in New Zealand and in some cases women of the South Pacific.

When Ada Smethurst of Auckland died in 1945, she bequeathed her home to the Methodist Women's Missionary Union for the use of missionary sisters and deaconesses working at home and overseas. (The MWMU became the Methodist Women's Fellowship in 1964).

For a number of years the property was well utilised by the sisters, but as time passed it was used less and less. In 1981 the home was sold. To many this seemed the sad end of an era but as is often the case a new and exciting era was born.

The Smethurst Trust Fund was set up as a result of the sale of Smethurst House and since that time has helped many women discover their potential in different ways.

Assistance has been provided with education, courses for self-improvement, and attendance at secular and church related conferences in New Zealand and overseas. Chaplains, writers, preachers, child educators, nurses, counsellors and youth workers are some of the people who have been supported with monetary assistance from the fund.

Women in Methodist parishes and in Union or Cooperating parishes with a Methodist component are eligible to apply.

Application forms and guidelines for those wishing to apply for grants are available from district MWF secretaries or may be downloaded from the MCNZ web-site www.methodist.org.nz under Methodist Women's Fellowship.

Applications may be made at any time. No retrospective grants are made. All grants are made at the discretion of the Grants Committee which meets three times a year, in April, July and November.

Further information is available from Catherine Dickie, phone: 07 850 1556 or e-mail: camjo.dickie@xtra.co.nz.



Young People



Filo Tu is heading to the island of Crete to serve as a steward for the World Council of Churches.

By Joshua Robertson

QUESTION: What is the connection between Petone, Wellington and Crete, Greece? ANSWER: Filo Tu. Don't get it? Then read on...

Recently 25-year old Filo of the Wesley Methodist Multicultural Church, Petone was selected to represent the Methodist Church of NZ at the World Council of Churches (WCC) Stewards Programme in Crete.

After originally applying to the Methodist Church of NZ Mission and Ecumenical Committee, his application was

Filo's going to Greece!

endorsed for submission to the WCC for their consideration along with over 250 other applications from around the globe. Filo was one of 30 successful applicants selected to attend this prestigious programme to be held in Crete in August.

WCC is a fellowship of churches that confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The WCC brings together 349 churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries throughout the world. It represents more than 560 million Christians and including most of the world's Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.

The main WCC headquarters is based at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva,

Switzerland

The WCC Stewards Programme that Filo will attend is a unique event that provides an opportunity for participants to deepen their knowledge of ecumenical movements and find inspiration for further work towards the unity of the Church.

It brings together a diverse group of young people to participate in leadership training seminars, and to serve at WCC governing body meetings. The leadership training seminars equip young people with skills and resources to continue their work on issues important to the churches at the regional and local levels.

Filo is no stranger to overseas travel in a youth rep capacity. He previously travelled to Tonga and Australia as part of NZ Methodist Youth delegations. Filo is very active within his local parish, synod and the wider Methodist Church of NZ.

He is currently one of the two national youth liaison officers for the Sinoti Samoa

and has just recently been appointed as the parish administrator of the Hutt City Uniting Congregations (HCUC) Parish in Wellington.

Filo already has a Bachelor of Arts degree (in Pacific Studies and Geography) from Victoria University and is currently studying theology through Otago University.

As is most often the case with people who succeed, strong family support is ever present. His parents, Fepulea'i and Selesa Tu, are pillars of strength for Filo. Filo also serves as a fine role model for his five younger siblings and young people in general.

Ecclesiastes 12: 1 - Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.

We congratulate you Filo and wish you all the best with the upcoming experience in Greece.

God bless!

Kidz Korner!

Winter is here. The weather is much colder, many trees have lost their leaves and I am enjoying my walks across the park near where I live as my feet crunch through the drying leaves! Remember, last month I asked you to send me a story about what you did for Pentecost? I'm looking forward to hearing from some of you.

Wesley College visits Hamilton

Recently some students from Wesley College paid a visit to St John's, Hamilton East Methodist Church. They attended Sunday morning service, which was led by Wesley College principal Ian Faulkner.

Afterwards everyone had a barbeque and the St John's youth group entertained the Wesley students.

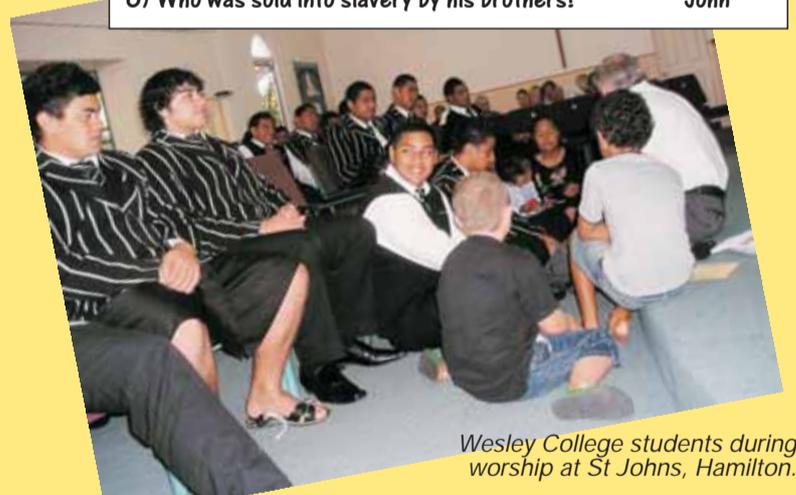
Wesley College head boy Fereti Ne'emias says it was a great experience for both students and staff to worship with the congregation.

The visit was a way of thanking the congregation for the financial support for two

former Wesley students. It was also a special visit for Sione and Maama Molitika who are members of St John's and students at the College.

"The service made me realise the very close relationship that the school has with the Methodist Church of New Zealand - Te Hahi Weteriana o Aotearoa. Being the only Methodist school in New Zealand is something quite special.

"I hope that in the future we continue to build strong relationships, not only with St John's but with all the other parishes in the church."



Wesley College students during worship at St Johns, Hamilton.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE - Q & A

Can you match the questions in A with the answers in column B?

A	B
1) Who was Jacob's youngest child?	Samuel
2) Which baby was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter?	Jesus
3) What did Elizabeth and Zachariah call their baby?	Joseph
4) Who was brought to Eli while still a baby?	Moses
5) Who was 12 years old when his parents lost him?	Benjamin
6) Who was sold into slavery by his brothers?	John

For the Bookshelf

GOD LOVES ME BIBLE

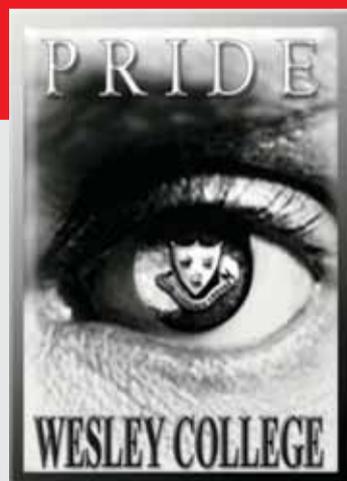
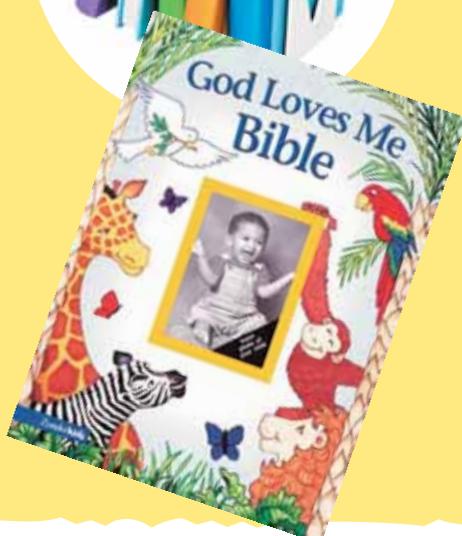
By Susan Elizabeth Beck

Publisher: Zondervan

This is a small format book with simple stories about the lives of around 50 biblical characters. Some of the people like Moses and the disciples will be known to young children. Others, such as Joash and Esther, are not so well known.

The book is beautifully illustrated, with colourful pictures that would appeal to young children. The front cover has a slot where parents can put a photo of their own child.

This would be a great gift to give to a child at their baptism.



ENROLMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Wesley College is an integrated Christian multi-cultural school with a Methodist character.

Located at Paerata 7 Km North of Pukekohe.

Boys are enrolled in Year 9 - 13 (Form 3 to Form 7)

Girls are enrolled in Year 11 - 13 (Form 5 to Form 7)

Enrolments are now being taken for the 2013 year.

CONTACT DETAILS

Parents of prospective students are invited to contact the College for application information.

Phone (09) 237 0224 • Fax (09) 238 3582
Email: barbaran@wesley.school.nz



Keith Taylor is retiring - Yeah, right!

Grand finale - Rev Keith Taylor's last service

By Diana Roberts

Nobody asked Keith Taylor how many services he's taken in more than 45 years of ministry but there must have been thousands.

He may have been remembering some of these as he took his final service on 6th May 2012 at Mt Albert Methodist Church, where he has just ended a four-year postretirement stint of supply ministry.

Music is a strong tradition at Mt Albert, and the church choir sang its heart out for Keith and his partner Trish. Musos 'n' Faith, a group of young singers who have developed during Keith's ministry, raised the roof with their joyful sounds, to the delight of a very diverse congregation.

The pews were filled with the old faithful who've been attending for many years, and with them sat newcomers from Africa, India, and the Pacific Islands.

Children snuggled up or wandered around quietly. A baby boy was baptised, and a candidate for theological training was received into the membership of the Methodist Church of NZ, welcomed by President Rev John Roberts. Worship culminated in the celebration of Holy Communion.

In his farewell reflection, Keith talked about the influences that have shaped his ministry. They included involvement with refugees, the call to work for social justice, multicultural and interfaith issues, and the worship style of the Taize community.

He expressed his appreciation of the Mt Albert congregation. He highlighted the way they share their talents, their willingness to work for church and community, and their faithfulness, generosity, openness and vision.

A magnificent lunch in the church hall provided an opportunity for speeches of thanks and appreciation to Keith and Trish. They were interspersed with interludes of lively entertainment.

In his response, Keith described himself as a conductor of a band, choir or orchestra who enables others to join in the interpretation and presentation of the life-giving music of the Good News of the Gospel of Christ.

He officially retired and superannuated several years ago, yet he stressed that for him there's no such thing as retirement. Bravo Maestro! Encore!

Kaleidoscope of fashion and flowers successful fundraiser



Art Deco fashion and floral displays were highlights of Lindesfarne Methodist Church's fundraiser.

Invercargill's Lindisfarne Methodist Church held a colourful and creative fundraising event in March. The 'Kaleidoscope of Flowers, Fine China and Art Deco' fashion day raised more than \$2000 and provided lots of fun to the Church and community.

Dorothy King and Betty Snell were two of the organisers of the event.

They say a highlight of the event was an Art Deco fashion parade put on by sisters Diana and Sandra Brough. Diana made most outfits, which were reproductions of original 1920s and 1930s designs. Their

hairdos and makeup were in keeping with the style of the era, and their accessories helped give a real 1920s look.

Designer florist Shani Hopgood demonstrated creative floral arrangements that combined flowers with cupcakes, hearts, jellybeans and other items.

"We were inspired to try to do some of these at home. These were auctioned at the end of the day."

One room of the church was dedicated to antique china collections. Betty and Dorothy say the settings were beautifully put together in colour themes. Many famous and well known manufacturers were featured.

The males were not left out. A 'bloke's corner' held a display of old tools and other antique equipment appealing to men (and others).

Modern floral displays of fascinating arrangements were placed around the church. These were created by Anna King.

"We had a stall where visitors were tempted to buy vintage linens, china, embroideries, and buttons as well as potpourris, jams, chutneys and pastes. It was a real shopper's delight."

A cup of tea was included in the \$10 entry fee for the event. Tables were beautifully set up with floral cups and saucers and flowers displayed on each table. Everyone was served at the tables by a trolley carrying tiered cake stands of delicious finger food and tea in silver teapots.

Betty and Dorothy say it was a successful fundraiser for Lindisfarne Church and an enjoyable occasion for all.

Missionary Sisters faced obstacles at home and overseas

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Lynne McDonald

In 1908 Rev Benjamin Danks wrote "Women who have been specially trained as nurses look upon themselves as different people altogether to women who have been simply trained in education matters... We need 'a real good, sensible Christian woman'". The nursing sisters from New Zealand who offered their services to the Methodist Mission in the Solomon Islands were undeterred by his statement.

Sister Lily White trained at Deaconess House in Christchurch, and then undertook her nursing training, gaining top marks in her examinations. She followed this with a mothercraft course in Dunedin.

After working at the Dudley Orphanage in Fiji, she returned home to care for her sick mother. In 1925 she was accepted for work in the Solomons, apparently against the wishes of the executive of the Methodist Women's Missionary Union (MWMU).

She relieved at Bilua, on Vella Lavella, and then she was appointed to Choiseul in 1926,



Sister Muriel Stewart and Dr Clifford James with medical orderlies and nurses.

where she worked at Senga on the east coast of the island. Here she assisted Rev Le Cornu Binet with medical work. In a 1928 report, Sister White was described as indefatigable in her work with the Senga people.

At the Solomon Islands District Synod held at Kokenggolo in 1928, however,

Sister White's suitability for mission work was discussed. It was decided that she should not return to the Solomons for a second term, as she had hoped to do, due to "a matter of temperament".

Rev John Goldie and Mrs Bowron, the president of the MWMU, also thought she was

unsuited for missionary work. No one had complained about her work, and she had, in fact, been praised for what she was doing, so the decision came as a shock to her. Sister White was allowed to continue to the end of her term, and then, when she returned to New Zealand on furlough, she was deemed unfit to return to the tropics by the missionary doctor, Edward Sayers.

Sister Muriel Stewart, from Te Aroha, was an experienced nurse and came to the mission highly recommended by Dr Clifford James, who had recently been appointed to the Methodist Mission. Before her departure for the Solomons she undertook midwifery training at St Helens Hospital in Auckland.

She was appointed to Choiseul in 1928. In his 1930 report, Doctor James described Stewart as 'an excellent nurse and a true missionary'. Sister Stewart wrote about her disappointment at not being able to do more midwifery work because Choiseulese women were reluctant to be treated by the male doctor. The midwife assisted the doctor but was not allowed to

deliver a baby by herself.

Dr James was concerned about Sister Stewart's health. He described her as 'run down' and he was afraid that if she was left alone at Senga after he returned to New Zealand she might contract a serious illness. He wanted to keep her under close supervision and so he requested that she return with him.

After arriving in New Zealand in 1932, she stayed with the James family and underwent further examinations to determine the cause of her constant high temperatures. She too was not allowed to return to the Solomons.

The activities of Methodist women missionaries on Choiseul made it possible to evangelise among the Choiseulese women. Their medical work meant that the high perinatal death rate among the women and babies was reduced. The tropical climate, as well as the personality of the women, and their relationships with the other missionaries, often dictated the success or failure of their ministry.

MERI NA TINAI JISU

Vakarautaka ko Rev Dr Ilaitia Tuwera

E vakayagataka nai Vola Tabu eso na iyaloalo me boroya se tukuna kina na vuravura nona na Kalou eda tiko kina oqo. Dua vei ira na iyaloalo oqori na were. Na vuravura sa nona were na Kalou ka cakacaka tikoga kina. Dua tale na vale. Sa nona vale na noda Kalou na vuravura. Era laveta cake vinaka na wekada lewe ni lotu Katolika e vuravura na itutu nei Meri ena itukutuku ni nona veivakabulai na Kalou, ka mai vakayacora ko Jisu Jisu Karisito.

Era dusia ni sa dodonu me okati na vuravura eda tiko vakatawa kina oqo me vaka edua na loma ni vale. Ka na tu yadua na loma ni vale meda curu kina ka sega na marama-tina me veiqaravi kina. Sai Meri na marama-tina eda raica ni veiqaravi tiko ena loma ni vale oqo. Eda raica eke edua

ga na gone yalewa sega ni kilai ka sega talega ni kawa vakatui se vakaturaga.

Rauta ni tiko ena maliwa ni 16 kina 18 na yabaki ni nona bula. Bulabula vinaka, dau mamarau ka dau veiqaravi. Edua ka rawa meda kaya ni vaka edua na senikau totoka ni nona koro. Ena nona yacova na itutu oqo me vakasucuma ki vuravura na luvena na Kalou, sa rawa meda kaya ni digitaki ko Meri ena nona yalo-savasava ka rerevaka na Kalou. Tu vakarau ko koya me vakayacora na ka ka kila ni sa inaki ni Kalou ena nona bula, ka sega ni lomalomarua kina.

Nona iyau na yalo malua kei na yalo malumalumu Kaya ko Luke: "Sa qai kaya ko Meri, raica na vada ni Turaga; me yaco ga vei au me vaka na nomuni vosa. A sa lako tani na agilosi mai vei koya" (1:38).

Na ilakolako balavu oya ki Peceliema e sega ni ka rawarawa vei Meri. Laki sucu na gone lailai ena vale ni manumanu. Ena sega ni dua na marama-tina me ciqoma vakarawarawa na nona sucu na luvena ena vale beci ka vaka tu oya. Ia, sa dei ko Meri ena vosa ka cavuta makawa ko Aisea na parofita, ka ratou vola talega na kosipeli sui-vata ena iVola Tabu vou: "Raica ena bukete edua na goneyalewa, ka na vakasucuma edua na gonetaganane, ka na vakayacani ko Imanueli: a kena ibalebale, na Kalou sa tiko vata kei keda" (Aisea 7: 14).

"Sa tubu cake ko Jisu, a sa yalomatua mai, sa sinai ena vuku; ka sa tu vei koya na loloma ni Kalou..." (Luke 2: 40). Ni se qai yabaki tinikarua ga, eda rogoca na nodratou lako vakavuvale ki Jeruisalemi

kina kana-vata-ni-lakosivia, me ratou tiko kina.

Sa dau nodra ivalavala na Jiu me ra saga mera tiko ena solevu vakayabaki oqo, ka kakua ni calata. Ena nodratou tiko mai kea, sa gu talega ko Jisu me curu kina valenisoro ka dabe vata kei ira na daunilawa, me vulica ka kila na lawa (Luke 2: 41-50).



Ilaitia Tuwera

E taleitaka vakalevu ko koya me vulica na lawa ka ni sa koto kina e vuqa sara na ka me baleta na ivakarau ni lotu vaka-Jiu, vakabibi na kena vulici na ivakarau ni bula ka vinakata na Kalou. Ena nodra lesu tale ki Nasareci ni oti na solevu, rau vakasaqarai Jisu o Meri kei Josefa ni rau sega ni raici koya rawa. E nanuma o Meri ni sa lako vata kei tamana ko Josefa; ka nanuma o Josefa ni sa tiko vata kei tinana ko

Meri. Ia, ni rau sa qai kila ni yali dina, rau sa mani vakusakusa lesu tale ki Jeruisalemi ka vaqarai koya tiko.

Ni oti e tolu na bogi (Luke 2: 46), rau sa qai kunei koya mai valenisoro ni tiko vata kei ira na daunilawa. E sega ni cudruvi koya ko Meri, ia e vaka me kurabui ka vakatarotaro vakalevu na lomana ena nona kaya: "Na luvequ, ko sa ivalavala vaka oqo vei keirau ena vuku ni cava? Raica o keirau kei tamamu keirau sa vakasaqarai iko ka sa rarawa tiko" (Luke 2: 48).

Sauma ko Jisu ka vaka: "Na cava drau sa vakasaqarai au kina? Drau sa sega beka ni kila ni sa kilikili kei au meu tiko ena vale nei Tamaqu?" (Luke 2: 49). Rau sa sega ni kila o Meri kei Josefa na ibalebale ni vosa oqo nei Jisu. Sa rawa meda raica na nona sa cauravou mai ka tekivu o Jisu me sa vavaca yani na bula era lakova taucoko na cauravou kei na goneyalewa ena veigauna. Ka sa sega talega ni rawarawa vei Meri na tinana me kila se ciqoma na veisau oqo ena bula ni luvena, ena nona itutu vaka-tina. Ia, sa tekivu me bibi vei Jisu na bula ka kacivi se talai mai kina mai vua na Kalou na tamana.

Na duidui ni rai se vakasama ka koto oqori ena loma ni vale nodratou na veitamani mai Nasareci e koto talega ena veivuvale kece sara, vakabibi ena gauna vou donuya kei na vanua vou eda mai bula kina.

Eda rogoca kina na veivosa eso nei Jisu ka sala vata kei na ka ka yaco oqo: "Ia ena nona meca na tamata ko ira na nona lewe ni vale" (Maciu 10:36); "O koya yadua ena muria na loma ni Kalou, sa

ikoya oqo na taciqa, se ganequ, se tinaqu" (Marika 3: 35). O Jisu e lewe lima tale na tacina kei na tuakana, ka lewe rua na ganena. Oqo ena mata-vuvale levu ka da kila vinaka mai Viti, Pasifika kei na veivanua ka tautauvata na ivakarau ni noda bula (extended family).

Na yasa ni bula dina vaka-tamata oqo ni Turaga e dau guilecavi ni da wilika se vulica na iVolaTabu. O Jisu e sega walega ni luve ni Kalou; e tamata sara talega me vakataki keda, ka lewe ni dua na vuvale ka sema vinaka koto kina na dra ni veiwekani.

Ena kana magiti ni vakawati ka vakayacori mai Kena e Kaleli, e nanumi ni rairai nona kana magiti edua vei rau na ganei Jisu. A sureti kina ko koya kei iratou na nona tisaipeli, ka tiko talega kina ko Meri. Sa oti koso na waini, ka ratou loma leqa na itaukei ni vakamau. Sa kila ko Meri ni sai Jisu duadua ga ena rawa me cakava kina edua na ka, ni mai oti koso vaka oqo na waini.

Sa kaya kina ko Meri: "A ka kecega sa kaya vei kemudou ko koya, dou kitaka" (Joni 2: 5). Ia ni ra sa tovolea na waini ka vukica oqo ko Jisu mai na wai, era sa qai kaya taucoko ni waini ka vinaka duadua ena soqo ni vakawati oya. A cava na vuna ka maroroi tikoga kina me qai mai vakayagataki ni sa voleka me oti na kana vata oqo? (Joni 2: 10).

Ni da raica yani na nona bula na marama oqo ko Meri, eda rawa ni kaya ni dodonu me laveti ka rokovi ko koya ena vuku ni nona caka loloma vei Jisu. Ka sa rawa meda dusia e va na ka ena bula nei Meri ka dodonu me laveti cake kina na nona bula, ka vakavinavinakataki: Dua, e vakarautaka edua na tikina se 'vale' me nona na iVakabula kei vuravura. Taumada ena nona maroroya vinaka na yagona me sucu mai kina ko Jisu. Sa maroroya vinaka talega na loma ni nona vale mai Nasareci me susugi ka tubu cake kina na Turaga.

Ni da cavuti Merit iko eke, meda kakua talega ni guilecavi Josefa ena nona vukei Meri ena maroroi ni nodratou bula vakavuvale mai na koro lailai beci ko Nasareci. Rau veivukei ka cakacaka vata ena veilomani me susugi na iVakabula ena loma ni nodrau vale. Sega na tiko yavavala se veitawasei sara.

Vakayacori na veika taucoko ena loma ni vale ena yalo ni veirogorogoci kei na veivosoti. Na kena tu vinaka na nodrau loma ni vale, eda rogoca kina na ka ka vola ko Luke ena nona kaya: "...sa tubu cake ko koya ena vuku kei na yagona talega. Sa vinakati koya vakalevu cake tikoga na Kalou kei ira talega na tamata" (Luke 2: 52). Rua, sa lomani Jisu ko Meri mai na kena ivakatekivu me yacova sara na kena ivakataotioti. Eda dau rogoca ni

NI SA BULA VINAKA -
NOA'IA 'E MAURI

Eda veikidavaki tale ena yaca talei ni noda turaga o Jisu Karisito. Sa nuitaki ni ko ni marautaka tiko na veika sa dau vakarautaki tiko yani.

dau tukuni vakavuqa ni gauna talei duadua ena nona bula edua na gone sa ikoya na imatai ni vica na yabaki ni nona bula. E talei ka kamikamica na nona bula ni da bula vata kei koya mai vale.

Ni sa tekivu kila mai e vuqa na ka ena vuli kei na veimaliwai, sa sega soti ni kamikamica me vaka ni se qai tubu cake tiko. Sa na tiko beka na gauna ka taura vaka dredre kina ko Meri na vosa eso nei Jisu, se nona ivakarau ni sa tubu cake mai (Marika 3: 21). Tolu, eda sega ni rogoca ena kosipeli ni saga ko Meri me togoraka yani na ka ga e vinakata ko koya vei Jisu. Eda kila taucoko oqo ena noda susugi ira na luveda se makubuda.

Sa tovolea ko Meri me vakaraica vakavoleka sara na tubu cake ni luvena. Sa kila talega ni gone oqo e soli mai lomalagi ka volekati koya na Kalou. Va, sa maroroya vinaka ko Meri na duavata ena loma ni nodratou vuvale. Na duavata oqo e yacova sara yani na Kauveilatai mai Kalivari. Ni rube ko Jisu mai na Kauveilatai, ka ciqoma tu me nona na yaluma kei na rarawa ena vuku ivuravura, sa sega ni guilecavi tinana na gone Turaga. Sa vosa vua ka vakacegui koya. Kaya ko koya vei Meri me baleti Joni: "Yalewa, raici luvemu! Sa qai kaya vua na tisaipeli (Joni), Raici tinamu! Mai na tiki ni siga koya sa kauti koya na tisaipeli ki nona vale" (Joni 19: 26-27) Rawa meda vakotora ena kena ivosavosataki eda dau taurivaka ena veisiga me vaka oqo ne: 'I Joni, qai raici Nau tiko. Au sa gole'.

Na yalo loloma nei Meri e vakamuri Jisu kina delana mai Kalivari. A sega ni yali mai kea ko Meri na tinana. "Sa tu voleka kina Kauveilatai i Jisu na tinana, kei na taci tinana, ko Meri na wait Kilopa, kei Meri na yalewa ni Makitala" (Joni 19: 25). Sega ni se qase sara. Rauta beka ni se qai volekata yani na yabaki limasagavulu ni nona bula ena nona lauvako oqo ko Jisu mai Kalivari. Ia, sa totolo na nona rairai qase ena levu ni veika e tara ka muloraka na nona bula ena nona nanumi luvena. E sega ni ka rawarawa vua edua na tina me rai tu ka sotava na veivakararawataki ko luvena ka lewe ni ketena dina. Ia na veivakararawataki cava me tautauvata kei na lauvako kina Kauveilatai me vaka oqo?

Veisiko na mataveitokani e Weligtoni kina ivavakoso e Mana-Pukerua Bay

Ena siga Tabu nai ka 29 ni Epereli, era a gole yani o ira lewe ni mataveitokani e Weligtoni ena nona veiliutaki o Viliame Naliva, kina na dua na i vavakoso ni valagi mai Pukerua Bay, e rauta ni 30 kilomita mai Weligtoni.

Na tatadra ni mataveitokani sai koya me ra kauta yani na loloma I Jisu Karisito ena veivanua e so e Weligtoni. Na lewe ni vavakoso lailai oqo mai Pukerua Bay, e toka na yabaki ni nodra bula mai na 50 - 92.

E ra vakaraitaka na nodra marautaka ni ra sikovi yani mai vei ira na tabagone ka vakadeitaka vei ira ni sa bula tiko na qaravi Kalou ena nodra veiqaravi na tabagone edai. E dua na gauna vinaka talega vei ira na mataveitokani ena veika era vakila ka vulica mai kina.



E ra marautaka na mataveitokani na nodra veiqaravi ena valenilotu mai Mana.



Sinoti Samoa Educational Expo - Manukau & Aukilani

Tusia: Joshua Robertson

The first Sinoti Samoa Educational Expo started off as a simple idea about three years ago, and it became a reality on Saturday May 19th.

The Expo was held at the Allan Brewster Recreational Centre in Papatoetoe. The theme of the expo was: 'Act today, succeed tomorrow - a pathway to success'.

With more than 300 people in attendance and about 20 different education providers and career pathways on display, this inaugural expo event was deemed a definite success.

Youth people from across the Sinoti Samoa Auckland and Manukau districts were out in force at the Expo, which was abuzz and resembled a marketplace. The difference was that this one was selling tickets bound for knowledge...for free.

While young people are always the main targets for these types of expos, older and younger people alike were also encouraged to attend and take advantage of all the valuable information available.

The day began with some words of encouragement and of course an opening prayer from the Vice President of the Methodist Church of New Zealand - Olive Tanielu. The display/stalls area was then opened.

Three different workshops were run throughout the day by Careers NZ, the Inland Revenue Department, and BEST Pacific Institute of Education. Mangere Labour MP Sua William Sio also popped in to share some words of encouragement with all present.

Some of the organisation/stall holders present included AIS St Helens, Auckland Hotel & Chefs Training school, Auckland University of Technology, BEST Pacific Institute of Education, Cut Above Academy, University of Auckland, NZ Fire Services, Otago University and Waikato University just to name a few.

To encourage those attending to visit every stall and attend each workshop, the young people

were required to carry with them a 'stamp passport' which was to be stamped by each stall holder/workshop presenter at each visit. A fully stamped passport was then eligible for entry into a prize draw which was drawn at the end of the day.

Lumepa Leausa of Panmure Youth won the first prize (a 16GB WiFi+3G Samsung Galaxy Tablet, 2 Degrees sim data pack with 100MB preloaded, \$20 2 Degrees top up and a 2012 expo t-shirt) with consolation prizes also won by three other youths in attendance.

In true Samoan style, food was also provided at this expo, with various Mafutaga Tamaitai (Women's Fellowship Groups) from within the Sinoti Samoa Auckland and Manukau Itumalo (districts) generously catering morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

One of the highlights of this expo was that it was organised entirely by Sinoti Samoa youth - and at the forefront were the very youthful organising committee aka the MASSEE (Manukau & Aukilani Sinoti Samoa Educational Expo) Project Committee made up of Filo Tu, Edna Te'o, Siauala Nili, Tupu Vatau, Vili Vaisagote, Luana Meki, Alafia Isaia, Talatonu Auva'a, Lautalie Aumua, Lise Oloi, Sione Oloi, Mele Vatau and Manu Palelei.

A HUGE thank you to The Methodist Church of NZ PAC distribution group, Sinoti Samoa and Careers NZ for their financial support and encouragement of Sinoti Samoa Youth Ministry and of course thank you to all who came along to listen, learn and support.

Of course the real success of such an expo is perhaps more accurately measured by the future successes of our people - let us pray that hard work, faith and God's grace will continue to help water the seeds that were planted during this educational expo extravaganza!

A second educational expo catering for the lower North Island Samoan Synod Districts will be held in Wellington in July.



The education expo Sinoti Samoa hosted was a chance for young people and their families to get a close look at training options.

FINAU! 'AUA LE FIU

Tusia: Filo Tu

I le sosaiete o lo'o nonofo ma aumau ai le pa'ia o leni atunu'u, o lo'o lotolotoi ai alo ma fanau o le tatou Sinoti Samoa e tau le taua i totonu o Iunivesite i itu e fia o leni atunu'u. I le masina o Me, o se masina e silasila ma maimoa ai le atunu'u i fa'ailogaina o le fa'ai'uina o galuega fai ma taumafaiga a tagata ta'ito'atasi.

O se fiafiaga sili fo'i mo le tatou Sinoti Samoa, ona ua tau lau o le fa'amoemoe, pei o la lea muagagana mo ni isi o alo fa'asino i le tatou galuega lautele, pei ona feagai ai le tama'ita'i ia Sharlene Fnone Malaemi.

"E muamua lava ona ou si'i le vi'iga ma le fa'afetai i le Atua, mo lona alofa ma lona agalelei ia te a'u i le tele o tausaga o lo'u olaga. 'O le Atua lava na puipuia a'u i taimi faigatai."

O Sharlene ua mae'a nei lona taumafaiga mai le Iunivesite a 'Aukilani, ma ua fa'au'uina ma lona Bachelor of Arts (BA) i le Pacific Studies and anthropology.

Fai mai Sharlene: "The reason why I chose to study in this field is because I was not familiar with our Pacific history. I wanted a deeper understanding of not



Sharlene Fnone Malaemi

only our culture but all the cultural groups in the Pacific... [It] covers our linguistics, history, traditions, customs, pre-colonial times, several writings on the Pacific and the list goes on. Anthropology covers the study of human beings and it connected very well with my major."

I le va'ai i le taimi ua tuana'i ma le faigata o le ola su'esu'e, sa saunoa Sharlene e fa'apea:

"My journey has been such a rollercoaster. From starting off as a fine arts student, I was so sure that was my calling in life. However, I was wrong! There were other opportunities and God led me to what I was destined to do.

"It had taken me a while to settle into University. It was so different to secondary school. The standards were higher and so much was expected. I had to adjust and work independently, something I lacked (lol). It wasn't easy at all.

"Balancing and prioritising were factors for me. I was involved in many things, but as the years went by, I knew I had to sacrifice many things. "What motivated me? Firstly, my parents, their hard work and support kept me going. They are the anchors in my life. Secondly, my siblings, my Manurewa Methodist Church and my family (aunties, uncles, cousins) and friends (all of them)! Everyone has played a significant part in my life and has motivated me to keep striving, that the sky is the limit and to

never give in."

"My message to our beautiful people would be, to AIM HIGH, pray every day, and never give in. Remember, there's always going to be another mountain, we are always going to want to make it move. There will always be an uphill battle. Sometimes we will have to lose. It's not about how fast we get there; it's not about what's waiting on the other side.

"It's the climb!" (Hannah Montana lol). Shout-outs - Praise be to God. Special thank you! to my wonderful parents, beautiful sister, handsome (sometimes) brothers, supportive family and friends and my church Manurewa Methodist and most importantly my Manurewa Youth Group."

O le tala fiafia ia fa'apena ona lu'itauina Tupulaga Talavou a le tatou Sinoti Samoa, ma ia fa'amanuia atili pea le Atua i lo outou soifua 'auauna. Manuia lava tiute ma faiva, ae maise o fe'au ma galuega, o nisi fo'i i a'oa'oga, fa'amalumu mai pea ona a'oa' agalelei ia te outou uma.

PIOKALAFI 'O 'ENE 'AFIO KO KINGI SIAOSI TUPOU V TU'I 'OFEINA 'O E 'OTU TONGA (HOKO ATU MEI HE MAHINA ME)

KO E FAKAHIFO 'O 'ENE 'AFIO

Fakatatau ki he Ouau Faka'apa'apa 'o e Loto'aa e Hau, ko hono fanguna 'o e fonua 'i he ongonā 'o e Ouau Fana Fakalangilangi he 'aho 4 'o Me 1948, ko hono talaki fakafonua mo fakapule'anga ia kuo fakahifo 'a e ki'i tamasi'i ko Pilinisi Siasoī Taufā'ahau Manumataongo Tuku'aho, 'i he Palasi, 'i Nuku'alofa. Ko e lahi taha ia 'i he fale'alo 'e toko fa 'o e Tama Pilinisi Kalauni 'o e 'aho ko ia, 'a Tupouto'a Tungī pea mo Pilinisesi Halaevalu Mata'aho. Na'e toki hoko he Tama ni, 'a Pilinisesi Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu, kae'uma'a 'a Pilinisi Fatafehi 'Alaivahamama'o [Lord Ma'atu] pea mo Pilinisi 'Aho'eitu 'Unuaki-'o-Tonga [Pilinisi Tupouto'a-Lavaka] kuo ne toki hoko ni ki he Taloni 'o Tonga.

KO HONO FAKANOFU KO E TAMA PILINISI KALAUNI

'I he hoko 'a 'ene 'eiki ki he Taloni 'o Tonga he 'aho 16 'o Tisema 1965, na'e fakanofu leva 'a Pilinisi Siasoī Taufā'ahau Manumataongo ko e Pilinisi Kalauni, pea fakatatau ki he Konisitutone mo e Ngaahi Lao 'o Tonga, na'e fakanofu e Tama ki he Hingoa Nopele tukufakaholo ko ia ko e Tupouto'a, 'i he 1966, neongo ko e ouau tukufakaholo ki he fakanofu ni na'e toki fakahoko ia 'i he lolotonga 'o e Katoanga'i e Senituli 'o e Konisitutone 'o Tonga 'i Novema 1975.

MAA'IMOA AKO 'A 'ENE 'AFIO

Ko hono teu'i 'o e Tama Pilinisi Kalauni 'i he mo'ui faka-sino, 'atamai, mo e laumalie, na'e fakatoka ia 'e he 'Ene 'Afio ko Kuini Salote Tupou III. Pea toki vaakai 'aki 'a e anga'ofa mo e ngaahi visone 'a Pilinisi Kalauni Tupouto'a Tungī pea mo Pilinisesi Halaevalu Mata'aho. Na'a ne kamata maa'imoa he ako fakavaha'apule'anga ko ia 'oku 'iloa ko e *Tonga Side School* pea ne hoko atu ki Nu'u Sila 'i he *King's School* pea mo e *King's College*, kimu'a pea ne hoko atu ki he 'apiako taautaha 'i Suisalani pea mo Pilitania foki. Na'a ne maa'imoa foki 'i he Ako'anga Faka-Tu'i 'a Pilitania ki he Tau Malu'i Fonua, 'a e *British Royal Military Academy-Sandhurst*. Pea ko e aofangatuku 'o 'ene maa'imoa ako na'e fakahoko ia 'i he 'Univesiti talaa ko ia ko *Oxford*, 'i Pilitania, 'i he 1970.

MAA'IMOA 'A 'ENE 'AFIO 'I HE NGAUE FAKAPULE'ANGA

Tanupou 'o e Ngaahi Fetu'utaki Faka-Tipilometika mo e Fetu'utaki Faka-Malu'ifonua 'a e Pule'anga Faka-Tu'i 'o Tonga

Na'e kamata maa'imoa 'a Pilinisi Kalauni Tupouto'a he Ngaue Fakapule'anga 'i he 1970, 'i he tu'unga ko e Taki 'o e Va'a Ngaue Ki Muli, 'i he 'Ofisi 'o e Palemia. Hili ha ta'u 'e nima, na'a ne hoko ko e Taki 'o e 'Ofisi Talafekau Lahi 'a Tonga ki Pilitania, 'i he tu'unga ko e Minisita.

'I he 1979 na'a ne ta 'a e 'uluafi 'i hono fakanofu ia ko e fuofua Minisita Ngaue ki Muli 'a Tonga. 'I he taimi tatau foki na'a ne hoko ai ko e Memipa 'o e Fakataha Tokoni, Kapineti pea mo e Fale Alea, pea na'e fakatoukatea 'a 'ene fakahoko 'a e ngaahi kaveinga ngaue 'i he fatongia pule kae'uma'a 'a e fatongia Fa'u Lao, tautautefito ki he ngaahi ngaue ke hakeaki'i 'a e fakalalakalaka fakasosiale mo faka'ekonomika 'o Tonga.

Na'e tauhi 'e he Tama Pilinisi Kalauni 'a e tu'utu'uni ngaue ki muli 'oku fetaiaki pea mo hono malu'i 'a e tau'atina 'o ha ki'i fonua si'isi'i. Na'a ne matu'uaki 'a e ta'au 'o e mafola 'a e fakaehaua 'a e Ngaahi Pule'anga Hau 'o Mamani, kae kei malu pe 'a 'ene pule aoni, 'o ne tanupou ai 'a e ngaahi fetu'utaki ngaue 'i he Va Fakafo'ituitui 'o Tonga pea mo e Ngaahi Pule'anga kuo laka hake 'i he 30. Ko e ola fisifisimu'a 'o 'ene maa'imoa ni ko e taumalingi

mo e tafe toulaki mai ki Tonga 'a e ngaahi polokalama tokoni faka-tekinikale mei he ngaahi pule'anga mo e ngaahi kautaha ko hono ngaahi Hoangaue Fakalalakalaka, 'a ia 'oku hasino 'i he ngaahi ola fakatuputupulangi 'o e ngaue 'a e kakai 'o Tonga, 'o tatau pe 'i he fakalotofonua pea mo e fakavaha'apule'anga.



Na'e a'usia ai 'e Tonga 'a e tu'unga ma'olunga taha mei ha Pule'anga Pasifiki 'i he fakahokohoko 'o e tu'unga lavame'a 'i he mala'e 'o e ako, ko e fika 55 'i he savea'i 'o e ngaahi fonua 'e 177, 'i he Polokalama Langa Fakalalakalaka 'a e Ngaahi Pule'anga Fakatahataha. 'Ikai ko ia pe ka na'e fakapapau'i foki kimui ni mai, 'e ha timi mei he Sino'i Pa'anga Fakavaha'apule'anga 'a mamani 'o pehe ko e tu'unga fakapa'anga 'o Tonga 'oku lolotonga fakaakeake pea 'oku fakalangilangi 'i 'a e ola lelei 'o e ngaahi liliu tu'unga fakapa'anga ko eni 'i he ngaahi 'otu motu iiki.

Na'e fakanofu 'a e Tama Pilinisi Kalauni ko e Kenolo Pule 'o e Tau Malu'i Fonua 'a Tonga 'i he 1969. Lolotonga 'a 'ene Minisita Malu'i, na'a ne fakahoko 'a e visone mo e kaveinga ngaue ki hono fakalahi, langa fakalalakalaka mo fakaivia 'a e Kau Ngaue 'o e Tau Malu'i Fonua, 'i he tokoni fakapa'anga 'a e Pule'anga Tonga kae'uma'a 'a e ngaahi polokalama fetokoni'aki fakavaha'apule'anga, 'a ia 'oku hasino 'a hono fua 'i he ola lelei 'o e fakahoko fatongia 'a e ngaahi kongakau 'a Tonga ki he ngaue fakamelino 'i Poukenivila, 'Otu Solomone, 'Iulaki pea mo 'Afikanisitani.

Sinoeme'a, 'i he kakato e ta'u 'e 28 'o 'ene maa'imoa ola he Ngaue Fakapule'anga, na'a ne tatau atu leva ki he 'Ene 'Afio Taufā'ahau Tupou IV 'i he Fakataha Tokoni 'i he 1998 'o fakatatau ki he ngaahi tu'utu'uni tataki 'o e Ngaue Fakapule'anga. Ko e makamaile mahu'inga ko eni na'e katoanga'i fakataha ia pea mo e Siupeli Koula 'o e Tama Pilinisi Kalauni, 'e he Hou'eiki pea mo e Kakai 'o Vava'u, 'a ia ko e kongā 'o e Polokalama ko e Po Hiva mo e Lotu 'i Pouono, 'a ia na'e fakahoko ai 'a e Ouau Mahu'inga fakatalutalu ko ia 'o e Tukufonua ki Langi. **Takimu'a 'i he Fakalalakalaka 'o e Tekinolosia, Fakamatala mo e Fetu'utaki (ICT)**

Na'e vavanga 'a Pilinisi Kalauni Tupouto'a ki he mahu'inga 'o e Tekinolosia Fakamatala mo e Fetu'utaki (ICT) ki hono hakeaki'i e tu'unga 'o e ako, ngaue fakapule'anga, pea mo hono feau 'a e maomaonganā 'a Tonga, pea ne takimu'a 'i hono fakatoka 'a e fetu'utaki fakakomipiuta he ngaue fakapule'anga 'o kamata pe he Potungāue ki Muli mo e Malu'i pea mo e 'Ofisi Ngaue ki he Kapineti, 'i he ngaahi ta'u 1980 tupu.

Ko e kongā 'o e visone 'a e Pilinisi Kalauni ki he ICT, ko hono fokotu'u 'e he Tau Malu'i Fonua 'a e 'Apiako Faka-Tu'i 'o e Sienisi ki he Ako Vahamama'o (*Royal School of Science for Distance Education*) 'i he 1998, 'o huufi 'e he 'Ene 'Afio ko Kingi Taufā'ahau Tupou IV, 'i he taumu'a ke faka'ata ki he fanau ako Tonga kotoa, 'a e faingamalie, ke nau kei nofo pe 'i he 'ataakai malu mo hao 'o 'enau matu'a, kae lava pe ke hoko atu 'enau ako, 'i ha totongi matu'aki faka'atu'i, ki he ngaahi 'univesiti 'iloa 'o mamani, 'i he founga ako vahamama'o 'i he 'initaneti.

Makatu'unga 'i he tui 'a e Tama Pilinisi Kalauni, ko e Sekitoa Taautaha, ko e kii ia ki he tupulaki faka'ekonomika, pehe foki ki he 'ene mea'i lelei 'a e faingata'aia 'a hono kakai, 'i he hikihiki 'a e totongi 'o e ngaahi tefito'i sevesi, ko ia ai na'a ne fokotu'u ha pisinisi ke ngaohi mo tufaki ai 'a e 'uhila kae'uma'a 'a e fetu'utaki faka-tekinolosia. Ka 'i he 'ene hoko ki he Taloni, na'e pau leva ke ne momoi atu 'a 'ene ngaahi pisinisi kotoa pe, 'o fakatatau ki he Lao, koe'uhi ke 'oua 'e tu'u fehanga'angai pea mo e ta'au pe fiema'u 'a hono lakanga taki ma'olunga.

HOKO KI HE TALONI 'O TONGA

'I he hala 'a 'ene 'eiki, na'e hoko leva 'a Pilinisi Kalauni Tupouto'a ki he Taloni 'o Tonga, he 'aho 10 'o Sepitema, 2006 'i he huafa ko e Kingi Siasoī Tupou V.

Ko e Ouau Fakafonua ki hono fakanofu na'e fakahoko ia 'i he Taumafa Kava he 'aho 30 'o Siulai 2008 pea fakahoko 'a e Ouau Hilifaki Kalauni he 'aho 1 'o 'Akosi 2008 'i he Falelotu Senituli 'o e Siasoī Uesiliana Tau'atina 'o Tonga 'i Nuku'alofa. Hili ha uike 'e taha na'e ha'ele 'a 'ene 'Afio ki he ngaahi tefito'i vahefonua - Vava'u, Ha'apai, Niuatoputapu, Niua Fo'ou, mo 'Eua, 'o fakahoko ki ai 'a e Taumafa Kava pea ne kau fakataha mo hono kakai ki ha Ouau Lotu Fakatahataha 'o ne hoko ai ko e fuofua Tu'i 'o e 'Otu Felenite, kuo ne kaunga kau fakataha mo hono kakai 'i hono katoanga'i 'a hono hilifaki kalauni 'i he tapa kotoa 'o hono Fonua.

Ko hono foaki 'e he 'ene 'afio 'a e temokalati kakato

'I he kuonga 'o e pule 'a e Tu'i Kanokupolu hono 19, 'Ene 'Afio Kingi Siasoī Tupou I, na'e fakatoka ai 'e he 'Uluaki Fa, 'a e makatu'unga 'o e Pule'anga Tu'i Faka-Konisitutone mo Faka-Kalisitiane 'i he 'ene foaki 'a e Konisitutone 'o Tonga he 1875, 'o hiki ai 'a e ngaahi fatongia mo e mafai fakapolitikale 'o e Hau, ki he Tu'i Faka-Konisitutone. Ka ko e ngaahi tefito'i mafai pule na'e kei 'i he malumalu pe ia 'o e Kapineti mo e Fakataha Tokoni na'e fili 'e he Tu'i.

'I he senituli hono hoko, na'e fakatuputupulangi 'a e fakalalakalaka fakasosiale, faka'ekonomika, pea mo e ako 'i Tonga. Pea 'i he faka'osinga 'o e senituli 20 na'e fiema'u leva ke fakahoko 'a e ngaahi sitepu faka'osi ki hono a'usia 'o e founga pule faka-temokalati.

Ko e fiema'u ko ia ke a'usia 'a e temokalati kakato 'i Tonga, ko e taha ia 'o e ngaahi kaveinga tefito na'e toka ki ai e finangalo 'o Kingi Siasoī Tupou V. Na'e vavanga ki he Tama Tu'i ko eni 'a e founga te ne fakafaingamalie 'a hono hakeaki'i 'o e fakalalakalaka 'i Tonga. Ko ia ai 'i Novema 2005 na'a ne fakatoka ai 'a e founga ngaue ki hono fokotu'u ha Kau Minisita 'e toko fa mei he Kau Memipa Fale Alea na'e fili 'e he kakai. 'I he 2006 na'e fakanofu ai 'e he 'Ene 'Afio Kingi Taufā'ahau Tupou IV 'a e fuofua Fakafofonga Fale Alea na'e fili 'e he kakai, ke ne hoko ko e Palemia 'o Tonga.

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KO E FAKALOTOFALÉ'IA

KAVEINGA: KO E ME'A TEEPUI E, KO E 'IATE KITAUTOLU 'A E 'OTUA LESONI HULUHULU: KALETIA.2:20

Kuo tutuki au ki he Kolosi mo Kalaisi: pea ko 'eku mo'ui 'oku fai, 'oku 'ikai kei ko au, ka ko e mo'ui 'oku fai 'e Kalaisi 'iate au: 'io, ko e mo'ui 'oku ou fai 'eni 'i he kakano ko e mo'ui 'i he tui, ko e tui ki he 'Alo 'o e 'Otua, 'a ia na'a ne 'ofeina au, mo ne foaki ia 'e ia ke pekia koe'uhi ko au.

Fakatulou atu kia Hou'eiki, kae'uma'a 'a ha'a Tauhi Fonua, pea pehe ki he fine'eiki Faifekau Sea, mo ha'a Faifekau, Setuata Lahi 'a e Vahefonua mo ha'a Setuata, 'a e ongo Sekelitali 'a e Vahefonua, kae'uma'a kimoutolu hono kotoa, si'oku kainga 'i he 'Eiki.

Fakafeta'i ki he 'Eiki 'i he 'Ene foefoeloa-i-moana, 'o lave mo tafoe 'etau folau mei he ngaahi peau taa 'o e vaha, ka tau tu'uta mai ki he ono'i mahina, mo e vaeua'anga malie 'o e ta'u ko 'eni. Mahalo ko e toko lahi 'iate kিতautolu, 'oku 'ikai te tau fu'u fakatokanga'i, kuo fuolua 'etau fononga he ta'u ko 'eni. 'I he te'eki ke tau kamata 'a e mahina fo'ou ni, ka kuo tau 'osi fakalaka mai he 'aho 'e 152 he ta'u ni, ko e loloa ange hotau ngaahi 'aho mo'ui, ko e moana ange ia 'o e 'ofa'i kিতautolu 'e he 'Otua. Fakamalo atu ho'omou lotua mai 'a e Faifekau Sea mo e hiki 'a e Ama Takilua 'oku fai ki he 'etau ngaue, pea fakamalo atu ki he ngaahi Vahenga Ngaue 'i he fataki mai 'etau ngaue 'o tau a'usia mai 'a e ngaahi 'aho tapuaki mo'ui ko 'eni.

Ko e Siasi ko 'eni 'o Kaletia, ko e toko lahi 'iate kিতautolu ko e kau Senitaile ne nau ului 'o Kalisitiane. Ko e fu'u feinga tau lahi ia kuo nau lava 'o ikuna'i, 'a 'enau lava ke tafoki mei he'enu mo'ui fakasentaile na'a nau tupu mo ia, 'a e fa'ahinga mo'ui na'a nau hoko ai ko e kau muli ta'e kau ki he ngaahi tala'ofa Faka-'Epalahame, ka nau hoko ko e kakai houhau'ia, Ka neongo ia na'a nau lava noa 'o hu'ihu'i 'enau mo'ui mu'a 'i he funga

'enau tui 'o tali 'a Sisu Kalaisi ko honau Fakamo'ui.

Kae pango ne a'u mai ki Kaletia ha ni'ihii Siu 'o nau malanga'i holo ke fakahehema'i 'a e tui 'a e si'i kau Senitaile ko 'eni kuo ului 'o Kalisitiane. Ko 'enau malanga na'e pehe:

“'Oku 'ikai kakato 'ete Kalisitiane, kapau 'oku 'ikai te te talangofua ki he Lao 'a Mosese mo tauhi hono ngaahi tu'utu'uni.” Ko e si'i kau Senitaile, ko e sola kinautolu ki he Lao 'a Mosese, pea 'oku 'ikai ha'anau kaunga ki he Lao. Ko e 'uhinga ia 'o e Tohi ko 'eni 'a Paula ki Kaletia ke fakafepaki'i fefeka 'a e tui hala ko 'eni.

Ko e taha ia 'a e 'uhinga 'ene talaloto he 'etau veesi huluhulu, ke fakamahino ki si'i kau Kalisitiane Senitaile 'o Kaletia, 'oku 'ikai ha toe hala kehe ia ki he mo'ui, ka ko e Tui pe kia Sisu Kalaisi. Pea na'a ne pole'i 'a e hala ko 'eni he kamata'anga 'o 'etau veesi - “**Kuo tutuki au ki he Kolosi mo Kalaisi**” Ko e fo'i ngaue mahu'inga taha ia kapau kuo te lava 'o fai, ke te fakapapau'i 'i he'ete tui. “**Ko 'ete ngaahi angahala, 'a e fa'o na'e tutuki 'aki 'a Sisu Kalaisi ki he Kolosi**” Kainga, 'oku mou mea'i 'a e hamu 'o e kona 'o e fa'o hono mamahi mo hono fakatu'utamaki, he kapau te tau pehe na'e vave 'ene pekia, koe'uhi na'e hamu 'a e kona 'o e fa'o, 'e 'ikai hala. He na'e omi 'a e kau sotia ke fesi'i hono va'e, ko e tesi ia pe 'oku ne kei mo'ui, pe kuo pekia, na'e 'ikai te nau fesi'i, he kuo ne 'osi pekia.

Pea talu ai mo e pehe 'e Paula 'i he'ene talaloto; *Kapau na'e pehe fau 'a e fu'u mamahi na'e 'inasi ai 'a Sisu, he 'ahu kona 'eku ngaahi angahala: pea ta ko 'eku mo'ui 'oku fai 'i he kakano 'i he taimi ni,*



Vaikoloa Kilikiti

'oku 'ikai ko ha kei mo'ui ia 'a'aku 'iate au, ka ko Kalaisi ia 'oku mo'ui 'iate au. Ko e mo'ui 'i he tui, ko e tui ki he 'Alo 'o e 'Otua, 'a ia na'a ne 'ofeina au 'o ne foaki ia ke pekia koe'ui ko au. Kapau na'e tutuki fakataha 'a Sisu mo 'etau ngaahi

angahala, pea 'i he'ene pekia he Kolosi, na'e mate fakataha ai mo 'etau ngaahi angahala, Pea ko 'ene Toetu'u, 'oku tau kaungaa toetu'u fakataha mo ia, pea kuo tau kaungaa mo'ui fakataha mo Sisu.

Kainga, 'oku 'ikai ha toe ngaue ia te tau fai ke tau mo'ui ai, kuo 'osi fai 'e Sisu 'a e ngaue. Ko e me'a pe ketau fai: Tau lea fakataha he mahina ni - “**KUO TUTUKI AU KI HE KOLOSI MO KALAI SI**”.

Pea kapau kuo fai 'e Kalaisi hono kotoa 'o e ngaue, pea 'e mo'oni 'a Paula 'i he I Kolinito 6:19-20 - “*Io, 'oku 'ikai te mou 'ilo koaa ko homou sino takitaha ko e temipale 'o e 'afio 'a e Laumalie Ma'oni'oni 'iate kimoutolu 'a ia kuo hoko kiate kimoutolu mei he 'Otua? Pea 'oku 'ikai 'amoutolu 'a kimoutolu? He na'e fakataha kimoutolu 'aki ha totongi. 'E mou fakaongoongolelei 'a e 'Otua i ho'omou me'a fakasino.*

Ko e pole ia 'o e mahina fo'ou ni: “Ke tuku aa 'etau fie pule kiate kিতautolu, he 'oku 'ikai 'akitautolu 'a kিতautolu, kuo pule kehea kিতautolu, ko Koe mo Au, mo 'eta faanau, mo e makapuna, mo 'etau nga'oto'ota, mo 'etau me'a kotoa pe, ko e me'a ia 'a Sisu Kalaisi he kuo ne 'osi fakataha kিতautolu Ma'ana”.

Ko e talaloto tatau mo ia 'a e Punake, he Himi 568 veesi 1, 4 & 5

1. Sisu, Lami 'ave hia,

Ko ho'o hopoate kita;
Ko e me'a kotoa 'a'aku
Te nau fakaongo atu.
4. 'Ikai na'a ke fua 'atu.
Sio me'a kotoa ma'aku?
'O kataki ke pekia
Ke totongi 'eku hia?
5. Ta ko ho'o me'a pe au
Ne ke ma'u he fakataha:
Mole 'eku fa'iteliha,
Ko ho'o hopoate kita.

Ko e Siate folau 'o e mahina fo'ou ni: **Ko e me'a teepuu e ko e 'iate kিতautolu 'a e 'Otua.** Ko e 'etau Kaveinga 'o e mahina ni, ko e Talatuku ia 'a Sione Uesilee, pea ne pekia. Kuo ne tuku mai 'a e tapuaki 'o 'ene he'aki tuku he 'ea 'o Taimi, ke tau nofo mo ia, pea ke tau 'ilo 'oku 'ikai ha toe me'a 'e mahu'inga ange 'i he mo'ui ko 'eni, Ka ko e 'iate kিতautolu 'a e 'Otua. Ka mole 'a e 'Otua meiate kিতautolu, ko e toki masiva 'ango'ango ee ka ko kিতautolu, Te tau maha mihemiha kapau 'oku 'ikai 'iate kিতautolu 'a e 'Otua.

Te tau tueenoa kapau 'e li'aki kিতautolu 'e he 'Otua. Neongo pe ko e ha 'a e faaliunga 'o e mo'ui te tau 'i ai, pe faingata'a, pe faingofua, fiefia pe mamahi, masiva pe ma'ukoloa, ka 'oku tau kei ma'u 'a e 'Otua, 'oku tau kei ma'u kotoa.

Kuo tutuki au ki he Kolosi mo Kalaisi: pea ko 'eku mo'ui 'oku fai, 'oku 'ikai kei ko au, ka ko e mo'ui 'oku fai 'e Kalaisi iate au: 'Io, ko e mo'ui 'oku ou fai 'eni 'i he kakano ko e mo'ui 'i he tui, ko e tui ki he 'Alo 'o e 'Otua, 'a ia na'a ne 'ofeina au, mo ne foaki ia 'e ia ke pekia koe'uhi ko au.

“KO E ME'A TEEPUI E KO E 'IATE KITAUTOLU 'A E 'OTUA”. 'I he Huafa 'o e Tamai mo e 'Alo mo e Laumalie Ma'oni'oni. 'Emeni.

Faifekau Vaikoloa Kilikiti

PIOKALAFI 'O 'ENE 'AFIO KO KINGI SIAOSI TUPOU V

From Page 19



Kimu'a 'i hono Hilifaki Kalauni he 'uluaki 'aho 'o 'Akosi, 2008, na'e to folofola ai 'a 'Ene 'Afio fekau'aki pea mo e teuteu ke ne momoi atu 'a e kongalahi 'o hono mafai pule ki ha Kapineti 'e fili 'a hono Kau Memipa 'e he kakai. Pea ne folofola ai ke fokotu'u 'a e Komisoni Faka-Tu'i ki he Liliu Fakapolitikale, ke ne avangi 'a e matapa ki hono fakahoko 'a e ngalutuku 'o e liliu fakatemokalati. Ko e 'ofa afeitaulalo mo e foaki li'oa 'ikai ala fakatataua ko eni, na'e a'usia pea fakakakato ia 'o taa'imalie ai 'a e kakai 'o e fonua 'i he koloa mo e tukutukulaumea mahu'inga ni he 2010, 'i hono fakahoko koia 'o e fuofua fili falealea fakatemokalati 'i Tonga.

Neongo 'a e fuonounou 'o e kuonga 'o e pule 'a

Kingi Siaosi Tupou V ka ko 'ene ngaahi maa'imoa ola fisifisimu'a ma'a Tonga 'oku 'ikai ala fakatataua. 'I hono tu'unga tukufakaholo ko e Tu'i 'o Tonga, na'a ne faka'apa'apa'i mo fakafaingamalie 'a e ngaahi malohinga mo e ngaahi naunau tu'utai 'o e feveitokai'aki mo e fekau'aki 'o e nofo 'a kainga, ko e anga fakafonua.

Na'a ne folofola 'aki foki 'a 'ene fakatokanga ki he siasi, 'i he 'ene huufi 'a e Konifelenisi 'a e Siasi Uesiliana Tau'atana 'o Tonga he 2010, telia 'a e ngaahi ouau ta'efaka'otua 'e ala hoko mai 'i he hingoa 'o e temokalati. Ko e loloto 'o e 'ilo mo e talatalaifale fakatamahi ko eni, 'e hokohoko atu 'a 'ene malu'i kিতautolu kotoa ki he pa'angangalu 'o taimi. (*toki hoko atu*)