

TOUCHSTONE

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



Community is more important than denomination at Tutukaka Community Church in Northland.

Small churches' big presence

Small churches are uniquely equipped for ministry success in the 21st century, according to research done in the United States.

The study, called 'Leveraging the Strengths of Small Churches', found that small churches have many advantages over their larger counterparts and can do effective ministry in a way that is difficult for larger churches to imitate.

Smaller churches can adapt more quickly to the changing

needs of their community. By being authentic and true to their stated convictions, small churches can thrive.

Of course, the small churches referred to in the American research are "a few dozen" people, which is larger than many small churches in New Zealand. But what does this mean for local congregations?

Greymouth District Uniting Church lay minister Lyn Heine says being a small church in a small population centre means people more readily embrace a range of opinions.

"Because you know there isn't anywhere else you can go, if you

want to be friends with people you've got to find some way of staying in touch, so there's more of a commitment to community."

Lyn believes having to accept people for who they are means the congregation is more open to discussing controversial topics like same sex marriage.

In a smaller congregation, people also feel more empowered to play their part, Lyn says.

In rural Canterbury, Methven's St Johns Presbyterian Church is looking to the future and has entered into discussions with the Rakaia and Mayfield Presbyterian churches to form a shared ministry. However,

community identity remains paramount, says lay leader Joan Wright.

"At Methven we are an older parish. It's hard for us to change and I really think that all three congregations want to keep their own identity.

"We are an important part in our communities and we don't want to change that. But at the same time, we are looking at what we can do together."

Combining resources could allow the churches to employ a minister and a youth worker, Joan says.

"We have a number of young people working on the farms and

they often come in to church. Our harvest festival service had quite a few turn up, so it would be good to be able to offer something more for them."

Joan says the St Johns congregation also has good relationships with the Anglican and Catholic churches in Methven.

In Northland, Tutukaka Coast Community Church lay leader Julie Mison says her small rural church, which embraces Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and anyone else who turns up, is the only one in the area for 30km, from Whangarei.

See Page 3

By David Hill

INSIDE

MINITA'S QSM - PAGE 3



PENTECOST - PAGES 5 & 11

FAKAME - PAGES 13, 19 & 20



Gospel MANIFESTO 2014

Towards a less punitive society

By Kim Workman

Prisons, the frequency with which we place people in them, and the way we treat prisoners tell us a great deal about a nation's attitude to power, normalcy, morality, and social relations.

As Nelson Mandela put it "No one truly knows a nation until he has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens but how it treats its lowest ones."

New Zealand is mostly seen as a just, peaceful nation. The OECD Social Justice rankings on poverty, access to health, and other indicators place New Zealand well above the average.

In recent years we have seen a steady drop in the crime rate, and modest decreases in the reoffending and re-imprisonment rates. These are all the hallmarks of a just, peaceful and cohesive nation that cares for its citizens.

But one indicator suggests otherwise - the extent to which we punish. The prison population in New Zealand went from 91 per 100,000 general population to 200 per 100,000 in 2009. This is well above other Western democracies, with the exception of the USA. We are currently sandwiched between two African nations, Gabon and Namibia in the 'locking up' stakes.

Criminologist John Pratt argues that friendliness and egalitarianism were features of early New Zealand society, our desire to defend 'paradise' led to intolerance for those who threatened its social cohesion. Homogeneity was hallowed, diversity was discouraged. Outsiders were not welcome and dissent was frowned on

Our treatment of conscientious objectors and attitudes toward homosexuals was much harsher than other commonwealth countries.

The market reforms of the 1980s triggered the start of a more recent trend toward increased punitiveness. Individualism competed with collectivism, meritocracy with egalitarianism, choice with uniformity, indulgence with frugality.

Crime was no longer seen as an indicator of deprivation and need. It signalled indiscipline and inadequate controls. These beliefs excluded any possibility that the offender may be disadvantaged or marginalised because of the government's social and economic policies.

Instead, the solution lay were more controls and a 'zero tolerance' approach to offending.

The criminal justice sector has become one way the government targets policies that appear to benefit the 'undeserving poor'. It

expresses cynicism about welfare, and supports more aggressive controls on an underclass that is perceived to be disorderly, drug-prone, and dangerous.

Increasingly, punishment has extended beyond the criminal justice system. The communities that most offenders come from have experienced a reduction in primary healthcare, more evictions and ineligibility for social housing, increased levels of unemployment, and a decline in welfare support.

How have Christians responded to this cultural shift? In my experience, those who are actively involved in caring for prisoners and offenders find that church leaders and fellows in Christ are unsupportive.

Many develop an ambivalent theological position between what they practice, and what they believe. There is often a gap between what we actually believe and what we think we should believe.

Christians may feel compassion toward the least, lost and lonely but publicly express views which are less aligned to the gospel, and this makes them indistinguishable from non-Christians.

Author Richard Snyder says the prevailing understanding of grace feeds into a punitive culture. First there is an absence of creation grace and doctrine emphasises original sin and total depravity. It becomes easy to think that those whose condition is less favourable (criminals, the sick, the poor) reap the just deserts of their unrepentant state.

Second is the misguided notion that the sole focus of redemption should be upon the individual. Redemption is as much a corporate and social dynamic as a personal one. It is not only persons who need redeeming; it is also public policies, institutions, and the structures of our lives.

Our task as Christians, is to recover an understanding of the social, collective nature of sin and salvation in terms of contemporary reality, and biblical witness. Rauschenbusch contrasted the emphasis upon individual salvation with what he understood as the heart of both prophetic Judaism and the ministry of Jesus. He wrote "The reign of God for which the prophets hoped was a social hope on fire with religion. Their concern was for the largest and noblest social group with which they were in contact - their nation."

Kim Workman is senior Associate of the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University, Wellington.

Pastoral visit to quake zone

By David Hill
The Methodist presidential team were shocked by the ongoing devastation they witnessed during their visit to east Christchurch last month.

President Rev Rex Nathan and vice president Jan Tasker visited parishes and communities to get a first hand glimpse of the daily realities in the worst affected parts of the city, nearly four years on from the first of the earthquakes.

"It's certainly been an eye opener. We have heard about it and read about it, but to actually see it is demoralising," Rex says.

"We know that people have left and we have seen where houses are derelict and waiting to be removed. And we have seen the affects of the flooding."

Rex and Jan met with an earthquake support group at New Brighton Union Church on Friday evening, before being given a tour of the residential red zone and visiting people waiting for action on their severely damaged houses.

"I think the resilience of the people is amazing. You've got to marvel at it but it's just not good enough really, what some people are having to go through," Rex says.

On Sunday Rex worshipped at New Brighton Union Church and Jan at Linwood Avenue Union Church, before meeting with local congregation and community trust leaders from Methodist, Presbyterian and Union parishes at Wainoni Methodist Church. Rex later preached at a combined eastern



Methodist vice president Jan Tasker (second from left) with New Brighton Union stalwarts (from left) Isabell Linton, Nita Whall and Pat Jeffrey.

churches service on Sunday evening.

The discussion was led by Methodist eastern churches co-ordinator Rev Mark Gibson. Issues discussed included a shortage of social housing and temporary accommodation, poverty, sustainability of parishes, health issues and the stress on families, which have been exaggerated by the earthquake experience.

Possible solutions include congregations going into partnership with the Christchurch Methodist Mission to make land available for social housing, opening up church buildings to assist those in need and reconfiguring parishes to free small congregations up to concentrate on mission and "being the church in the east".

Rex praised Mark's work in trying to find practical solutions for the east Christchurch parishes.

"I think the church has an important role to play in the community and things like what Mark is doing are where the church needs to be at."

Anglicans on fence over same-sex marriage, ordination

By Cory Miller
With same sex marriage now a legal right in New Zealand, the Church, in all its shapes and forms is facing the question, of what this means for church life.

This question was put forward and debated at the Anglican Church of NZ's bi-annual general synod. While it is yet to give its full blessing for same sex-marriage and ordination, it seems some small steps forward have been taken.

Though it's not the firm nod the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community have been hoping for, the Anglican Church has not said no either.

It is promising to continue the discussion around same-sex marriage and ordination. It will create a working group that will propose a way that the church can work toward integrating both sides of the debate so that everyone can be happy.

During the synod the Anglican Church acknowledged the pain inflicted upon the LGBT community in the past, with this apology: "All too often our church has been complicit in homophobic thinking and actions of society and has failed to speak out against hatred and violence against those with same-gender attraction. We apologise unreservedly and commit ourselves to reconciliation and prophetic witness."

Auckland's St Matthew in the City is a church well known for its progressive views. Rev Helen Jacobi admits the result of this year's general synod discussions is bittersweet.

"As a priest and pastor, I have to face my congregation to try and explain that this is the good news of Jesus Christ," she says. "I am comforted by the knowledge that many in the church are ready to move forward, and I am pleased that others are now starting on this journey of inclusion."

Helen says while she is grateful for the work of synod members, much work remains to be done.

Just prior to the meeting of the synod Helen voiced her hopes that the church would make a more firm case towards a fuller inclusion of the LGBT community. "Otherwise we are discriminating valuable, artistic, creative people from the leadership".

She says while the latest decision from the synod is encouraging, it has not met this hope.

"From the perspective of those faithful gay and lesbian Anglicans waiting to be married, or waiting to be ordained, it is a tiny step," Helen says. "They have received an apology from the church... followed by 'wait some more'."

For now the Anglican Church remains steadfast in its definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman.

Nevertheless, Helen says St Matthew in the City will keep its doors open to the LGBT community.

"My prayer is for those who continue to be hurt and excluded. We at St Matthew's will continue to have our doors open wide," she says. "St Matthew's has long had the gates open wide and we are richer for it."

Last year the Methodist Church of NZ decided that its presbyters can officiate at same-sex marriages but are not required to do so. Local congregations can also make their own decisions on the use of their premises.



Methodist Trust
Association

Established by Conference 1978
for the secure investment of the Church's funds

Investments measured against Church
Guidelines for Socially Responsible Investment

Contact email: info@methodist.org.nz

Established for the secure investment of the Church's funds.

St Stephens
Methodist Church, Tauranga

Welcomes those to a special
service and morning tea to
mark 60 years of Methodism
in Otumoetai.
29th June, 9.30am

Geoff Warth Parish Steward
gwp@kinct.co.nz • 07 579 3637

QSM for service to Maori and Pakeha

At the age of 84, John Kopa is one of the longest serving minitaiwi in the Waikato rohe.

John has no idea how many tangi or weddings he's conducted or the number of far flung homes he's visited but for the past few years his church role has taken a back seat to his work as kaumatua of the Aotearoa Marae.

Set in rolling South Waikato farmland surrounded by forest, the marae belongs to John's Raukawa iwi, and is close to where he was born. "My heart will always be here," says John.

In recent years John and his wife Kura and their sons have worked hard to see the marae renovated and restored to its former glory. In 2011 the Maori King Tuheitia presented John and Kura with a certificate for the most improved marae.

They host regular hui at Aotearoa Marae, which bring many different nationalities together.

"We have university students, and study groups for Maori language week, as well as regular farm trust meetings," John says.

They've both got bad backs and John's got a nuisance cough, a side effect of his heart pills, but he and Kura think nothing of moving hundreds of mattresses and preparing the kai for these occasions.

"Kura's big thing is the visitors. The karanga, all the protocol, for her it's like having breakfast. Everything costs but my mother said her fridge was always full because she believed in God. That applies to me too," he says.

One of 16 children, John left

school early to help support the family. He worked as a shearer and bushman before becoming a supervisor at the BP Oil Company. He came late to the ministry, called to his role as a minitaiwi by kaumatua. While he has embraced his church role he admits he's never felt at home with all the trappings. "I don't need that," he says. "I've got the wairua o ratou, the spirit of those who've gone before."

John has received a number of certificates for his work, and last year he was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for his services to the community. "I certainly didn't expect it, but I'm very honoured," he says.

He received congratulatory letters from all political parties, but he's especially proud of a letter from Maori Party co-leaders Tariana Turei and Dr Peter Sharples. Written in Maori with an English translation, it begins by saying, "we pay tribute to you John for the honour you have received from the NZ government and the Queen of England for your services to Maori and Pakeha."

It acknowledges his dedication to kaupapa, his leadership in the restoration of the Aotearoa Marae, his support for Whakawatea kohanga reo and kura kaupapa, and other government departments and community groups.

It speaks of the aroha and knowledge which John has shared for the benefit of everyone, and of his support "for those needing calming and strengthening of spirit across Aotearoa."

Equally important to John, the letter pays tribute to his whanau for

his achievements. However, he feels slightly embarrassed at being compared to a rangatira. "That's not me at all," he says.

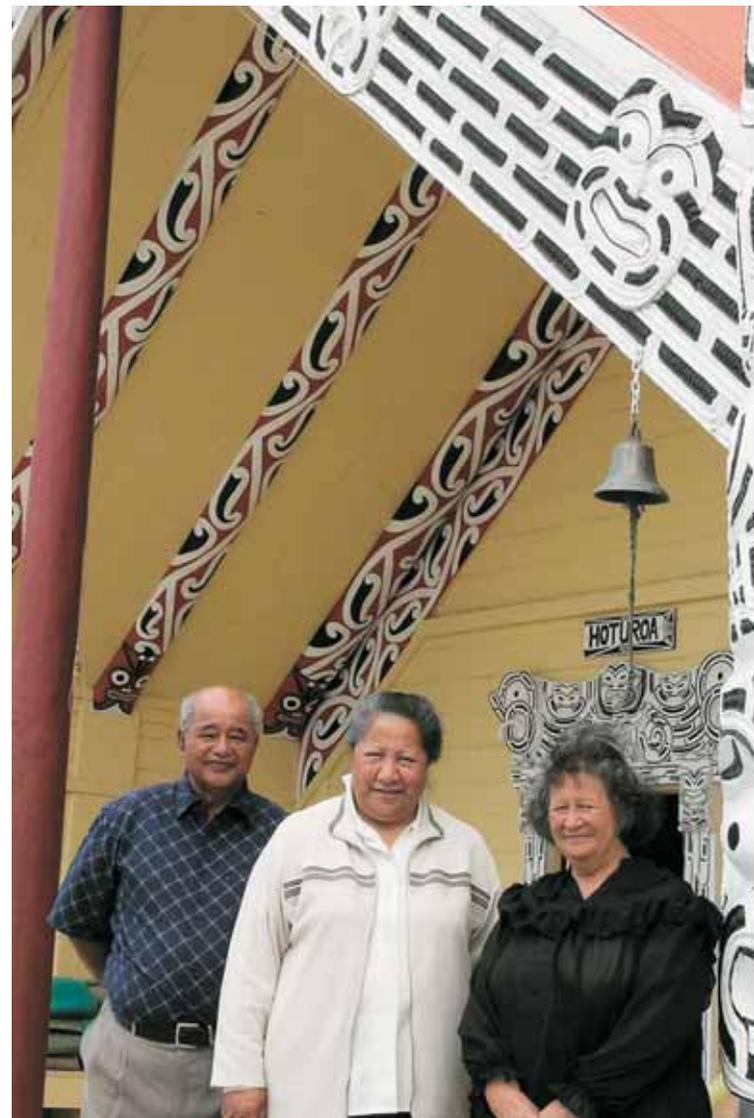
A high point in John's career was his appointment to the Inland Revenue Department as an iwi representative on their recruiting panel. "I felt honoured because they could have chosen from any number of people."

John has supported Te Arawa Treaty claimants and he attended the blessing ceremony for the many women and children killed in the battle of Orakau in 1864.

He also took part in a blessing ceremony in Christchurch to lift the tapu on the Durham St Methodist Church, where three men were killed in the February 22 earthquake.

"What I've done would fill a thousand books," he says. "But what's important is the aroha. I've got a wonderful wife and whanau, and I'm blessed by the Lord. If I have one regret, it's that I haven't been able to give more to the church. I apologise for that."

For the future, he'd like to see more people coming forward to fill the gaps left by departing minitaiwi. "Some big changes are needed," he says.



John Kopa, Taha Maori tumuaki Rev Diana Tana (centre) and Kura Kopa (right) at Aotearoa Marae.

Small churches

From Page 1

The diversity and relative isolation means community is more important than denomination.

To embrace the diversity, the small church offers a family service on the first Sunday of the month, Anglican communion on the fourth Sunday and Methodist-Presbyterian services on the second and third. Fifth Sundays often see a visiting speaker.

In Christchurch, New Brighton Union Church minister Rev Mark Gibson says smaller congregations often understand Jesus' metaphors of salt and leaven more easily. They understand that small quantities can have influence.

"People can get to know others and get known more quickly. There is a greater sense of being empowered, they get to do things they wouldn't do in a larger parish."

Mark says smaller congregations are often more inviting than larger churches, which can be "quite scary and overpowering for people".

However, small parishes also

have only a small pool of people to take on leadership roles. Volunteers tend to worry about who will take over from them and stay on in roles longer than they should.

Mark says small parishes can lose their self-esteem when they compare themselves with bigger parishes.

"When they can't do some of the things bigger parishes are doing, they feel somehow they are failing."

This is where small parishes need to find their niche, Mark says.

"Small parishes can be flexible and have the ability to change direction a lot more quickly and to try new things."

"Small churches just need to be smart and not try to do too much. They should focus on a few key areas that they do well. I think smaller churches can have an impact in a neighbourhood, because they are not big and imposing."

For more information on the US research, go to buildingchurchleaders.com

The Methodist Church of New Zealand
Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa

Mission Resourcing

National Co-ordinator for Tauwi Children, Young People & Families Ministry

Mission Resourcing invites applications from lay or ordained Methodists for the position of National Co-ordinator for Tauwi Children, Young People and Families Ministry.

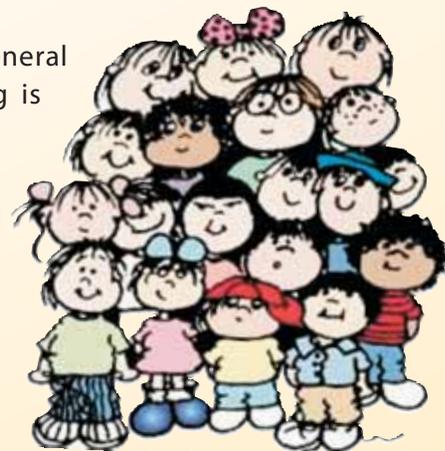
The person we are seeking needs to have a passion for ministry with children, young people and families. The person also needs to be creative, vibrant, confident, organised, an excellent communicator and be able to think strategically.

The position is full time for an initial three year term with a hope for another 3+ years. The successful applicant is expected to live in Auckland and be based at the Mission Resourcing office.

The standard Methodist stipend and general expense allowances will apply. Housing is not provided.

For a copy of the job description and person specifications please contact nehu@missionresourcing.org.nz.

Applications close 8 July 2014.
Starting date is negotiable.



PUBLIC ISSUES NETWORK

Budget 2014 - financial surplus at what price

By Public Issues co-ordinator
Rev Dr Betsan Martin

While the Government has portrayed its budget as family-friendly, it does not invest to solve inequality and poverty or address climate change.

Achieving social justice requires investment. As economist Suzanne Snively notes, the budget is about financial orthodoxy, not about policy change or investment.

The budget details \$1.1 billion in additional spending. This includes \$200 million for health and a new hospital on the West Coast, \$198m for Kiwirail 'turnaround' plans, \$40m for irrigation and \$37m for Hobsonville housing come from the proceeds of asset sales.

Where does it come from? The answer is largely from asset sales. The partial sale of Mighty River Power, Meridian Energy, Genesis Energy and Air New Zealand yielded \$4.7 billion. And it should be noted tax cuts in 2010 have an ongoing impact of reducing government revenue by \$1.1 billion per year.

The budget's real focus is on economic growth and business interests. It has two key priorities - reducing the public sector as a percentage of GDP and economic growth.

Crown expenses have fallen from 34.4 percent of GDP in 2009, to 31 percent in 2014 and it is projected to be 30 percent by 2017. This is a very low level of public spending by international standards. A reduced public sector tilts the responsibility for employment, innovation and economic development on the private sector and minimises government investment in public good.

AT A GLANCE

Defence (\$535m), social spending (\$500m), and public-private business partnerships (\$708m).

The \$500m for social initiatives includes paid parental leave (\$172m), parental tax credit (\$42.3m), free GP visits (\$90m), early childhood education \$155.7m and the Children Action Plan for Vulnerable Children (\$33.2m).

The budget consolidates support for Whanau Ora and Maori economic development with a \$60m allocation plus \$50,000 to build business and cultural relationships with China. \$5m a year for a Maori Centre of Research Excellence is welcome. The extension of paid parental leave, free doctor's visits and prescriptions, apprenticeships, and parental tax credit will benefit eligible whanau and families.

THE REAL TARGET: MINIMAL GOVERNMENT AND GROWTH

The budget affirms commitment to the Business Growth Agenda, the Ministry of Primary Industries, and export double goal. These initiatives aim to increase the value of New Zealand's primary exports by \$32 billion and export growth by 5.5 percent per year.

This will be achieved through Primary Growth Partnerships, for which \$708m is committed in this budget from industry and government. Investment in free trade, irrigation, food safety are key spokes in the wheel of export-led economic growth. Tax deductions for research and development for businesses support business innovation.

CHRISTCHURCH

Canterbury Earthquake Authority receives \$67m for the Christchurch rebuild, support services and the \$3.5m to offer beneficiaries a one-off payment of \$3000 to take up a job in Christchurch.

BUDGETING FOR STEWARDSHIP

An innovative policy for superannuation is needed to reduce the burden of an aging population. Government contributions to the Super Fund will not resume for another six years, when net debt is 20 percent of GDP.

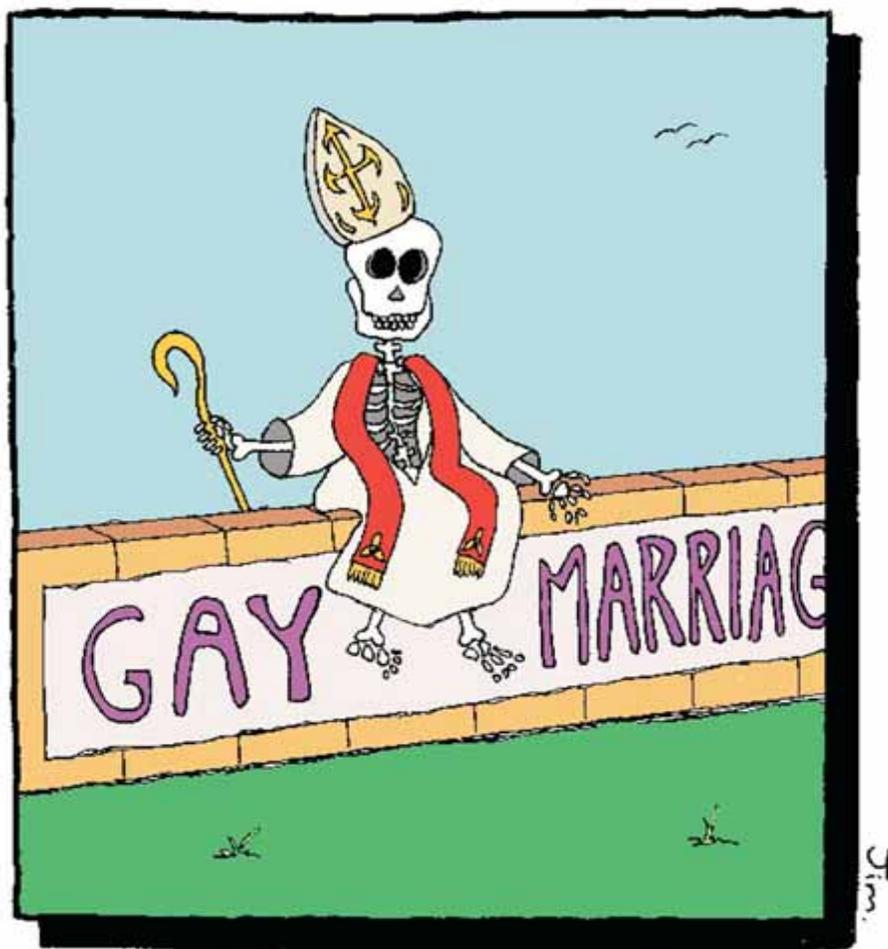
Policy for climate change requires transitions to low carbon through strategies for renewable energy and public transport. These are not included in the budget.

Inequality is largely determined by wage levels. New Zealand has the second lowest wage levels in the OECD. Council of Trade Unions economist Bill Rosenberg says that labour is receiving a falling share of income due to inflation. If there are further tax cuts for business in the next term, inequality will be more entrenched.

Housing is the biggest social need for New Zealand. Unaffordable housing puts pressure on social housing needs. Yet there is a two thirds reduction in the grants paid to social housing agencies to build low cost housing.

The allocation for housing includes \$37m for the Hobsonville Land Company public-private partnership for housing in Auckland and \$30m for community housing organizations to provide social housing for high need families.

Support to councils to manage freshwater receives \$20m over four years spread over 11 regional councils. If nature is the basis for dairy, sheep, beef, wood, and other food exports, does this signal plans for environmental stewardship?



FROM THE BACKYARD

Autumn lessons

Gillian Watkin

It has been a golden autumn day. Tomorrow we may well have our first frost.

It took me a while to understand the nature of frosts. Why and how did they come? Frost comes as a convergence of air temperature and soil temperature. That much I know, and I know the beautiful clear days precede and follow the frosts.

I remember as a child walking to school and getting the ice out of the puddles. Soon we will have to break the ice on the bird bath and one of us will take a little warm water out to top up the bath.

In the clear air of the afternoon the bellbird calls out across the tree tops. The tui has taken to feeding on the bottlebrush flowers in the afternoon. The fantails are busy around the garden with the little flying insects.

Until I stopped and took time to watch, I never knew that there was so much to learn and discover about just this one sector of creation. With each passing year there is more and more to discover about everything, even within the most familiar setting.

So often, the text for the week and Bible readings illuminate something that we have never noticed before.

In his book 'The Dream of the Earth', the wise man, monk academic, and eco-theologian Thomas Berry wrote "The natural world itself is our primary language as it is our primary scripture, our primary awakening to the mysteries of existence. We might well put all our written scriptures on the shelf for twenty years until we learn

what we are being told by unmediated experience of the world about us."

Thomas goes on to say "The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human."

I remember attending a workshop with the author and psychiatrist Dr Scott Peck who wrote the classic *The Road Less Travelled*. Scott said clearly that when God exiled Adam and Eve from Paradise and blocked their return, it was the beginning of education.

Now when we talk of education and place it in the realm of schools, colleges and universities, we ignore it as a lifelong and not necessarily institutional, quest.

As Thomas Berry makes clear, Christians have often failed to acknowledge the spirituality and numinous presence of the earth. We have failed to learn and in the modern world failed to come out of the buildings.

After all the human spirit takes life with the first breath, and grows with every breath from that point. The child will notice the bird, the butterfly, the sun and the wind long before they have the text of a book to hand.

The parent is called to show and help develop the child's sense of wonder. It is sad when that wonder is not discovered and when in later life it is ignored. The wonder of the outdoors cannot be allowed to reduce to a commute to and from home, school and the shops.

Because key staff will be away, there will be no July issue of Touchstone. We will be back in the pews on August 3rd. Until then, God bless!

See you again in August



TOUCHSTONE
Exploring Faith Issues for Today

Postal PO Box 931
Christchurch
Fax (03) 366-6009
Editor Paul Titus
Phone (03) 381 6912
Mobile (021) 655 092
E-mail touchstone@paradise.net.nz

Advertising Pieter van den Berg
Phone (03) 310 7781, Fax (03) 310 7782
Email pietermarjan@paradise.net.nz

Circulation
Phone
Email

Karen Isaacs
(03) 381-4315
j.isaacs@xtra.co.nz

Production Julian Doesburg
Publisher The Methodist Publishing Company

Printer The Ashburton Guardian
Ad Deadlines 15th of the month preceding publication
Letters Deadline 15th of the month preceding publication
Subscription Changes 10th of the month preceding publication



When death is not death

By President Rex Nathan
and Vice President Jan Takser

Death: How well are we prepared for the inevitable and is it fair to blame God?

The death of anyone is very difficult for family and friends. Our deepest sympathy to all those whose loved ones have departed recently.

There are times when death is prolonged and expected. It puts pressure on family caring for their loved ones, awaiting the inevitable either at home or in a hospital. When death finally occurs there is sadness but relief that the deceased is now no longer suffering.

There are times when death occurs unexpectedly. Death without notice is equally difficult to deal with. The unexpected news of death deeply shocks us. Questions arise: What happened? When? Was anyone there? Was the person

sick? 'I was talking to him/her just last week.'

In the immediate heat of the moment, the big question arises: Why did it happen? Could it have been avoided?

Immediately following death, there are funeral arrangements to organise, relatives to inform, travel for those attending from afar. All of this has to happen quickly. The day of the funeral arrives. Lots of people gather to say their farewells.

That day seems to be a long day and then it is eventually all over. People depart for their homes and leave the family to continue to grieve, to tidy up some loose ends, and to deal with the after death matters.

Then God sometimes gets the blame because in the eyes of some, God controls everything.

Jacqueline Kennedy, in a letter to Rev Joseph Leonard after the assassination of her husband President John Kennedy in 1963 wrote "I am so bitter against God". In a later letter she wrote, "I feel more cruelly every day what I have lost. I always

would have rather lost my life than lost Jack."

Is it fair to blame God?

When Jesus was betrayed by Judas, Jesus knew of his pending death and that it was only going to be a matter of time that the inevitable was going to happen sooner rather than later.

The disciples were puzzled about what Jesus was saying. "A little while and you will no longer see me, and again a little while you will see me". Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by this?" Jesus replied "Because I am going to the father" (John 16, 16-17).

Jesus was certain of his destiny. As Christians, we can be sure of certain things.

Death is just a transition. Although the body ceases to function, the spirit lives on.

Death, according to the Bible, is a change of status. That which perishes is exchanged for that which is imperishable. Death ushers us into the presence of the living God. Death brings us into eternity. All of us must face death sometime.

Hebrews 9:27 says, "man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment." In light of this, we should all take great care to live in such a way that when it comes our time to die, we are ready to face God. Death is not death if you know the Lord. It is merely a change of place, and a transferral from one realm of existence into another.

Death is not death, if it kills no part of us, except that which hindered us from becoming perfect. Death is not death if it raises us in a moment from darkness into light, from weakness into strength, from sinfulness into holiness.

Death is not death if it perfects our faith by sight, and lets us behold Him in whom we have believed. Death is not death, if it rids us of doubt and fear, of sickness and disease, of sorrow and sadness.

Death is not death if it gives us to those whom we have loved and lost. Death is not death; for Christ has conquered death, for Himself, and for those who have trusted Him as their Redeemer.

Common Roots of the Methodist and Anglican Communions

Rev Dr Trevor Hoggard

Director of Mission Resourcing, Methodist Church of NZ

Methodism may be a living sign of the failure of Christians to live up to the Gospel of unity and reconciliation they proclaim but Methodism also testifies to the triumph of God over the Church.

The Church has always struggled to cope with God doing new things. That's the reason the Christian Church was founded in separation from its Jewish forbears. It's the same reason that men such as Luther who wanted to reform the church he loved ended breaking it up.

It's the same reason that the Methodist family of churches continued to fracture after Wesley's death. Think of the New Connexion 1797, the Primitive Methodists 1811, the Salvation Army 1865, and on into recent times.

John Wesley was always less committed than his brother Charles to resist the drift towards Separation. John simply said that he did not believe it to be 'expedient' but would follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. If you're an Anglican that sounds like dissembling, if you're a Methodist that sounds prophetic.

John allowed himself to leave his beloved Anglican Church only because he genuinely believed the Spirit of God was leading him to that

step. He looked at the tangible evidence before him of large numbers brought to faith, and of lives once violent, alcohol dependent and aimless renewed with a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

Following the Wesleys' first preaching tour to Cornwall the county jails were found to be empty on their second visit. To John and Charles, this was hard, reliable evidence that Methodism made a difference and so they pursued it whatever the Anglican authorities had to say about it.

Of course, once a group breaks away, finds its own head, becomes sovereign in its own kingdom, it becomes very difficult to bring that group back into the parent body. The child has left the womb and has its own life to lead.

Like mother and daughter, our two communions have laboured for 200 years side by side. In times of war, natural disaster or the uncertain days of early colonisation the deep family bonds of doctrine, spirituality and sacramental theology have enabled us to work in reasonable harmony from Flanders Field to 9/11.

Where Christians have been a small minority, Methodists and Anglicans have sought each other out on occasion to put the past behind them, as in the Churches of North and

South India and the United Church of Pakistan.

Yet too often attempted reconciliations have failed. Methodists have been abandoned at the altar more than once. Anglicans have too often shown a maternal assumption of superiority and authority, whilst Methodists have been too eager to retreat to the old stereotypes of Anglican moribund, ritual conformism.

We can't help but note that even in the present proposals going before General Synod it has been deemed necessary to point out that any Methodist President acclaimed as an episcopal minister will not have the same ontological status as an Anglican episcopos or bishop.

Yet despite such quibbles, here we are celebrating the existence of the Methodist-Anglican Covenant. Its effects are patchy but a new direction has been set for the long haul.

The lukewarm still need to have their hearts strangely warmed, to borrow a phrase, to the joys of sharing the charisms that God has so graciously bestowed on Anglican and Methodist peoples. We are discovering that we are more deeply connected than we have sometimes been willing to acknowledge, and we always were.

There is an ancient yew tree at Fortingall in Scotland which is 2,000-

3,000 years old. It doesn't look like a tree. It looks like several trees growing in a ring several metres across; but below the soil, its roots are one. The tree is so old the central part died off, leaving an open central area which was first recorded in 1770, but around the circumference, many stems and branches of this original tree are still growing strongly.

They look like separate trees, side by side; but in truth their several trunks and many boughs are sustained by the same roots.

That is the essence of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. The difference this covenant should make is this: we may have been willing to cooperate in times of war or disaster or the early years of colonisation but now this covenant is telling us that even in the easy times when it would be so much simpler for us to do things separately, you in your corner and we in ours, we must stop, pause a moment and look across to our partner and consider whether there is a new way to do familiar things together, hand in hand.

This is an abridged version of a sermon delivered at Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral in Auckland on 18 May to mark the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. The full text is available at the Mission Resourcing website: missionresourcing.org.nz.

Pentecost - born with fire and mystery

By Bill Peddie

Just as we must come to terms with the strange accounts of Easter and its aftermath, to understand the early Church we have to consider something even more unexpected than a resurrected Christ - Pentecost.

This time the principal actors were the disciples themselves. Just imagine being suddenly transformed with flames around your shoulders and speaking in another language.

Thankfully, the people at the astounding event sound rather like people today. Things were getting a bit tricky for those who called themselves followers of Christ, so they shut themselves away in a large room. Then there were those judgmental types who said, 'These people are drunk'.

Whatever happened in that room, doubters were changed to disciples and there was a sudden boost in the number of loyal followers. As a result of their Pentecost experience, some of these followers were prepared to step out and face hostile crowds and witness to what they saw and believed to be utterly transformative. The word 'Pentecost' is derived from the Greek for '50 days' and is, for the Church, 50 days after Easter.

The initial reason for the Pentecost gathering was not strictly to do with Christ. The supporters of Jesus were able to assemble because Jews were gathering in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival of the Shavuot Seder, which is celebrated 50 days after Passover.

Shavuot and Pentecost

share something else. Passover is when Jews recalled their miraculous escape from enslavement in Egypt and their journey to the Promised Land. Shavuot was a reminder of something that transformed their history but was not easily explained.

How should we think of these stories today? Despite our modern desire for explanations that reconcile with logic and science, open questions remain. If one or both accounts were written using symbolism to leave strong impressions to bolster the faith, their challenges to the laws of nature seem less important.

What would have been acceptable in Biblical societies is rather different to what we expect. We know that stories change with repetition and traditional history is never entirely straightforward as people shape stories for many reasons.

This is not to say we ought to ignore everything that doesn't fit our personal experience. There is a place for mystery.

Certainty closes off thought but wonder leaves open the possibility that there is more to learn, and this in turn should encourage us to be more humble and willing to listen to one another.

The mystery of the Holy Spirit described as a flame is wonderfully appropriate. Flames are mysterious as they flicker and spread. At times they appear to flow as they provide warmth and light in a range of colours and intensities.

(Continued on Page 6)



A bigger aid budget would enable New Zealand to help more people hard hit by natural disaster and conflict.

More generous aid budget urged

New Zealand aid agencies welcomed the projected increases in future foreign aid spending in last month's Budget.

However they caution these increases leave New Zealand well short of meeting the international commitments by wealthy countries to helping developing countries.

The 2014 Budget announced spending for New Zealand Official Development Assistance (ODA) will increase by nearly \$220 million spread over three years thought this will not start until 2015/16. Total expenditure on ODA over this period will be \$1.89 billion compared to nearly \$1.67 billion in the current three year period.

The New Zealand aid sector welcomes the increases in future foreign aid allocations but the Council for International Development (CID), which is the umbrella organisation for most organisations working in the aid sector, says waiting until next year before making modest increases is disappointing.

"Our aid budget has been too low for too long while developing countries have been hit hard by the after effects of the world financial crisis," says CID director Dr Wren Green.

"While it's tempting to see any increase in the New Zealand aid as a good thing, we are currently languishing at 16th on the league table of rich nations giving just 0.26 per cent of our gross national income to ODA."

"New Zealand is not doing its fair share," says Christian World Service national director Pauline McKay.

"The budget is woefully short of the 0.7 percent of our Gross National Income that successive governments have pledged at international meetings. We have a responsibility to the nearly one billion people who go hungry every day and the millions of people needing help because of conflict and disaster.

"Quite simply this budget is not enough," Pauline says.

Spirit of Pentecost

From Page 5

Before the flame appears it requires fuel and air and sufficient energy for the reaction to start. The fuel must be subject to the source of energy and not denied oxygen.

To take that analogy one step further, once a flame is burning it can cause other flames to ignite. Even if we have the potential stored within us to be followers of Jesus, we may still need activating and we still need the oxygen of informed faith.

The question we need to ask is not so much about what actually happened in that closed room. The real question is whether we can see evidence that the Holy Spirit continues to act in the lives of today's saints and in our own lives.

We can indeed spot committed individuals who make room in their lives to help those in need, expose injustice, and inspire others to a positive outlook. These rare individuals reflect the influence of some indefinable Spirit.

One way to think about the Spirit and

Pentecost today is to think of them as we would of a person or a nation. That birthday only gains significance in the way the life is lived.

On Pentecost, in A.D. 30, some 120 followers of a man named Jesus gathered together in Jerusalem. Suddenly the Spirit of God filled each one of them and illuminated and energised them with tongues of fire. On that day the Church was born. No historian of the time saw anything significant in that event.

Its significance came to lie in what those followers did with their experience. It is actually a choice that each successive generation must face for themselves.

We are born, like the Church was born at Pentecost, into possibility. What we do with the motivating Spirit will determine the significance of what that birthday potentially offers to the Church, the community...and even our world.

See more musings from Bill Peddie at his website: billpeddie.wordpress.com.

HONEST TO GOD *By Ian Harris*

The Holy Land's unholy mess



Ian Harris

How has the land called 'holy' by three major faiths turned into a cauldron of hatred and despair? Why are Jews and Palestinians locked in a bitter, seemingly intractable struggle that threatens a wider conflict?

These are among the questions explored in *Who Owns the Holy Land?*, one of a series of lectures delivered by Sir Lloyd Geering during a 30-year 'retirement' ministry in Wellington on behalf of St Andrew's Trust for the Study of Religion and Society. The series ended last month with a valedictory lecture on *The Evolving City*.

Always highly topical, in 2001, a month after al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, Geering traced the origins of and prospects for the 90-year impasse between Jews and Palestinians, both of whom claim the Holy Land as their home. The Jews base their claim on ancient possession and their sacred scriptures, the Palestinians on the fact that their ancestors happen to have lived there for more than 2000 years.

In the Hebrew scriptures, God bestowed the land of Canaan, which encompasses modern Israel, on Abraham, his son Isaac and their descendants some 3800 years ago. For Jews, this makes the land theirs by divine right.

From 722BC, however, came wave after wave of foreign invaders, with the result that from 586BC to the proclamation of Israel as a Jewish state in 1948, people other than Jews ruled the Holy Land.

Most Jews dispersed into neighbouring countries and into Europe, where for centuries they were forced into ghettos and shamefully persecuted. Toward the end of the 19th century the conviction grew that they must have a land of their own, and the Zionist movement opted for Palestine.

Palestine, however, was already populated. By the time of Jesus it had accommodated Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. By the 600s the country was Christian, but then it was conquered by the newly Muslim Arabs - who also traced their origins back to Abraham through Isaac's older half-brother, Ishmael.

So if God's promise of the land to Abraham and his descendants is decisive, it would seem to apply to

Arabs as well as Jews.

The Palestinians, says Geering, had no common ethnic origin or religion: "What joins them is simply the fact that they and their ancestors have lived in the land of Palestine from as far back as any of them can remember. In their veins runs the blood of ancient Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Crusaders and Turks."

They are Muslim and Christian, Samaritan and Druze. By birth and descent, they believe the land to be rightfully theirs.

Christian evangelicals and modern American fundamentalists complicate the religious dimension with their belief that the Jewish return to the Holy Land is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and the necessary forerunner of the second coming of Christ.

Geering traces the tortuous path of political Zionism from the 1880s, through Britain's Palestinian mandate after World War 1, the conflicting commitments Britain made to Jews and Palestinians, the influx of Jews before and after the Holocaust, the Jewish terrorist campaign in the 1940s, and the establishment of Israel in 1948. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled or were driven out to live in refugee camps and, since 1967, under Israeli occupation.

More recent developments are canvassed, including the emergence of Palestinian consciousness in response to Israeli oppression. The decades of tension have also contributed to a serious fault line developing between two of the world's 'civilisation plates' - Islam and the West.

Geering sees the best prospect of peace in a single religiously neutral state incorporating both Israelis and Palestinians, with equality of citizenship and opportunity guaranteed to all. But all-out war may have to come first.

He also notes that not all Israelis support the Zionist expansionist programme. Philosopher Yashayahu Leibowitz warned some years ago that the continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip would bring catastrophe to the Jewish people and asked: "Who will want to be known as a Jew in 100 years, unless we stop doing to another people what was done to us?"

Since religion is so inextricably intertwined with politics in this conflict, the question asked by the Hebrew prophet Micah is pertinent: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Three faiths would say "amen" to that - but you wouldn't know it in their Holy Land.

The booklet *Who Owns the Holy Land?* is available at admin@satrs.org.nz; \$8 posted. I recommend it.

On terror and compassion

JOY KINGSBURY REFLECTS ON THE SONS OF ABRAHAM

In June the lectionary includes two stories from the Abraham saga. They can be described as tales of terror, as each tells of a threat to the life of a son of Abraham.

In Genesis we encounter the world of an ancient nomadic herdsman and clan chief whose tragedy is that his beautiful wife is apparently infertile. In ancient times one's 'immortality' depended on having progeny.

Abraham has migrated to Canaan believing that his God would give this land to him and his descendants. When this looks increasingly unlikely, Sarah decides to solve the problem by having her slave Hagar become a surrogate mother.

Sarah will use Hagar's womb to obtain a child who will be legally Sarah's. This type of surrogacy is not unfamiliar to us in the strange world in which we live but the fact that Hagar has no choice in the matter appals us.

Hagar is no pushover, however. As a

slave she has no authority over her body but while Sarah and Abraham may consider her a thing to possess, Hagar knows her own self-worth. A Jewish tradition that Hagar was of royal descent reflects this perception of her.

When her son Ishmael is born, Hagar doesn't hand him over to Sarah. He remains her son, and she uses him to elevate her position within the clan. Sarah's plan has backfired.

Should Abraham die, Ishmael will become clan chief, and his mother will be empowered to take revenge on her mistress. Sarah has jeopardised her future. The solution arises with the birth of Isaac. Abraham has his legitimate heir, so Sarah can get rid of her son's rival and his dangerous mother.

Reluctantly, because of his affection for Ishmael, Abraham agrees to Sarah's request to cast out the slave woman and her son after God intervenes on Sarah's behalf. Sarah's apparent desire for their

demise doesn't align with God's plans, however.

He has promised Hagar and now promises Abraham a future for Ishmael. God tells Abraham to send the boy and his mother away. He does not tell the patriarch to send them into the desert to die by being inadequately provisioned. Abraham leaves it to God to supply the water needed for life.

Having had to save the life of one son, God commands the sacrifice of the other. One wonders about a connection here. Were there lessons about the sanctity of life that both Sarah and Abraham had to learn?

Initially God appears no better than the pagan deities who demand the lives of firstborn sons. Perhaps Abraham has yet to sufficiently disassociate God from the Canaanites' brutal gods.

The Bible interprets the 'sacrifice' of Isaac as evidence of Abraham's faithfulness to God. However, the darker side of the

tale is not hidden from our view. How terrified was young Isaac and what lifelong trauma did he suffer?

What impact did this have on his relationship with Abraham? How anguished was Sarah? In Jewish tradition Isaac is an adult, being tested alongside his father. Did his 'sacrifice' hasten his mother's death, the next story in the saga?

The world of the Hebrew Scriptures is strange to us but the negative impact of our self-serving actions is all too familiar. Thus we're little different to the Jewish patriarchs and matriarchs who first heard and responded to the voice of God.

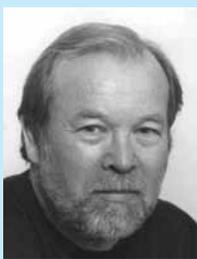
The Bible speaks of Ishmael and Isaac reconciling but is silent about Hagar. Was she always an outcast, or is the Jewish tradition that she is Keturah, the woman who became Abraham's third wife, correct? Did Abraham learn something about compassion after all?



LISTEN TO THE VOICE WITHIN

CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



It is seven years since I officially retired from ministry. Actually it seems like only yesterday.

My ministry has taken me around the world, from the east coast of the USA, to

Europe back to the Midwest of the USA, to Aotearoa New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands, to the West Coast of the USA, to Christchurch, Wellington and then back to Christchurch. It has been an extraordinary journey covering many miles.

After the visit of a good friend, I found myself returning to a little book by the Quaker writer, teacher and activist Parker Palmer entitled 'Let your Life Speak'. I asked myself: What have I done with my life?

This is a question I suppose all of us ask at one time or another. Life is a gift, given once and lived once. When we are young and look forward to living our lives, we ask what can we do to make a difference or how can I be noticed. But when we are old, we are more inclined to look back and ask what have we done with our lives.

In his book Palmer turns this question on its head and rephrases it with a question borrowed from the Oregon poet William Stafford: "Ask me whether what I have done is my life?" For some of us, it is a question we ask towards the end of our lives. For others the question is a non sequitur, it doesn't make sense."

Initially I thought I would pursue a career in medicine but halfway through university I laid that vocational aspiration aside. God was calling me to ministry so I tried theological college but its emphasis on a professional approach was

not for me.

Confused and frustrated I decided I needed some more time to think things over. Encouraged by my father, I enrolled in the officers school of the US Navy. I completed the programme and spent almost four years of active duty as the chief engineering officer on a destroyer, cruising the waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

Life in the navy was challenging and demanding. On long nights when I was officer on the deck I had a lot of time to think about my life.

Determined to find my 'real' vocation, and following what was the call of God for me, I re-entered theological college and prepared for the ministry. That was the early 1960s, or what now seems like a foreign place and time. From parish ministry to further theological studies, university lecturer and university chaplaincy and back to parish ministry, it has been quite a ride!

When we are young, we try to bend life according to our will. We 'enforce' upon ourselves the ways we think our lives should go. But gradually we realise, life isn't lived that way.

The English word vocation is derived from the Latin word *vocatio* or 'voice'. Vocation is not a goal I pursue, it is a calling I hear. It is a voice within telling me who I am and inviting me to listen to my life.

In other words it is God speaking, calling us to be true to ourselves and our families.

As Parker Palmer reminds us: "Vocation does not come from a voice 'out there' calling me to something I am not. It comes from a voice 'in here' calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfil the original selfhood given to me at birth by God."

Don't take membership rolls lightly

Peter MacKenzie,
UCANZ executive officer

I sometimes get calls from local churches asking about membership rolls and how they should be organised.

Generally the conversation begins with a statement that they have not worried too much about the roll before, but now they need to get it sorted. The driving force is sometimes a major property decision, the appointment of a minister, a question of levies, or a matter of conflict within the local church.

The problem is facing up to people with an issue that has been seriously neglected.

A membership roll is a legal matter. The membership of a local church has certain legal obligations in terms of property, finance and pastoral care.

It is the members that elect a parish council to administer the local church.

The authority of the parish council is, in some respects, dependent on being properly appointed by the membership.

In property transactions it is the members that give approval for significant deals. This becomes crucial when a hard decision has to be made (such as closing or selling a church building) and there are mixed feelings. Such a decision is even more complicated if there is no up-to-date membership roll and people from the community believe that they can have their say and vote.

When a membership roll is out of date, technical issues arise. Suppose a church has a roll of 100, but 50 of those people are now inactive. When a major decision is called for it is impossible to have a 50 percent vote of the membership.

The Charities Commission also

wants to have a clear idea of who are members. There is a clear statement that members of a charitable organisation should not have pecuniary gain through their involvement - so the issue of who is a member is important.

A membership roll is a financial matter. A number of church levies are based on membership numbers, although not the UCANZ Partner Support Fund at the moment. When we have a clear indication of membership, there is statistical proof for actions that are undertaken.

A membership roll is a pastoral matter. Membership issues can be sensitive in two ways. Firstly, when we challenge people who are no longer involved in the life of the congregation to review their membership. And secondly, when we ask someone who has been actively

involved to make a clear commitment and become a member. The sensitivity usually arises because we fail to make such conversations a regular part of our church life.

A membership roll is a mission matter. A local church can evaluate its own performance by considering their membership roll. Only for a limited time can we hide behind the mantra 'it's about quality, not quantity'.

The harsh reality is that numbers do matter and we must consider the viability of local churches and their use of valuable assets. Membership is a key statistic in such an evaluation.

The process of updating a local church roll needs to be seen positively and proactively. It should not be in the form of 'purging the roll' but rather an opportunity for people to affirm their commitment to the life and work of the local church.

THE TRINITY COLLEGE project called *Our Communities of Meaning* has begun. All around the New Zealand Methodist Connexion, from Riverton to Whanganui, Wellington to Auckland, you are warmly invited to join the conversation in tcol-mahara forums.

What's it about? In a recent forum we asked participants to describe their communities of meaning under three headings: educational, church, wider society.

There was a rich and varied set of responses. So much so, that we decided to widen the forum to include anyone who wanted to participate.

Here's a very brief sample of some student replies. There's much more to read in their posts.

"BEING PART OF the Pasifika Community Leaders at Mt Roskill Primary school is also another learning experience. Working with large groups of teachers, children and parent is always challenging but it enhances our experiences as well as (understanding) diversity."

"I CONSIDER (my workplace) to be my most important or significant community of meaning. The staff and customers I have contact with who influence me or have been influenced by me in some way. My 25 years there means I know a lot of people – everyone I work with knows I am a Christian and knows how active I am in the life of the Church. Many people over the years have come to talk to me in times of difficulty for my listening ear, for advice and support. Past customers still ring me to talk over issues."

"AND THEN THERE is tcol where I am increasing my sense and experience of meaning of God and life: through the people with whom I share this course, and their ideas; through Night School, which not only is increasing my knowledge but also brings fellowship and fun and amusement, for goodness

sake! I also think that the pictures/art and the music that are put up and played at the end gives an opportunity to experience meaning on an emotional level, in addition to the intellectual stimulation of the imparted knowledge and the following chat pod discussion."

"OUR CATHEDRAL of the Blessed Sacrament Choir and Orchestra (CBS) constructs its meaning beyond this. We have a strong Christian music mission which reaches beyond Christchurch to the diocese, New Zealand and the world. The community's meaning continues to develop especially during tours. This is generated by shared experience and dialogue and extends beyond the conductor's musical direction."

"I BELONG TO three main communities of meaning. First is Onehunga High School, my place of work. I am a full-time Maths teacher here. This community is quite diverse with different cultures, and serve as good preparation for ministry. Second I have more recently become active in the mahara community in terms of being a member actively participating and learning how the e-portfolio can be an effective solution for developing ministry in an on-line context. Third, I subscribe to AMA (Auckland Mathematics Association) that has an active school network for Maths teachers, where it promotes better ways of teaching. The last two examples are on-line as well as off-line communities which improves my performance as a prospective minister. It also affords an opportunity to listen to significant insights from a range of perspectives."

"MY COMMUNITIES OF meaning are deliberately linked together in my response, because I see no separation between academic, church and wider society. All are enriching and have an equal role to play. They include my involvement with New Brighton Union Church, Linwood Avenue Union Church and the wider Methodist church,

with Touchstone newspaper, with the River of Life Project and in my work as a journalist. Of those, I think the best example of a public face of theology is the River of Life Project, an ecumenical movement, and in particular the interaction on Facebook, which has led to media coverage, public meetings and action on issues including water quality, a proposed Avon River Park, earthquake recovery / renewal, sewerage issues arising from the earthquakes and more recently earthquake burnout."

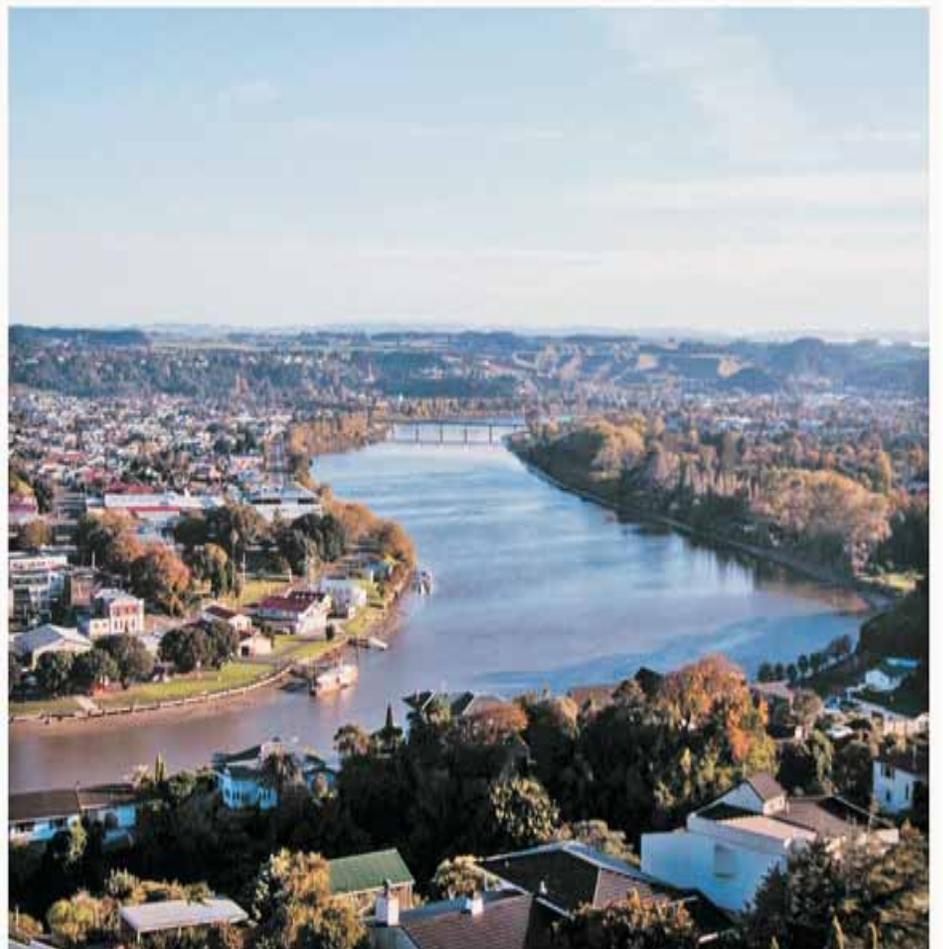
"IN THE COMMUNITY, my communities of meaning are varied. As a Police Chaplain, the police staff are the ones with whom I spend time, getting the opportunity sometimes to bring theology into the public square. Building a relationship of trust takes time, but after 2 years with them, the trust has grown, the relationship with many is relaxed and conversations can go deeper. I am a spiritual director and counsellor, so I have professional communities of meaning with both those groups. With the counsellors, this is more on-line as we read and respond to articles and requests from the Association of Counsellors, but there is substantial face to face contact with the spiritual directors."

"TRINITY COLLEGE IS another community of meaning for me. The time away with other students on Te Tai Tokerau trip and the chance to get together both face to face and on-line are both primary and secondary ways into a community of meaning. Our communication with others as students and tutors is the primary way, but we also take our reflections and collected and shared wisdom beyond the College community to be shared in our churches and communities."

So, let's talk. It's fun and it's also serious. Why not have your say? Church leaders will soon discover what laity have always known: there's a wealth of talent in the pews Sunday by Sunday. And more than a dollop of goodwill, commonsense and generosity.

Share your **communities** of meaning

f tcol-mahara forums



join the talk www.tcol.ac.nz wherever you are

Homeless young people an NZ reality



It is estimated that there are 34,000 homeless people in New Zealand. Young people aged 14-24 years old make up half of that population.

Being 'homeless' is now defined as being in temporary or unstable accommodation as well as the more familiar image of sleeping rough in cities. New Zealand's rate of homelessness is on par with New York's. Roughly a third of families who are homeless have at least one parent who is working full time.

Young people in this situation often come from a background of abuse and trauma, and are dealing with addictions and mental illnesses.

Some young people who go into social care find a home for life in loving foster families or their own families. But a small, vulnerable percent bounce around incompatible homes and move badly out of care.

With no family support and ineligible for adult benefits, homelessness is a real risk when they leave care at 17. Sleeping in cars or couch-surfing is often a reality young people face. Even if it's only temporary it is still a

stressful and depressing experience.

At the other end of the homelessness spectrum are low-wage income earners who can't afford high rents. The current waitlist for Housing New Zealand houses is more than 10,000 families. That means that's about 80,000 children waiting for homes.

In 2010 the Lifewise Trust received funding from the Vodafone New Zealand Foundation for a dedicated youth social worker. They hired Alex Frank to work out of the Lifewise Hub on Karangahape Road in Auckland.

In the last six months the Hub has worked with 60 different young people who have accessed their services for varying purposes. Lately they have noticed an increase in young people from different ethnicities accessing their services. Often these young people are refugees or have unstable home environments.

Social workers who deal with this small and high-risk group of young people know the situation is complex. Homelessness is never down a single issue. A few big issues

can create a barrier to finding help.

Lifewise social workers support young people to make changes and see that they can have higher expectations from their lives.

People who seek the help of Lifewise are often trying to beat an addiction in order to have more money and stability to put into accommodation. Rehabilitation programmes and parenting courses can help.

A young woman who started her rehab journey after her third child was taken into care worked her way from living on the street through two weeks of medical detox, then eight weeks of rehab. A four-month assisted living programme supported her sobriety, and now she is in a programme that focuses on staying sober and safe parenting.

With the staunch support of social workers, young people can push back against barriers of inequality and turn their lives around.

Lifewise is shining a spotlight on youth homelessness in this year's Big Sleepout campaign.

Auckland's business and community leaders will sleep rough and fundraise for Lifewise's crisis response and housing staff who work with Auckland's homeless people.

With a special focus on youth at risk, Lifewise will raise awareness about how kids can fall through the gaps in New Zealand's welfare system, and how with support they can start to live healthy lives.



Social workers at Methodist Mission children's centres provide help to families.

Children's programmes gateways to family support

Methodist Mission Southern runs a number of centres for children and those programmes can open doors for families to find the support they need to deal with the impacts of living with poverty.

These centres are the Arahina Family Support Centre in Mosgiel, the Little Citizens early learning centre in South Dunedin, and the Approach Community Learning programme in Lookout Point.

Arahina offers after school programmes and information about health, education and jobs. Little Citizens is a nursery and day care centre for pre-schoolers. Approach provides courses on computing, administration and employment skills to young people and adults.

Mission director Laura Black says a social worker is based at each of the centres.

"Our centres are in the most deprived areas of the South Island. We self-fund social workers in each because it is easiest to help parents early on. We don't intrude in people's lives but an extra layer of help is simply part of the package we offer all those we work with.

"All families need help from time to time. We provide information, help families build skills, and teach them how to navigate the issues they face," Laura says.

The Mission has lots of stories to tell about the work at its children support centres.

They include that of a 10 year old boy from a gang home. He moved to Dunedin with his family because Dad was in prison there.

When he started to show aggressive behaviour at school, the Mission became involved. Through Arahina he got a chance to explore local waterways, forests, and parks.

The social worker at Arahina linked him into support services outside of school including

counselling sessions for his behaviour. After this his school work and behaviour improved and he now attends taekwondo.

He is a role model at Arahina, and has been heard to tell other kids to walk away and calm down when a fight breaks out.

Another example of the support the Mission can provide can be seen in the way a social worker at the Little Citizens centre has worked with a family that has six children aged 17 to three years.

The four older children were removed from the parent's care three years ago due to family violence while Mum was pregnant with twins. At one point, Dad was imprisoned for the violence.

Today Dad and Mum live in separate homes. The children remain under the custody of CYF but live with Mum and receive support from Dad.

All four children have witnessed and been subjected to violence and abuse resulting in complex behaviours and needs.

The three youngest children attend Little Citizens while the oldest attends Approach and is working towards NCEA 1. The social worker has helped get the other children into school and extra activities so they could begin to re-establish routines and normal family life.

Although Mum and Dad live in separate homes and violence orders are in place, they share the parenting of the children, and this is working well.

The Mission's social worker has enlisted the support of other social workers in their schools to help support Mum and the children while they are at school. The girls have been referred to the Women's Refuge's tamariki programme to work on the violence they have witnessed.

Help families provide better lives for their children

Support Methodist Missions

Every child needs a caring home with adults who care.

Every family needs support and a chance to develop the skills to care for their children.

A commitment to social justice is at the heart of what it means to be Methodist.

Methodist Missions live this commitment by working with families and children who need extra support.

A donation or bequest can help Methodist Missions Aotearoa makes a lasting difference to New Zealand families.



For more information contact the chairperson of Methodist Mission Aotearoa, Michael Greer
12A Stuart Street, Levin 5510 • P 06 368 0386 • 021 632 716 • E mgreer@gdesk.co.nz

Progressive spirituality conference to explore beyond the borders

By Sophie Parish.

Many people of faith have questions about the Bible, traditional church teachings, and the life and legacy of Jesus. Some are finding groups that explore new ways of applying Christianity and spirituality to their modern lives.

In August a conference will provide those with an interest in progressive spirituality to exchange views. The 'Beyond the Borders' conference will take place at the Community of St. Luke's in Remuera, Auckland August 28-31.

Participants are invited to think about ways of believing and living that are beyond the borders of any one perspective or religion.

St Lukes minister Rev Glynn Cardy says there are some issues such as social justice, gay marriage, and poverty are often a focus of progressive spirituality but it encompasses a variety of views. Some progressive Christians have a strong personal faith and describe Jesus Christ as their saviour. Others take an approach similar to Lloyd Geering and think that we create our concept of God.

"The idea of God is bigger than the available categories. The best word for God is love. God is a divine source of energy and synergy. For me it is a very big God," Glyn says.

The progressive spirituality movement does not try to convert people or form a new religion. Glynn says the movement supports people where they are, and uses doubt and questions as a tool of faith exploration.

Topics addressed at the conference will be emerging wisdom, compassion and justice, critical study of the bible and Christian theology, the search for peace, and other insights from various religions.

Pitt Street Methodist Church presbyter Rev Lynne Frith will attend the conference. She sees progressive spirituality as a transformative movement that gives people opportunity, companions, and space to explore different ways of experiencing the sacredness and oneness of life.

The Beyond the Borders conference is held every three years and stems from the Common Dreams network, established in Australia in 2006.

Among those who will address the conference are author and professor at the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Dr Brendon Scott, who will talk about how Jesus has been interpreted through the first few centuries of Common Era to the present day.

Australian author, microbiologist and theologian Dr. Val Webb will speak on the topic 'From Insiders to Outsiders and

People without Borders.' Val says "If we think about the divine and the universe that is within us we become motivated."

At the conference Australian broadcaster Dr Rachael Kohn will engage people from different religions, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in a discussion on spirituality and what sustains them.

Other speakers include former NZ Race Relations Conciliator Wally Hirsch, Rev Brenda Rockell from Cityside Baptist, Anglican Deacon Wilf Holt from Auckland's City Mission and NZ artist Star Gossage.

The conference will also offer workshops where people can join small groups to discuss topics related to progressive spirituality. A 'quick fire' session will allow people aged 20-30 years, seven minutes to share their work and latest projects helping communities here and overseas.

Glynn says the conference is a time for progressive Christians to refresh the spirit and the intellect. He welcomes all who interested in attending.

Early registration for the conference is \$60 and \$10 to attend the presentations of individual keynote speakers.

For more information on the conference: progressivespirituality.co.nz.

Speaker offers invitation to doubt

By Sophie Parish

Theologian and microbiologist Val Webb says progressive spirituality means different things to different people.

"It can be liberating for some people and provides a place to talk about their doubts or questions within the church," she says.

Val holds a PhD in theology and has taught religious studies at universities in the US and Australia.

She says her experiences during her years as a young university student was that religion was debated within academic circles but it was not widely talked about or questioned in churches.

"Having my own questions after talking in academic circles I wrote my first book 'In Defence of Doubt - an Invitation to Adventure.' We should celebrate doubt and help people realize that they do not have to be stuck in a hard place. We are in the 21st century," she says.

Val's journey as led her to write 10 books that celebrate doubt within religion, look at the feminine role within scripture, and extract the humanistic and core message of the written word to apply to modern day life.

She challenges traditional teachings, including science and progressive theology to arrive at a post-modern outlook on what religion looks like today.

Her vision is to create an inclusive spirituality rather than an insider and outsider perspective.

At the Beyond the Borders Conference in Auckland Val will speak on the topic 'From Insiders to



Val Webb

Outsiders and People without Borders'. "I was raised with a highly developed insider/outsider mentality that takes a lifetime to shake it off."

She said there are many progressive spirituality groups around but often they are outside of the church.

Val sees a lot of people from the Methodist and Presbyterian faiths attending the Australian progressive spirituality conferences.

She says progressive Christians do not throw out all the traditions of their faith. "There are different ways to understand the core message of Jesus."

Val says progressive Christians tend to get involved in ecology, care about the planet and have acceptance of people from other faiths.

For more information about Val Webb visit her website - valwebb.com.au.

21ST CENTURY PENTECOST

Do we still burn with passion?

The season of Pentecost is upon us, but what does it mean in today's world? David Hill approached some Methodist ministers to ask them what Pentecost means to them and their congregations.

Pentecost ranks alongside Christmas and Easter as one of the three major Christian seasons but it is the least understood.

Ministers spoken to say their congregations have different reasons for celebrating Pentecost but for all the season celebrates rebirth and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Marlborough minister Rev Ian Boddy says his two congregations in Picton and Blenheim have different reasons for celebrating Pentecost.

"Picton always celebrates the time when they built the building they are in now, around the time of Pentecost. They really get into it and think of Pentecost as being the birthday of the church."

The Blenheim congregation does not have an event to tie in with its Pentecost service, so it just doesn't have the same feeling.

To help build a theme, Ian uses 1960s pop songs. Last year he used the Beatles song 'You've Really Got a Hold on Me' to set the mood for Pentecost. Two years ago his Pentecost song was 'Light My Fire'.

"I haven't got this year's one chosen yet but it will be one with the fire theme to fire up the imagination."

Dunedin minister Rev Siosifa Pole says Pentecost is a celebration of God being

present among the community of faith, to inspire, empower and direct them in their mission.

"We feel that we are not alone because God is among us and within us, so we can go out into the world with confidence."

Siosifa says Pentecost brings people together, just as in the story in the book of Acts, where people spoke in various languages and understood each other. "So it is a great witness in today's world as we come together in our diversity."

Rangiora minister Rev Philomeno Kinera says Pentecost means that God, through the Spirit, is choosing "to meet us where we are, in the midst of a multitude of languages and experiences".

"We cannot describe God using one language, one concept, or one image because the spirit of God is creative and is reimagined in a myriad of ways, thoughts, expressions and theology."

Philomeno is reminded of John Wesley's heart-warming Aldersgate experience, which resulted in his passion for people and social action and his familiar statement: "Catch on fire with enthusiasm and people will come for miles to watch you burn."

"Whatever you do, do it with passion or else return to your trade, Wesley said. This to me is Pentecost," Philomeno says.

"We experience Pentecost daily being transformed from one degree of glory closer to the image of Christ. Moving towards perfection, not free from sin or mistakes, but perfection in works of love, compassion and justice."



Pentecost, water colour by Glenda Moore (www.GlendaDietrich.com).

Rev Augusten Subhan says as his parish at Te Puke and Mount Maunganui prepared to celebrate Pentecost it reflected on the first Pentecost as described in Acts.

"It was a day of incredible drama, a day of miracles, a day in which lives were changed," Augusten says.

"But I am thinking, how it is relevant in our present scenario of church. When our churches are empty and the size of congregations is deteriorating, pews are filled by elderly members of the church.

"I think we need the same power to bring revival in our churches. We need the same flaming fire to bring harmony and hope in our communities."

Augusten says we need the Holy Spirit to empower us in the 21st century, as we attempt to appeal to people lured by a materialistic world.

"We must have a heart, which is burning with love and passion to serve God and his people on the earth."

Uncertainty in South Sudan

When the world's newest country, South Sudan became independent in 2011, hopes were high for a better future.

Instead, hardship continues and fighting that was once confined to a few areas has spread. This time the conflict is not from neighbouring Sudan with whom the south has outstanding negotiations from independence.

Now the fighting is from within and once again has caused dislocated large numbers of people. For a bitterly poor country where one in seven children dies before their fifth birthday and one in three doesn't have access to water, it is the people who carry the burden when there is conflict.

Rachel aged 25 and her sister Ajah 24 fled from Bor, where fighting is intense. Like more than 86,000 people they have crossed an international border - in their case to Uganda. The Ugandan government has allocated them a small piece of land and



A woman cooks while talking with her children in a displaced person's camp in Manangui, South Sudan. Photo: ACT/P Jeffrey.

humanitarian agencies like Action by Churches Together (ACT Alliance) of which Christian World Service is a member assist with non-food items and shelter.

Rachel and Ajah have arrived with little but are grateful for the safety. "At least we don't have to hear the sound of a gun," says

Rachel. "Here we are settled and can have a life."

The fighting flared up on December 15 when President Salva Kiir accused former deputy Riek Machar of plotting a coup. Church leaders tried to mediate and urged for a national dialogue.

"We are heartbroken to see

what was a purely political problem in the ruling SPLM party quickly slide into an ethnic one, on a rapid and escalating scale," they said in a joint statement.

Talks continue and so does the humanitarian effort of South Sudanese in other states. Agencies including the ACT Alliance are

providing shelter for the nearly half a million internally displaced people.

At the request of ACT Alliance CWS wrote to Foreign Affairs minister Murray McCully asking him to use the influence he has to pressure those who can to make a difference.

Wadalla Peter executive director of CWS partner the Maridi Service Agency was in Juba in December. Now safely back in Maridi he thanks CWS and ACT Alliance for their advocacy efforts.

"Maridi County is fine, and in fact the whole of Western Equatoria state is calm and peaceful." People have fled Juba but are mostly being hosted by their relatives. "The radio (Maridi FM) is operating normally and updating the community on the current situation in country," he continues. Many of those caught in the fighting do not have the benefit of reliable news.

SOLOMON ISLAND FLOOD APPEAL

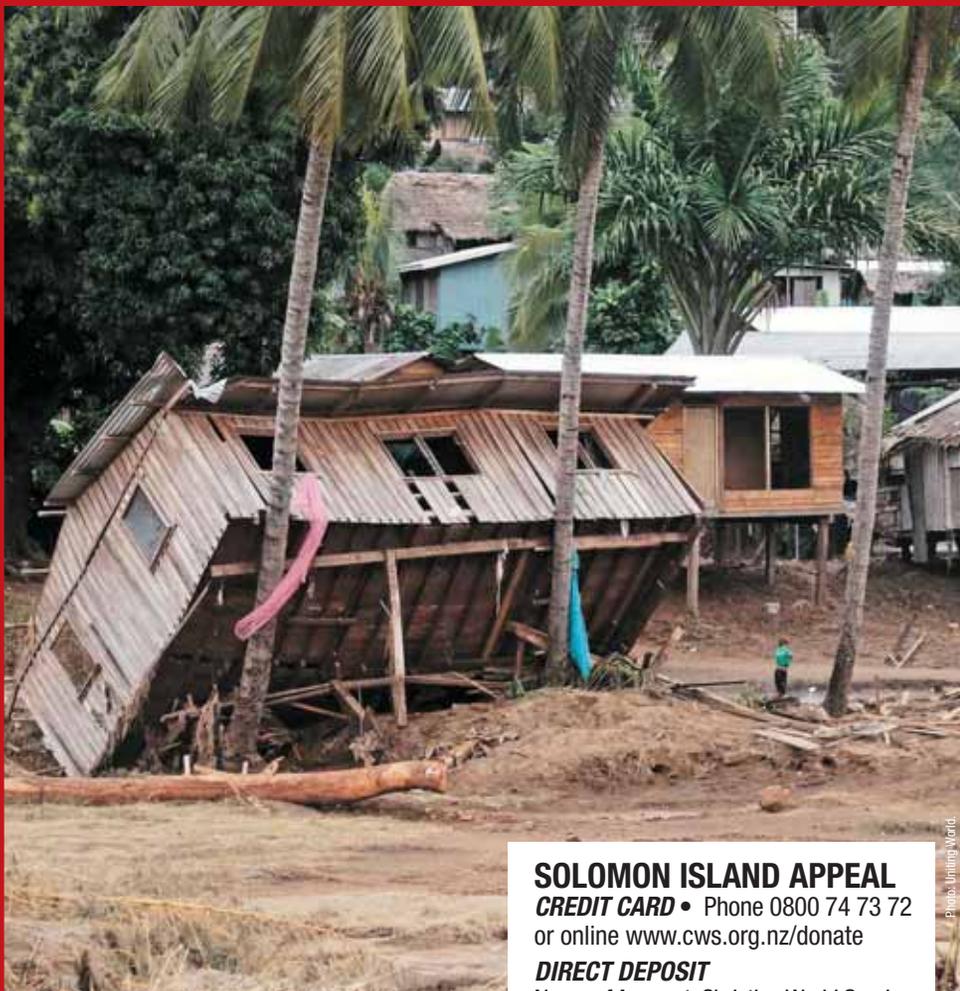


Photo: United World

SOLOMON ISLAND APPEAL

CREDIT CARD • Phone 0800 74 73 72
or online www.cws.org.nz/donate

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Name of Account: Christian World Service
Account number:
ANZ 06 0817 031 8646 00
Reference: SolomonFlood
Email postal details to cws@cws.org.nz
if you would like a tax receipt.

POST • Christian World Service
PO Box 22652 Christchurch 8140.



PLEASE DONATE NOW

Can you help Solomon Islanders recover from Flash Floods? They need food, clothing, shelter and help to start new food gardens. Help local church groups respond.

CWS joins calls to bring back Nigerian school girls

Churches, the YWCA and the World Council of Churches have joined others in calling for the return of the 276 Nigerian young women from Chibok boarding school on April 15.

The World Young Christian Women's Association (YWCA) and YWCA of Nigeria have called for their immediate release, calling the action "a bruise on the conscience of the whole of humanity". Together they are calling on the Nigerian government for the immediate and safe return of the girls, to ensure the security of all persons and to end the conflict that creates the risk for kidnapping, sexual abuse and trafficking of girls.

"Christian World Service endorses the campaign to Bring Back our Girls and asks churches to pray for and support efforts to end this shameful exploitation of girls and young women. Sadly, this is only an extreme example of what is happening the world over.

"It is something many of our overseas partners are working to stop in their communities through education, through campaigning and through the legal system," says CWS national director Pauline McKay. The radical Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram is responsible for the kidnapping. Boko Haram has killed thousands of people in recent years. Its name translates to 'Western education is a sin', hence the targeting of schoolchildren.

Boko Haram has little support within

the Muslim community. However, since its establishment in 2002 they have received support from northern Nigerian Muslim elites concerned about the increasing number of Christians and those following traditional religions in their region.

Nigeria is now Africa's largest economy but the government has failed to deal with rising tensions, corruption and increasing levels of violence.

Under current president Goodluck Johnathan the situation has continued to deteriorate. The government is dependent on large oil reserves and fails to address the causes of the conflict. Human rights violations and lack of economic opportunity continue to plague a country which sends one third of its military overseas as UN peacekeepers.

In an effort to lessen the violence in 2012 World Council of Churches general secretary Rev Dr Olav Fyske Tveit joined chairperson of the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought (RABIIT) Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan, in leading a Christian-Muslim delegation to visit Nigeria in response to the inter-communal strife. Discussions have continued in an effort to prevent the loss of lives in the name of religion.

The YWCA is a global network of 25 million women and young girls leading social and economic change in over 120 countries worldwide.



Young People

NOTHING CAN TOP FAKAME!

By Filo Tu

It cannot be found in any New Zealand calendars, nor was it acknowledged within the Gregorian or Mayan Calendars of old. But there is a calendar...out there somewhere...that recognises the first Sunday of May as 'White Sunday', better known as Fakame.

One of the most recognised traditions within the Tongan culture, Fakame is a celebration of children and young people. It is a time to recognise their faith in Jesus and an opportunity to showcase their skills and talents.

In the broader scheme of things, Fakame is mainly celebrated by the Wesleyan churches of Tonga amongst the other denominations. Over the years, numerous artists, musicians, dancers and choreographers have developed firm foundations due to this tradition.

Like most things that are associated with Tonga and its people, music and dance are like the outer shell of an egg. They encompass everything within it and protect traditions within an ever-changing society like New Zealand.

So what does Fakame have to do with

this? Everything!

Fakame is like sitting an NCEA Level 3 examination. The only differences are, with Fakame you have a crowd watching. You cannot leave halfway through and you cannot rely on pieces of paper that you've hidden inside your socks. But you do have your mother at your back (no pressure!).

The program for Fakame varies from place to place but traditionally it falls into two parts: the service and the celebration. The service is traditional, and filled with hymns, scripture and the encouraging words of the day. The celebration is slightly more flexible, however. It is filled with skits, dances, laughter and tears.

At the central point in all of the preparations that go into both are the children and young people who will spend hours on end attending practices, memorizing verses, learning actions and being pampered to give their utmost best (with the promise of McDonald's if they're really good!).

And then comes the moment of truth: Doomsday! For Fakame, everyone dresses



The spotlight is on the young ones during Fakame.

up in traditional white, surrounded and encompassed with fine mats. Tongans definitely live up to the phrase 'dressed to the nines' and they definitely rock it!

But beneath the makeup, the sparkling footwear and the wonderful attire is a ticking brain going over and over what must be said, what must be done and where one must go. Nevertheless, it's all over in the blink of an eye, and one stands at the end of the service, greeting one another and all, thinking... 'Phew! I'm glad that's over. What's for lunch?'

Like most Pacific traditions, Fakame can be looked at from various angles. As a young person that has been through more

than two decades of such performances, pressures and attention, I believe that nothing can prepare any Pacific person better for the realities of society.

Our everyday lives are a Fakame, requiring us to prepare, organise and stand ready. It demands us to remember, install and deliver and asks us to perform and adjust our voices to any situation that might arise.

So if this is your first read of a Fakame, or whether you are curious to witness such a tale, be sure to write it into your calendar, the first Sunday of May, a celebration of our young, now and forever.

Kidz Korna!

WELCOME TO KIPZ KORNA JUNE 2014!

Wasn't it great to see last month's Kidz Korna and find out what people around the country had been doing for Easter?

This month we hear from children at two churches.

The children at Hauraki Plains Co-operating Parish celebrated Easter with a play. It told the story of Jesus' resurrection.

We also hear from Emily and Jordan Cormack from St David's Union Church in Timaru.

Giddy from Emily

"Hi, my name is Emily Cormack and my brother is Jordan. We are members of St David's Union Church in Timaru.

"At a church service in March, we heard the story of Jesus talking to Nicodemus.

"We then took up the offering and at the end of the service we gave out jelly beans to everyone before helping our grandparents, Margaret and Bevan Johnson, serve morning tea.



Emily and Jordan Cormack.

Easter at Hauraki Plains

Before the Easter service at Hauraki Plains Co-operating Church, children in costumes lined themselves at the front of the church.

During the service they acted the play of the resurrection based on John 20:1-18.

The children did actions while the story was narrated. The play showed Mary going to look at Jesus' tomb. After Mary met Jesus, all the children gathered around Jesus and Mary. Mary sang 'I come to the garden alone' and the children joined in the chorus.

After the service we all had Easter eggs.



The stars of the Easter play at Hauraki Plains Church.

FESTIVALS

Can you find these festivals in the word search?

Which one appears twice?

All Saints, Ash Wednesday, Christmas, Easter Day, Epiphany, Fathers Day, Good Friday, Harvest, Mothers Day, Palm Sunday, Pentecost. White Sunday

A	O	Y	B	T	C	W	O	L	Y	B	A	Z	S
Y	S	Z	A	F	S	B	T	A	I	E	L	D	Y
P	S	H	V	D	I	E	D	W	P	V	L	Z	A
W	E	N	W	K	S	R	V	I	V	H	S	P	D
H	T	N	H	E	E	R	P	R	V	V	A	E	S
I	E	H	T	T	D	H	E	J	A	L	I	N	R
T	Y	C	S	E	A	N	Q	H	M	H	N	T	E
E	B	A	Q	N	C	S	E	S	T	F	T	E	H
S	E	I	Y	S	E	O	U	S	L	O	S	C	T
U	N	Q	U	K	B	N	S	V	D	W	M	O	A
N	Q	U	E	V	D	R	W	T	O	A	E	S	F
D	X	G	F	A	E	Z	A	E	V	T	Y	T	V
A	G	O	Y	Y	A	D	I	R	F	D	O	O	G
Y	G	I	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	I	U

What are the kids in your church up to?

Kidz Korna wants to hear from you so we can share your stories. Send stories and photos of your activities to Doreen Lennox at dlennox@xtra.co.nz or to touchstone@paradise.net.nz

ON SCREEN

A film review by Steve Taylor

TRANSCENDENCE

Transcendence is defined in the dictionary as existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level.

Seen at the beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 11, in the Tower of Babel, transcendence is the upward human quest to build toward the heavens.

As seen in the movie, transcendence, is inward, a technological quest. Here the building blocks become not bricks but brains in an artificial computerised quest for existence beyond human limitations.

The movie begins with a flash forward, to a future devoid of technology. Armed soldiers patrol the streets. Cell phones are silent. Laptops have no use but to hold open shop doors. Such are the consequences of this search for transcendence.

The movie then moves backwards. Johnny Depp is Will Caster, Rebecca Hall his wife Evelyn. Deeply in love and fanatically committed to research into artificial intelligence, their scientific research is halted by a movement of Luddite terror.

Together they experiment on the dying Will. His brain is mapped onto a computer and in the wonders offered to us by modern science, a miracle occurs. Will is regenerated as an artificial intelligence, his brain harnessed to the power of the world-wide web. A rural town is purchased, in which Will-the-computer calculates his way toward his research dreams.

The vision is fantastic, a world in which cancer is no more, the planet healed and poverty alleviated. It is a modern telling of the Isaiah dream, a secular eschatology.

The results are far more sinister, a loss of human freedom as Rebecca finds herself less and less free to love and be loved, and an army of hybrids is saved from disease simply to serve Will's growing empire.

It is an intriguing juxtaposition as transcendence wrestles with free will. Both are dreams of the modern world, the belief in the power of science to exceed human potential and the priceless gift that is

individual freedom.

Despite the philosophical and timely potential of these themes, Transcendence is a poor movie. The movie enlists plenty of star power, including the acting of Johnny Depp and the direction of Walter Pfister. The cinematography is artful, in a style reminiscent of Pfister's work on the Dark Night series.

But the plot, Jack Paglen's first major screen write, is jumbled. The inevitable gunfight at the A.I. Corral might make for spectacle but seems wooden if one really is fighting against a computer.

And Rebecca Hall is so composed she comes across as lacking emotion. The result is two cold characters, the computerised Will Caster, the emotionally distant Rebecca.



The amazing saga of Genesis

For the next three months, the Lectionary Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures come from the Book of Genesis. It is an amazing collection of stories that traces the forebears of Jesus from mythical times, to the founding of the Jewish nation, via stories of the Patriarchs.

Genesis follows the fortunes of a wealthy herding family that moves from Ur in the Persian Gulf, through Mesopotamia to Haran, to Canaan and finally to Egypt. Enjoy sorting through the relationships.

Bible Challenge	Adam's third son and forebear of the Patriarchs	___ T ___	Genesis 5:3
	A notable righteous man in early evil times	___ H ___	6:9
	Youngest man saved from the great flood	___ E ___	6:13
	A descendent of Shem and father of Abram	___ A ___	11:27
	The wife of Abram's brother Nahor	___ M ___	11:29
	The father of Lot; also an important place name	___ A ___	11:27-32
	Abram's servant heir (should he have no sons)	___ Z ___	15:2
	The servant found a suitable wife for his master's son	___ I ___	24:66-67
	Rebekah, daughter of Milkah, had a brother	___ N ___	24:29
	The Egyptian mother of Abraham's firstborn son	___ G ___	16:15
	The name of Abraham's firstborn son	___ S ___	16:16
	The elder of Sarah's twin grandsons	___ A ___	25:25
	Jacob and Leah had a ___ named Dinah	___ G ___	34:1
	Jacob's wife who gave him six sons	___ A ___	30:20
	The second son of Jacob and Leah	___ O ___	29:33
	Judah was the ___ of Tamar's twin boys	___ F ___	38:24-27
	Leah's son, Reuben, was Rebekah's first	___ G ___	19:32
	Jacob's favourite and most famous son	___ E ___	37:3
	Jacob's seventh son and Bilhah's first son	___ N ___	30:5-6
	The mother of Joseph and Benjamin	___ E ___	35:24
The wife of Joseph given to him by the Pharaoh	___ S ___	41:45	
Joseph's younger son	___ I ___	41:52	
Joseph and Asenath's first son	___ S ___	41:51	

Answers: Seth, Noah, Japheth, Terah, Milkah, Haran, Eliezer, Isaac, Laban, Hagar, Ishmael, Essau, Daughter, Leah, Simeon, Father, Grandson, Joseph, Dan, Rachel, Asenath, Ephraim, Manasseh © RMS

Lay ministry teams gathering in Wairarapa

This year lay ministry teams are invited to 'Come in from the Cold' at the 'Gathering' event at Wairarapa College, Masterton, 10-12th July.

The Gathering welcomes all local shared ministry teams, lay ministry teams, enablers, resource people, parish leaders, and interested members from Methodist, Presbyterian, Union and Co-Operating Parishes.

If your congregation is planning to enter into team ministry or if you are looking at what your options for ministry might be, this is a great event for you to gather information and hear how other congregations are engaging in ministry and mission in their communities.

Come prepared to share your hopes and dreams, to tell inspiring stories, to explore your challenges and ask your questions.

Sessions include Telling our Stories, Enabling a Changing Church, Transitioning to Team Ministry. What is 'Proper' Church?, Resourcing Team ministry, Creative Activities, Building Teams, Challenges and Opportunities, and Caring for Your Leaders.

Accommodation is in self-contained units, separate cubicles with single bed in each.

Rooms are well-heated with few steps. Cost is \$120 for 2 days. Meals are covered in this cost. People can also attend for a single day or an evening with cost adjusted appropriately.

The Gathering is an initiative of Methodist Mission Resourcing's ministry team work group.

For more information and registration contact

Val Nicholls at vnicholls@tccl.ac.nz, 021 518 786 or 09 424 5758.



Finding Your Inner Treasure - A Spiritual Journey of Creative Exploration

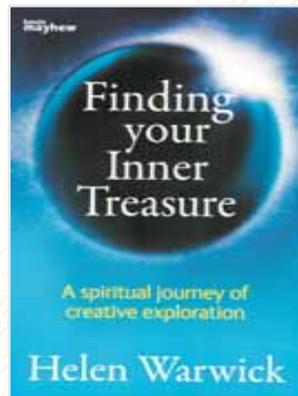
Helen Warwick is a British writer and spiritual director. This book begins with the premise that each of us is unique, with our own personality and our own particular giftedness but we have to work to discover them.

Warwick came to embrace the craft of spiritual direction after a long illness (chronic fatigue syndrome) and she speaks with some candour about her experience.

At almost 350 pages this is quite a long book. It is not meant simply to be read through but to be worked through. A wide range of exercises are proposed and Warwick counsels the reader to some discernment about quite which ones to take up.

If you were to set yourself the discipline of heeding your inner voice for Lent then its length and the exercises it sets would perhaps make this a worthwhile Lent book.

Much of the book is taken up with a series of exercises



involving, among other things, felt tips, paints, symbols, words, magazine clippings and Bible verses. If this seems 'crafty' then it is to labour her point that most of us somewhere in our past have become estranged from our own creativity.

She urges us "to learn the language of your unconscious, to connect to God in a way that is personal to you." Every exercise she offers relies upon an instinctive approach, and because each of us has somewhat different instincts, readers will find some exercises resonate more than others.

Notable chapters examine the pace of our lives (a mite too fast in my case!), decision making, and our true purpose. Later chapters have a kind of anchoring effect which can work well for those who find it difficult to be in the present moment and which are also rather reassuring to people with high levels of anxiety.

I would commend two particular strengths of this book. Firstly, the disposition of New Zealand Methodism is towards a rather activist engagement with the world around us. While there is much to be commended about this, it can lead to a wariness with introspection and a view of contemplation or spiritual practices as in some way a waste of time or even a form of self-indulgence.

Warwick does us the service of confronting us with the urgent claim of the inner life on us and of our deep instinct to spiritual journeying.

Secondly, she challenges us to a healthy self-esteem. Why nurture the spirit if we do not value the uniqueness and beauty that we each of us possess? Why go on a journey of self-discovery unless you are excited that within you there is something good and beautiful and worthwhile?

I found this to be a fun and refreshing book. If you find you have little time for reflection or for exploring the meaning of things unfolding around you then this book could serve you very well.

Review copy courtesy of Epworth Books.

By Helen Warwick

2010, Kevin Mayhew Publications, 346 pages

Reviewer: David Poultney

What Did Jesus Do All Day? Discovering the Teen Jesus

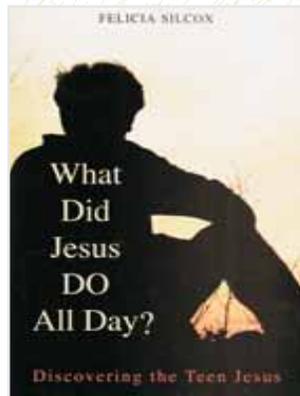
How different was Jewish culture at the time of Jesus from ours today?

So different that it is almost impossible for us to understand much of what Jesus said and did? Or near enough to ours that we can see points of contact and similarity? These questions underlie this book by Felicia Silcox.

She begins with the Dead Sea Scrolls, which give a snapshot of a particular sub-culture more or less contemporaneous with Jesus. Understandably they and the gospels give us only partial insight into Jesus' world, and do not deal with ordinary family life.

Most of the rest of the book fills this gap. It begins with the Jewish religious scene and the turbulent politics of the day, then describes what Nazareth might have looked like, how and why houses were extended, what clothing was worn including religious items.

We discover how the Jewish Law dominated much of life, including schooling for boys (only boys!) and what women did all day. Working and eating, marriages and



funerals, religious festivals and pilgrimages to the Temple are all described in some detail.

At the end of each of the 10 chapters and the epilogue are questions which can be used in personal reflection or in a study group, and finally there are a time line, a glossary and a bibliography.

There are odd comments and aspects that irritated me. The publisher describes the book as Bible Study, so why are there so few biblical references?

For instance, when discussing the custom not to mix meat and dairy a footnote to Exodus 23.19, 34.26 and Deuteronomy 14.21 (referring to not

cooking lamb in its mother's milk, and extended to the custom mentioned) would have helped, even though there is some doubt about whether this interpretation was common in Jesus' day.

Felicia's attitude to the Bible is rather simplistic, assuming, for instance, the historicity of the massacre by

Herod the Great when there are major historical doubts, and treating the gospels as eye-witness accounts.

Other facts were simply wrong. Twice she mentions (pages 14 and 16) it is 21 centuries since Jesus lived; she means 20.

Elsewhere she writes "Translating the four Gospels into Greek so more people could understand them was a huge challenge" (p64). Not really, they were written in Greek. What Felicia means to say is that stories and memories were translated before being incorporated into the Gospels. So why not say this?

She further boldly proclaims (p81) that Peter, Andrew, James and Matthew were all married, though we only know that Peter had a wife (Mark 1.30).

It is a shame that these little irritations rather spoiled my reading of this book, as they were quite unnecessary, but for those wanting to know what the teen Jesus did all day, this slim volume does give some great insights and is worth reading. At \$29.99 for 132 pages it is a bit pricy, so why not buy one for the parish library or as a resource for preachers or groups?

Review copy courtesy of Epworth Books.

By Felicia Silcox

2013, Morehouse Publishing, 132 pages

Reviewer: Peter Taylor

You Visited Me - A Pastoral Care Companion

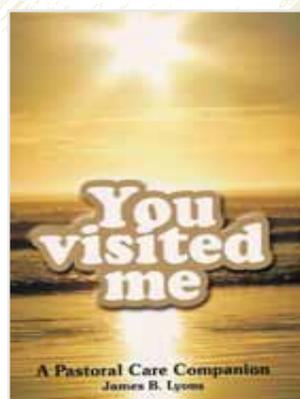
This book is an invaluable resource for those who minister to people unable to participate in public worship or Holy Communion in church.

The contents reflect the deep spirituality of the author, who is known personally to the reviewer.

As stated in the preface, *You Visited Me* was first published in the 1990s as a resource for lay people involved in pastoral care of the sick and serving Holy Communion in private homes.

That this resource has proved its worth is shown by the fact that it is now in its fourth edition. In recognition of changes in pastoral needs this edition has been extensively revised.

Drawing on his experience as a pastor, which he acknowledges has enriched his spirituality, James Lyons offers some wise, helpful and practical advice for all pastoral ministry. This includes making appointments to visit and sticking to them, listening rather than dominating by talking,



and not outstaying one's welcome. Visitors should always be discreet, honest, cheerful and prayerful.

Visitors are reminded of the importance of their own preparation in prayer, reflection and inner silence. When Holy Communion is to be served some brief comments are made on the form this may follow.

Suggestions are offered as to intercessory prayers but it is recognised that spontaneous prayers may be more appropriate. Prayers after communion remind us that the Eucharist is an action of the whole people of God and not a

private ritual.

Intended as a pastoral care companion the book is attractively presented in a size easily slipped into a pocket or bag. There are prayers and images for special times and any time. The prayers are sensitively expressed in fresh language linking spiritual insights with everyday experience.

Examples are: Protect us from the cloud of anxiety that clamps reason and dampens trust... Keep us still long enough to know that hearts still beat and life goes on without my constant monitoring... Though death separates us from those we love, your presence is the bridge that carries our hope... Let me be a light shining where it is most dark, letting others see that pain and fear cannot block the path to life.

Each prayer is reflected in a thoughtful and well-chosen photograph by Evan Morgans on the facing page. Those who use this book may find spiritual inspiration by reflecting on both words and images. This section is followed by a comprehensive selection of words of hope and healing drawn from the scriptures.

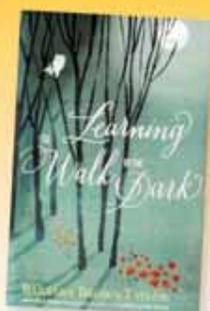
I keep this book within easy reach at all times. I refer to it constantly and have found it to be a friendly and indispensable companion in the challenging and rewarding ministry of pastoral care.

Copies may be ordered from Pleroma Christian Supplies, 38 Higginson Street, Otane 4202 or email: management@pleroma.org.nz.

By James Lyons

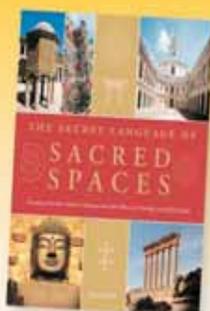
2013, Pleroma Press, 118 pages

Reviewer: John Meredith



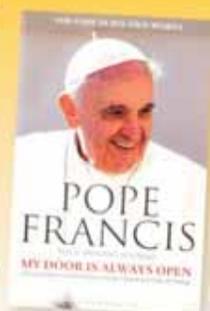
LEARNING TO WALK IN THE DARK

Barbara Brown Taylor guides us through a spirituality of the night-time, teaching us how to find our footing in times of uncertainty. Hbk. **\$39.99***



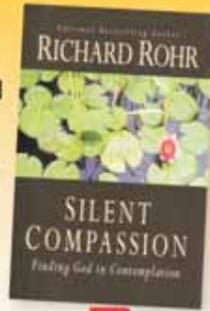
SECRET LANGUAGE OF SACRED SPACES

Fascinating insights into the world's most impressive churches, cathedrals, temples, mosques & other places of worship. Superb colour photographs. Hbk. **\$69.99***



MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN

In this compelling and engrossing dialogue Pope Francis reveals his background, faith and vision for the Roman Catholic Church. **\$36.99***



SILENT COMPASSION

Richard Rohr shows that the peace of contemplation is not just for monks and mystics, but for all people who can quiet their own mind to listen for God in the silence. **\$22.00***

ORDER NOW

Freephone 0800 755 355 • sales@epworthbooks.org.nz • epworthbooks.org.nz *Plus P&P \$5.50 for 1 or 2 items, \$7.50 for 3 or more.

Epworth
BOOKS

Unsung Methodist Personalities

New Zealand Methodism's First Bi-Centenary
Samuel Leigh - 1785-1852

Samuel Leigh, New Zealand's first Methodist missionary.

Two hundred years ago today it's likely that Samuel Leigh was putting together his case to present to the Shaftesbury Circuit Quarterly meeting in Wiltshire to be accepted for overseas mission work.

He was very nearly sent to Canada but at the last moment Conference decided he should go to Sydney to satisfy the needs of a small but vocal group of Methodists who wanted a minister.

At that point Samuel was nearly 30, the son of blacksmith Matthew Leigh and his wife Elizabeth, who lived at Milton in Staffordshire. Samuel was a blacksmith himself and was in partnership with his

brother Ralph at Shelton.

By 1810 he had become a lay helper and local preacher at the Independent Chapel at Hanley - all these places are in present-day Stoke-on-Trent. A call to ministry took him to Dr Bogue's Congregational Seminary at Gosport for two years.

Already Samuel comes across as a man of strong opinions, for he disagreed with the formidable doctor on theological grounds and left the Seminary, joining the Wesleys at nearby Portsmouth. Almost immediately he was received on probation, and during his second year he made the decision to offer for missionary work.

Ordained just prior to sailing on the Hebe, he eventually arrived in Sydney in August 1815.

He spent seven years there, off and on, encouraged by both Governor Lachlan Macquarie and Rev Samuel Marsden. Leigh didn't enjoy the best of health, and a 'recuperative' visit to New Zealand with Marsden in 1819 led him to the belief that he must establish a Wesleyan Mission across the Tasman.

After a brief return to Sydney he went

back to England in 1820, officially to regain his health. But he also did his best to convince the rather unwilling Missionary Society to further stretch its resources by approving a mission to the 'heathen New Zealanders'.

Samuel was allowed to canvass for barter goods for the mission, and believed he had received enough to underwrite the first five years of the Mission's life. In the end they lasted not much more than one year.

Before he left England again he married Catherine Clewes at his home village of Hanley. They spent not much more than a year in New Zealand, most of it staying with the Church Mission folk at the Bay of Islands. It was only when William White and then Nathanael Turner arrived in 1823 that he actually oversaw the choice of Whangaroa as the mission site but he was again too unwell to offer any real assistance in this arduous task.

Samuel and Catherine returned to Sydney, and he spent nearly 10 more years there as circuit superintendent. On the death of Catherine he returned to England, and from 1834 till 1842 he was in various circuits around the country. His brother Ralph had

become an attorney, and when he died Samuel was a fortunate beneficiary of his will, being enabled to retire in his mid 50s.

Samuel settled in Reading with his second wife, Elizabeth. There is a pleasant coincidence from this period, for in 1849 he baptised a child named Thomas Brooke. Thomas ultimately came to New Zealand as a Wesleyan minister, and from 1909 till 1924 was the general secretary of the Home Mission Department, seeking in a very different way the same goals as Samuel Leigh.

Leigh died at Reading in May 2nd 1852.

He was a man after Wesley's own heart in the sense that he believed his only task as a preacher of the Gospel was 'to save souls'. The reality, however, of the missionary's task in founding a mission was that he had to build a house for his wife and family and he had to learn the language of the people he wanted to convert. He had to work with and inspire his colleagues. He had to be seen by others as a person of mana.

We may praise Samuel Leigh for his vision but let's not uncritically turn him into a hero.

Circulating library provides 1880s snapshot

PRESBYTERIAN ARCHIVES

By Anne Jackman, Presbyterian Research Centre

Serendipity is a wonderful thing and plays a big part as we acquire treasures for the archives and library.

After speaking at a recent meeting of the local genealogy group, I was asked if the Archives would be interested in receiving a book listing members of Dunedin's Kaikorai Presbyterian Church's Circulating Library, dating from June 1880.

It was quite a find. Fortunately it had already been declined by another repository as being out of their collecting scope. We gratefully accepted the offer.

No one was really sure how it had come to be in private hands but this is often the way. It ticked the boxes as far as our collecting policy was concerned. It is part of the record of a New Zealand and Otago/Southland Presbyterian Church, listing a number of its members, and as something of a rarity in an archive, which deals more with the administrative record.

The Kaikorai Presbyterian Church dates from 1868, although various other arrangements had been in place since 1852. In June 1880 approval was given for the Kaikorai Presbyterian Church Circulating Library to be established.

Its rules are listed inside the book, which served as membership list and record of issues. The committee was elected by the congregation plus the minister. One librarian elected by the committee and another by the Sunday School teachers. The committee had the power to veto any book deemed unsuitable and to charge a subscription of one shilling per quarter for membership.

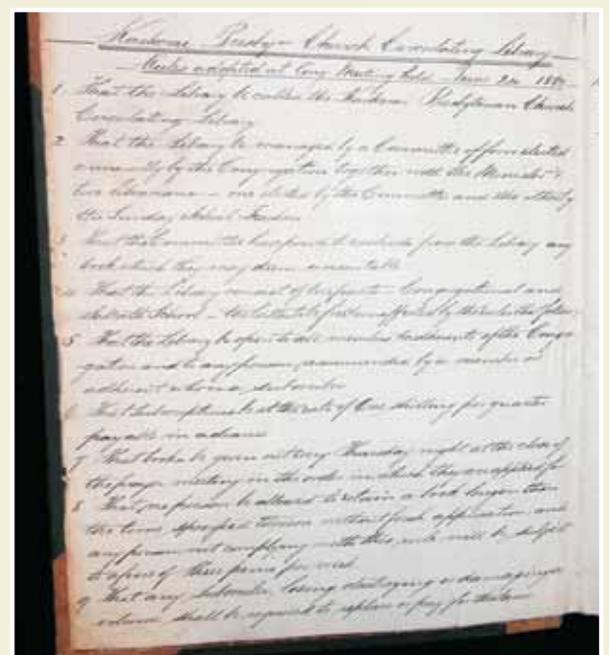
There were 100 subscribing members. An account is kept at the back of the book and a separate note lists those who have not paid their subscriptions! Most members appear to have taken their responsibility to return items on time seriously - there is little taken in the way of fines.

Such a record gives us an insight into the books that were considered appropriate for a church library, and the reading habits of a select group of the members. What were people reading in 1880? Without knowing the extent of the library's collection, I have relied on the titles issued to various members of the Church.

David Thompson, for example, read biographies but mostly favoured two journals - 'Sunday at Home - A Family Magazine for Sabbath Reading' published by the Religious Tract Society in London, and 'Leisure Hour' a title which also seemed to be popular with others in the

2	123	Temple & Circulation	11	7/10	11 th
1	12	Family Treasury	25	7/10	7 th October
16	11	Family Treasury	25	7/10	2 nd Nov
4	29	The Christian Treasury	25	7/10	18 th
13	171	The Land's People of Africa	14	7/10	2 nd Dec
2	110	Historical Sketches	11	7/10	22 nd
10	153	Historical Sketches	11	7/10	6 th Jan'y 1881
1	199	Abominations of Modern Society	7	7/10	15 th
13	187	Men with Amalians	11	7/10	27 th
17	6	Knowles Elocutionist	21	7/10	17 th Feb'y
17	5	Sunday at Home	11	7/10	5 th March
3	5	do	11	7/10	10 th
11	210	Leisure Hour	11	7/10	26 th
16	6	Sunday at Home	11	7/10	11 th April
16	238	do	11	7/10	25 th
10	10	Leisure Hour	11	7/10	17 th May
11	11	do	11	7/10	24 th June
1	215	Health Studies	21	7/10	24 th
1	216	The Boy's Own Annual	25	7/10	21 st July
1	258	Leisure Hour	11	7/10	11 th Aug
1	247	The Boy's Own Annual	11	7/10	15 th Sep

Titles from the Kaikorai Circulating Library included *A Winter in Morocco*, *Boys Own Annual* and *Abominations of Modern Society*



Rules for the Kaikorai Circulating Library 1880-1886

congregation.

Waverley novels, Half hours with the Best Authors, and Extraordinary Men and Women proved popular. There were a few more practical titles - How to Farm Profitably and Knowles Elocutionist, which was no doubt useful to anyone embarking on public speaking.

A Miss Laing favoured reading about the wider world - *A Winter in Morocco*, *The Land and People of China*, and *Scenes and Services in South Africa*, while Mr McLaren read his way through volumes 1 and 2 of the *History of Scotland*, though he did need an extension of time to get through the second!

Titles which caught my eye were *Abominations of Modern Society* (1879), and *Sports that Kill*. After some research, I found that both were by Thomas de Witt Tamage. This sent me off to look at Google Books where the digital version of *Sports that Kill* was freely available.

In its preface, the author says he writes to "save people from the Theatre as it now is, from bad books and

newspapers, from strong drink, from ruinous extravagance, and from an impure life, as well as to suggest healthful forms of amusement...". Neither title appears to have been a popular read and only the one issue for each is recorded.

Sadly later entries dispensed with titles, only identifying themselves by a catalogue number. There is no information as to how long the library survived. Where did the books eventually go? Neither of the two books by de Witt Tamage appears in any New Zealand Library that I am able to find.

There was more success with the journals *Sunday at Home* and *Leisure Hour*. The Hewitson Library in Dunedin holds some issues of the first, and Dunedin Public Libraries most of the second, so there is a possibility that copies from the church library found a good home.

Although we are unlikely to ever know how the library was dispersed, we can enjoy the snapshot its record gives of a part of life in the 1880s here in Dunedin.

Scientist asks what makes us good

By Hilaire Campbell
In a seemingly cut throat world, what is the point of being nice? Why are some of us good and others not so good?

Religion has long pondered these issues but today's scientists are also exploring them.

Lee Dugatkin is a specialist in evolutionary biology from the University of Louisville, Kentucky. He delighted audiences with his answers to some of these questions when he toured New Zealand in April as a guest of the Allan Wilson Centre's 2014 international speaker series.

Talking on the evolution of goodness, Lee showed how we can learn some things about ourselves by studying nonhuman behaviour. He says that human qualities of altruism and justice can be seen in social insects and animals.

For example, experiments with different monkey species, some individuals were clearly disgruntled at being offered less attractive food - e.g., cucumber instead of grapes - for the same effort as others.

"It's a really nice example of how nonhumans have a sense of fairness," says Lee.

Before the 19th century, ideas about human goodness and altruism mostly came from religious thinkers and philosophers. Then, in his *Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin popularized the idea of natural selection.

"Darwin didn't know about genes but he thought that altruistic behaviour could be passed down through generations," says Lee. "When honeybees sacrifice themselves to protect the hive, they're ensuring the survival of future generations."

Now it looks as if goodness can evolve in a few different ways. Altruism and cooperation can be dispersed to blood relatives, or maybe we help someone who is not related to us and they reciprocate.

Individuals in a group share the benefits. A rugby player helps his team to outplay another; the members of one religious group out proselytize another.

Lee says all the scientific hypotheses about how altruism evolves focus on reciprocity and individuals somehow being paid back for their good deeds.

"In humans it might be with money,



Lee Dugatkin

in animals it's usually resources. Reputational things like self-esteem play a part but they're too hard to quantify. We leave those things to the psychologists and social scientists.

"Now we're getting beyond how goodness evolves in a general way, to the evolution of empathy - the capacity to feel what

others feel."

The bonus for animals, Lee says, is that we are more likely to treat them kindly when we know they have a sense of justice. "Learning about animals also tells us something about ourselves and the world around us."

Evolutionary biologists have made great advances in the last 10 years, but they are still generations away from a model that neatly explains every aspect of social behaviour - risk taking in animals, for example, and the role culture plays in human behaviour.

"But we are getting a good handle on conflict resolution," says Lee. "Dogs have powerful fangs but they rarely kill each other. They could teach us humans a thing or two."

Evolution is a touchy subject for many religious people but Lee doesn't see any conflict.

"It's just that we're coming at it from a different perspective. Religion is based on a set of beliefs and views of the supernatural. We want to understand the same things but we're trying to use natural laws to do so."

Lee's talks around New Zealand attracted large audiences of people, who were sympathetic to his views. They had a passion for science that he says Americans don't seem to share.

"Folks here were especially enamoured by the work I discussed on empathy and responses to inequality in nonhumans. What I loved was that questions varied from people probing me on the nature of human kindness, to more technical questions.

"There was the eight year old who warmed the heart of everyone, including me, by asking me why I did research.

"I was so impressed with New Zealanders...large groups of passionate, science-loving Kiwis. A joy," says Lee.



An Arty Crafty activity for the younger members of St David's Union Church

Timaru church strengthens lives

By Sophie Parish

Soon after the first of the big Canterbury earthquakes, former presbyter at St Luke's Union Church in Halswell Rev Bob Sidal and wife Morven were stationed to Timaru.

They say the Woodlands Road Methodist Church and St David's Union Church were very welcoming.

"They are loving people, and the feeling of welcome is still there now," says Bob.

The Woodlands Road Church is the Methodist centre for Waimate, Temuka and Timaru. As he is the only active ordained minister in the Central South Island Synod south of Ashburton, Bob spends much of his time visiting.

He has also been busy with seismic safety assessments for the Woodlands Road church.

The majority of Timaru and Temuka's congregation are of retirement age and Bob now has a large pastoral ministry. Temuka Methodist Church closed last year, so each month he attends a lunch at Temuka's Tea Pot Inn, where the members of the Temuka Church continue fellowship.

One of the strengths of Woodlands Road church is the pastoral care. Bob visits at hospitals, homes and rest homes. Often he will take a service as well.

Bob is from Fiji and he says his ministry his ministry there was focused on families. He has enjoyed having an elderly congregation, however. "I do more visiting here than I have in the 20 years of ministry in Fiji."

Parish steward Margaret Ramsay has been a member of Woodlands church since 1950, and she says people appreciate Bob's visits.

Bob's Fijian-Indian background has attracted some new members to Woodlands Road. Two Fijian families have moved to the area and joined

the Sunday service.

Bob has submitted a proposal to the parish council to have a Fijian language service one Sunday afternoon per month. Bob has also introduced a weekly bible study group which meets at the church. For those new to the church Bob has a 'curry ministry' - an invitation to lunch which is often a good homemade curry after a Sunday service. "Food is something that is very important in the Pacific Island culture," he says.

Morven was appointed to serve as lay minister of St David's Union Church in 2011. The St David's congregation also has Sunday worship services at Woodlands Road Church.

Morven assists Bob organize combined events where the St David's and Woodlands Road congregations worship together when there are five Sundays in a month, and on special occasions like Good Friday or Christmas Eve.

As part of the Let the Children Live initiative, St. David's has linked up with the only decile 2 primary school in Timaru to provide snacks, clothing, toiletries, toys and stationery for the school children.

After the devastating effects of the earthquakes in Christchurch, the Woodlands Road church buildings must be strengthened to 67 percent of the current building code. Bob says the seismic assessments began in 2013 and he is now waiting on engineers to estimate the cost to strengthen the church.

He says the amount of time and energy being spent on this has been considerable and the strengthening will be costly. "It is hard to see a vision for anything else until this is done."

Bob says he and Morven enjoy living in Timaru. "We look to the mountains and we look to the sea. It is the best place in the world, everything is close."

Leo o le Sinoti



THE VOICE OF SINOTI SAMOA

Talented leader leaves a void

Young Samoan Methodist minister Rev David Palelei is remembered by his family and colleagues as a talented but humble person.

Born in October 1980, David died suddenly on May 2nd. David's family held a memorial service for him on May 8th at Crossroads Church in Papakura, where he served as presbyter, and his funeral service was held there on May 10th.

David entered Trinity College in 2008 and was ordained at Methodist Conference 2013. He grew up in a Methodist family. His father, the late Rev Alalafaga Palelei, was the presbyter at Manurewa Samoan Methodist Congregation and a number of David's cousins are ministers in the Methodist Church of Samoa.

David is survived by his mother, Kueni, his wife, Fa'afeai (Faye), and his three children.

Faye says David was a humble

man who always said yes to people. "Even if it was too much for him, he would do it if someone asked for help."

"When he was young David was a good rugby league player. He played for the Kiwis under-19s team and played professionally in Australia for four years."

Faye says David was also very musical. Before he entered training for ministry, he taught piano lessons and had a recording studio where he recorded church choirs and Island music. Music was a big part of David's ministry at Papakura.

Methodist Church of NZ Sinoti Samoa superintendent Rev Tovia Aumua, David was coordinating the musical and dance presentations that the New Zealand-based Samoan Methodist were to present this coming July in Samoa for the 50th anniversary of the Samoan Methodist Conference

Tovia says, along with family

members from New Zealand and Samoa, a large number of Methodist Church leaders and ministers from other denominations attended David's funeral.

Tovia says David was born and grew up in a Christian family where he was taught, nurtured, and became a follower of Jesus Christ.

"David was the youngest of Sinoti Samoa presbyters and he was the first young New Zealand-born Samoan to offer himself for the Samoan ministry.

"In South Auckland he was brought up in a community of many ethnicities, religions and cultures. Despite that, he knew his culture and identity very well.

"He lived and demonstrated his Samoan culture throughout his life. He is a role model for all New Zealand-born Samoans as he spoke fluent English and Samoan.

"David was always respectful



Rev David Palelei with wife Fa'afeai serving communion at Methodist Conference 2013.

to people of all ages and especially to the elders and the older ones like me. He always called me tama or father. At times I wondered why he addressed me that way, whether it was because I'm older than him, or because I became a father figure to him after his father died, or because he regarded me like the Catholic fathers or priests."

Tovia says David had a great sense of humour and could make

people laugh. Because of special respectful and gentle nature, he got on well with people of all ages and was well liked. He was a gentle giant who leaves a big hole.

"David was one of those young Sinoti Samoa presbyters with huge potential for the future. Although his ministry physically has come to an end, his ministry will be continued by those whose lives he touched in many ways."



Nai Tuvatuva Ni Veiqaravi Ni Wasewase o Viti kei Rotuma e Niu Siladi Ena Vo Ni Yabaki Oqo- 2014

Rally ni Tabagone ni Wasewase

Na nodra “rally” na tabagone ni Wasewase ena vakayacori tiko ena El Rancho Christian camp mai Wellington ena i ka 11-14 ni vula o Julai. Qo ena donumaka tiko nai matai ni macawa ni nodra sereki na gonevuli. E sa kerei sa tiko yani vakabibi na kena vakadeitaki na yacadra na gone ka ra na gole tiko ena keba oqo ka soli yani vua na I Liuliu ni Tabagone ni Wasewase o Narieta Raleqe.

Bose ni Talatala/Vakatawa/Liuliu ni vavakoso (Wasewase Ministerial Syno) 2014

Na nodra bose na i Talatala kei ira nai Vakatawa kei ira nai liuliu ni vavakoso ena loma ni Wasewase ena vakayacori tiko ena i tikotiko ni Lotu mai Meadowlands, Okaladi ena siga Vakaraubuka nai ka 18 ni Julai.

Bose Vakayabaki ni Wasewase 2014

Ena vakayacori tiko na bose vakayabaki ni Wasewase (AGM) ena i tikotiko ni Lotu mai Meadowlands, Okaladi ena siga Vakarauwai nai ka 20 ni Julai. Ke tiko na vakatataro ena vuku ni tuvatuva sa volai koto oqori, mo ni qai veitaratara ga yani vua na vunivola ni Wasewase o Kula B o w e r e n a bower_kula@yahoo.com se ena talevoni na 021 0839 8995.



Ko ira na lewe ni matawilivola ni Sigatabu kei ira na tabagone ena Wellington Wesley Methodist Fijian congregation ni oti na Lotu ena Sigatabu ni Gone.



Ko ira na lewe ni matawilivola ni Sigatabu kei ira na tabagone ena Tauranga Fijian Congregation.



Lotu Cokovata ni Tabacacaka o Waikato/Wairiki

Me Rairai Ko Jisu Ena Noda Bula (Joni 20: 19-22)

Na mate nei Jisu, e biuta koto mai e dua na lala kei na galili ena nodratou bula na tisaipeli. E yali vei iratou na vakanuinui ni veiwekani ena nodratou dau raici koya, veivosaki ka vakila na katakata ni nona tiko vakayago kei iratou. E vaka eratou sa rere, sogoti ka tu duadua ena loma ni vale.

E ratou sa sega ni veilakoyaki ka vunau se cakacaka mana ni yali na Turaga ko Jisu ko koya e dau liutaka voli nai lakolako.

Sa buto ka veilecayaki na bula ni yali ko Jisu.

Ia na nona basika ka rairai voli vei iratou vakavica me rauta ni vasagavulu na siga, sa vaka e solia tiko e dua na kaukauwa ena gauna ni dredre.

Na duru ni virikawakawa ki vua na Kalou sa mai biuta na Turaga ko Jisu Karisito ena nona BULA, VOSA, VEIWEKANI, CAKACAKA, I TOVO, KAUKAUWA kei na na nona

TIKO ena gauna Va- Kalou e mai bula vakatamata kina.

Era veisemati vata na yavu oqo me sa dua na I soqosoqo ka sa vakalewe ena yago I Karisito ko koya eda sa lewena e daidai.

E tekivutaki na lotu va-Karisito ni sa yali ko Jisu ena kedra maliwa nai lawalawa era muri voli ena sala sa semati vata kina na tamata kei na Kalou. Sa basika na vunilagi ni lotu, ena loma ni tabavale era sa toka kina na I soqosoqo Vakarisito, nai soqosoqo era .

Era duavata toka ena loma ni sogotubu, rere, vakatataro se taqaya ni sa basika na Turaga, “Dou vakacegu”. Joni 20: 19.

Sa dau solia na vakacegu ko Jisu.

Eda sa yacova e vuravura nikua na bula ni sogotubu, loka na vale, alamu na valenilotu, kei na rerevaki ni i tovo butobuto ena vuravura oqo. Eda sa veirerevaki tikoga vakataki keda.

Sa evei na vakacegu?

Au vakananau sara mai Viti eliu nida dau moce ena bogi ka doladola tu ga na katuba. Ia o ya mai liu!!! Sa sega ni kua..Sa loka na matamata kei na katuba ena loma ni veivuvale.

Ni tiko na Karisito, sa dau vakadeitaka na galili kei na lomatarotaro se rere. Me da vakacegu...Oqo na vosa e dau voqa tikoga ena veigauna eso. Ni tiko nai yau se sega, meda vakacegu ga, ni lala na vale se tawa, me da vakacegu ga, ni bula vinaka se tauvimate, me da vakacegu ga..Ni tiko ko Jisu, sa dau kauta mai na vakacegu.

E da bole vakayalo ena veigauna eso e tarogi kina na noda muri Jisu. Me vaka na tukuni yalo, soli bula, soli gauna, soli taledi kei na soli yau ena vuku ni lotu i Jisu.

E vuqa na gauna e bole kina na noda sogobutu, rere se yalolailai, e kaya tiko ko Jisu, Me da vakacegu.

E laurai votu na bula ni dau

yali na vakacegu me vaka eda sarava ena nodratou bula na Tisaipeli ena gauna ni nona rairai voli na Turaga.

E dua na maliwa ni gauna dredre e basika kina ko Jisu ena yakavi ni siga koya. Ni voleka na buto. E dau gauna rerevaki ni vakayacori kina nai valavala rerevaki. E yali kina na rarama.

Ni basika na bula, ko Jisu ena gauna ni butobuto, sa vaka e soli na marau ena gauna ni rarawa. (Joni 20: 21) Era sa qai reki ni ra sa raica na Turaga. E dau tiko na reki ni laurai ko Jisu. E da dau rekitaka na nona lomani keda, maroroi keda ka karoni keda nai Vakabula ni sotavi keda dina ena loma ni noda rarawa.

Na noda reki vakayalo e vu mai na nona basika na Turaga me tara na yalo e rarawa.

E tukuna na nona bula ena vosa, vakaraitaka na ligana ka tiko ena kedra maliwa na rarawa. Me da kua ni lotu vosa walega ia me

da sa vakaraitaka na mawe ni lotu ena noda tiko ka cakava na kena i tavi.

Sa tiko ka vosa ka vakaraitaka vei iratou na we ni vako kei na moto, sa qai ceguvi iratou ka talai iratou. tk 21-22

Me da ceguvi mai vei Jisu ena nona YaloTabu.

E sega ni dua na i talai me lako ga ena nona kaukauwa. Ia me ceguvi mada. Sa dusi vei keda na dauniveiqaravi ena lotu se kabani se matacacakaka cava ga eda vakaraitaki Jisu tiko kina. Me da sa vakaukauwataki ena Yalo Tabu ni Kalou.

Sa vula talega eda na vakananuma kina na Sovaraki Ni Yalo Tabu.

Me da sa ceguvi kina nai Wasewase Ko Viti Kei Rotuma e Niusiladi ena veimama ni yabaki sa da vakarau curuma. Me da Kaukauwa Ka Qaqa Ni Sa Rairai Tikoga Vei Keda Na Turaga Ko Jisu Karisito.

'ATA 'O E NGA AHI KATOANGA FAKA-ME 'A E POTUNGAUE LFS VAHEFONUVA TONGA O AOTEAROA

Ko e ngaahi 'ata 'eni 'o e ouau fakame 'a e fanau Lautohi Faka Sapate Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa ki he ta'u ni 2014.

Ko e fakafiefia ko e lava ke ma'u atu e ngaahi 'ata mei he ngaahi fai'angalotu 'i tu'a

'Aokalani ke mou me'a kiai.

These photos are from the Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa's Sunday School Fakame (White Sunday) celebrations around New Zealand.

Fakame is held each year on the very first Sunday

of May.

This event gives Tongan Sunday School students the opportunity to perform and present verses from the Bible and hymns in Tongan and to present dramas from Bible stories that are included in the

LSF Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa curriculum.

The stories that the children present are also included in the final year examinations in November. Fakame provides very good practice for the children to learn these stories

in preparations for their exams at the end of the year.

Songs with actions are also embedded within the dramas that the children present. Fakame is truly a special day dedicated to the Sunday School children.



DUNEDIN



BLENHEIM



OAMARU



SAINT JOHN (HAMILTON)



AVALON



TAURANGA



CHRISTCHURCH (KOSIPELI)



UTUTA'U



WESLEY WELLINGTON



UPPER HUTT



WESLEY GISBORNE



PALMERSTON NORTH

Fakalotofale'ia - Siune 2014 Kaveinga: Fakafeta'i ma'u ai pē he Me'a'ofa Folofola 'a e 'Otuá

Saame 103:2 – “Fakafeta'i kia Sihova 'a hoku laumālié, pea 'oua na'a ngalo 'ene me'a'ofa fulipē”.

Ko e Folofola Huluhulu ki he Kaveinga 'o Siuné, ko e taha 'o e ngaahi Saame tu'ukimu'a mo laulōtaha he fononga tākaua tui 'a Tevita mo hono 'Otuá. Ko e Saame 'o e mo'ui na'e holo ki lalo, ko e faka'ilonga 'o e tukulolo, kae fotu mo mahiki hake he lotó 'a e Tokotaha ke fai ki ai 'a e Fakaongó.

'Io, ko e fatu ta'anga 'a e laumālié 'o e sevāniti kuo fakatau'atāina 'e he Mo'oni 'a e 'Otuá, tu'unga he'ene 'ilo'i ko 'ene angahalá kuo fakamolemoleá. 'Io, na'a ne fakalaululoto, fasi'i mo hiva'i mei hono laumālié 'a e ta'anga ni, ko e laumālié pē 'o e “Fakafeta'i”.

'Isa, 'oku ofongi kitautolu ni 'e he Saamé, ketau 'ilo 'a e fuofua ngafa ketau fai he 'aho kotoapē, ko e “Fakafeta'i kia Sihova 'aki hotau laumālié”. 'Ikai ngata aí, ka ko e fakahaa'i 'e hotau fa'ahingá ki he 'Otuá 'a e lotu 'oku hounga'ia 'i He'ene 'Ofá; koe'uhi ko e'ikai 'omi mo'o kitautolu 'a e tuha 'o 'etau ngaahi angahalá, pe “totongi kiate kitautolu 'o fakatatau mo 'etau ngaahi hiá”. Ko ia, 'oku tau lea



Re Nehilofi

fakataha mo e talaloto fungani, talaloto mo'ui, ka ko e talaloto “fakafeta'i”, kuo vahevahe mai mei he laumālié 'o e fatu saame ni: “Fakafeta'i kia Sihova 'a hoku (hotau) laumālié, pea 'oua na'a ngalo 'Ene me'a'ofa fulipē”.

'I he mamani 'o e 'Otuá mo hono mahutafeá, 'oku ta'efa'alaua 'etau mo'ui lāungá. Ka 'i he kanoloto 'o e Saame ni, 'oku 'ikai ha hanu pe lāunga 'a e fa'uhiva ni; ka 'oku ne he'aki pe le'o 'o e “fakafeta'i”, hiva 'o e “fakafeta'i”, lotu 'o e

“fakafeta'i” mo e mo'ui ke “fakafeta'i”, tu'unga he me'a'ofa foaki kuo ne ta'imālie aí. 'Io, 'oku e'a mo mahino 'i he ta'anga ni 'a e mo'ui 'apasia 'Otuá 'a e helo tui ni. Ko 'ene Tala-'Otuá, na'e fai mei he lotu 'apasia, 'a'au mei he lotohounga'ia, pea talaloto mai mei mo'oni 'o 'ene a'usiá.

Ko 'eni 'a e ngaahi me'a'ofa foaki na'e tu'u ai 'a e hiva; ka ko e lotu “fakafeta'i” 'a e fatu saame: (i) Ko 'ene ongo'i 'ene angahala kuo fakamolemolea (V/3), (ii) ko 'ene mahaki'ia mo kafo, kuo lava hono faito'o (V/3), (iii) kuo huhu'i ia mei he mate (V/4), (iv) kuo fakakalauni ia 'aki 'a e 'ofá mo e faka'atu'i (V/4), (v) kuo ne 'inasi he nonga 'o e fakafeau mo e fakamaau totonú (V/6). Ko e ngaahi tapuaki ni, kuo talaloto vetehia 'aki 'e he fatu saame 'i he 'ao 'o e 'Otuá. 'Io, kuo ne fakamo'oni mai, na'e 'ikai ha'ane fe'unga pē kākākunga, tuha pe taau kene a'a he fakakoloo ko ia; ka ne ta'e'oua 'a e 'Ofa Meesi 'a e 'Otuá.

Si'oku kaungā-pue, k a u n g ā - f o n o n g a , kaungā-vakavakaō, mo

kaungā-mo'ui; 'oku ou fakaafe'i atu kimoutolu ketau kaungā-lotofale'ia mu'a ke tali 'a e akonaki, fakakaukau, mo e fekau 'o e Folofola Fakalotofale'ia 'o e mahina ko Suné: “Fakafeta'i kia Sihova 'a hoku (hotau) laumālié, pea 'oua na'a ngalo 'ene me'a'ofa fulipē”. 'Io, 'oku tau mo'ui pupuivá, pea fakatoupi'oi 'a e taulaka kimu'a, koe'uhí ko 'etau mo'unofoa ke lama lāungá; kae ngalo 'iate kitautolu tene kaiha'asi 'etau tokangá pea tau mo'u feangainga ai mo e lotu tala'á, puputu'ú, mo e hamumú. Ko e ngaahi faka'ilonga 'eni 'o e mo'ui ha'isia 'e he angahalá, pea masiva he Maama 'a e 'Otuá.

'Isa, ko e fakalotolahi - neongo pē koehā ha faingata'a 'o e fononga'angá, pipiki ki he Palomesi Folofola 'a e 'Otuá. Ko hotau fatongia ke “fakafeta'i” he me'a kotoá, 'o 'ilo 'oku 'iate kitautolu 'a e 'Otuá 'o e Opé, he taimi kotoapē, feitu'u kotoapē mo e lotolotonga 'o e kakai kotoapē.

'Io, ko hotau 'Amanaki'angá ko e 'Alo 'o e 'Otuá. Mo'oni 'a e lea Tongá:

“Fakatu'amelie ki he'ete taunga 'oku tautau he fu'u telie”. Ko e uho 'o e tu'unga lea melie ni, 'oku taau ia ke fakapapau'i 'oku mapuké, ke 'oua na'a siva 'etau Fakatu'amelié; koe'uhí ko 'etau Taungá ko Sisu Kalaisi, – Tapu mo IA ko e 'Alo Pelé, 'oku Ne tautau he fu'u Telié; ko e Kolosí ia mo hotau fakakoloo na'e fai 'i Kalevalé.

Tau fakahaa'i mu'a 'etau lotohounga'ia 'i he “fakafeta'i”, 'aki 'a e 'oatu pe hotau kotoá, 'i he lotó, 'atamai mo e laumalié ke fai 'aki 'a e “Fakafeta'i kia Sihová, pea 'oua na'a ngalo 'Ene ngaahi me'a'ofa fulipē”, 'a ē ke tu'u ai hota langahaké, he kuo Ne fokotu'u kitautolu mei he maté. Fakamalo lahi atu he faingamalie monfa mo tāpuaki kuo u ma'u ke fakamo'oni ai ki he 'Ofa 'a e 'Otuá 'i he pepa ni; pea ke 'a 'IAA ai pe 'a e Langilangi mo e Kololiá 'o Ta'engata. 'Emeni.

Mālō mo e 'ofa atu 'i he fehūfia'aki
Rev Nehilofi
'E-Moala-'Aholelei
(Sevaniti kaungā-pue 'o Kalaisi)

Kuo tau lava'i foki 'a e ngaahi uike mahu'inga ne fakatefito 'i he Familí. Na'e kamata 'aki e Faka-Me pea tau hoko ai ki he Sapate Fa'e, uike Familí pea faka'osi 'aki 'a e Sapate Tamai.

Ko e uike hoko na'a tau takitaha fakatahataha ai ki he ngaahi famili mo e 'ulumotu'á. 'I he vakai 'a Siopau ngalingali 'oku manakoa e ngaahi teu faiva pea mo e fa'u hiva usu mo e ma'ulu'ulu pea mo e skit.

Taimi 'eni 'oku lava ai e kau punake 'o fa'u mai e ngaahi hiva mo e faiva ke ako he

ngaahi kulupu. Na'e mahino e tokolahi e ngaahi siasi na'a nau fai 'eni pea lava ke sio 'i he fiefia 'a e kainga lotu he teuteu na'e fai.

Neongo na'e teuteu pe he uike 'e taha pea fakahoko he Tokonaki, ka 'oku lelei pe he 'oku tui 'a siopau ka toe fuoloo atu e ako faiva, 'e lahi e fakavahava'a mo e ke pea lahi mo e mahino ia ne tokolahi pe ni'ihia ia

ne 'ikai pe ke faiva ia 'i Tonga.

Me'a lahi 'oku mahino 'a e faingofua 'a e ako e ngaahi faiva he kuo potu'i faiva mai e fanau ako mei he ngaahi polyfest 'oku fakahoko he ngaahi ako 'i NZ.

Lahi mo e ngaahi kulupu 'oku nau fakamanamana pe ki he ta'u fo'ou'.

Ko e Sapate hili e ngaahi faiva na'e toki

fakahoko ai e Sapate Tamai pea fai ai mo e tapuni 'a e Uike Famili.

Tauange ke mou ma'u ha ta'u fiefia ki he ngaahi famili takitaha.

Mou kataki ka lava ke ma'u mai ha ngaahi 'ata pe talanoa ke ke post mai he facebook 'a e Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa pea lava ke load ki he Pukolea.



Ko e kau Faka-Me 'eni 'a Vaine Mo'onía, Ponsonby



Ko Faifekau Tevita Finau mo e ongo Setuata mo e ngaahi Tamai mei Mo'unga Heamoni he Sapate Tamai



Lautohi FakaSapate 'a Dominion 'i he Faka-Me



Ko e taha e ngaahi faiva mei Gisborne 'i he 'enau Uike Famili