

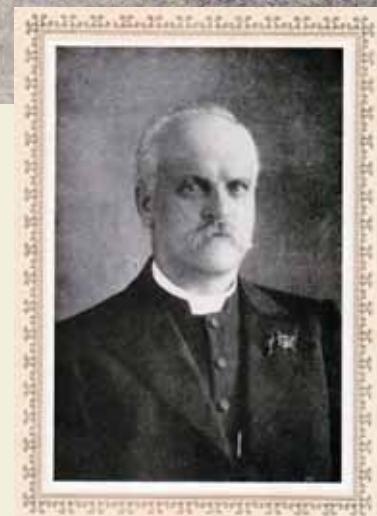
# TOUCHSTONE

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



## NZ Methodists primed to celebrate 100 years of unity

*The first Union Conference at Wellington's Wesley Church, Taranaki Street, February 6th, 1913.*



*Rev Samuel Lawry was elected first president of the united NZ Methodist Church.*

**A**t Conference in November we will celebrate the union of the Methodist Church in New Zealand with the New Zealand Primitive Methodist Church. This happened in Wellington, at Taranaki Street, on what we now call Waitangi Day, 1913.

Though it is in 2012, Methodist Conference this year is the closest Conference to the centenary of the actual event - and it is at Taranaki Street! Why is this significant, and what might it say about us as Methodists?

There are three reasons why Methodists have been to the forefront in matters of Church union in England, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

One is the contribution of the Wesleys. Samuel and Susanna Wesley brought together two strands of the Christian faith in their marriage, the Church of England and the Dissenters.

Later,

John in his sermon on the Catholic Spirit made it clear that neither the Church of England nor the early Methodists had propriety rights to the true faith.

Hymn writer brother Charles abhorred sectarianism and was a strong supporter of the unity of the Church. He wrote:

*Was it our aim disciples to collect,*

*To raise a party, or to found a sect?*

His answer is a resounding 'no'. Part of our Methodist birthright is therefore openness to other Christians, and a concern for the unity of the Church.

The second reason has to do with our experience of Methodist union. Within 40 years of John Wesley's death, and in spite of Charles' protestations, there were eight different Methodist denominations in the United Kingdom. In the 1830s, and again in the 1850s the first signs that these Methodist strands might come together began to emerge, though it is not until 1907 that a major Methodist union eventuated in England.

In the meantime four of

the Methodist denominations made their way to New Zealand: the Wesleyans, the Primitives, the Bible Christians, and the United Methodist Free Church.

In New Zealand the initial moves towards Methodist Union came in 1883 when the Wesleyan Conference appointed a committee of ordained ministers and lay people to confer with the other three Methodist Churches to see if a basis for Union might be found. The three Churches responded positively and formed committees to help draw up a plan for Union.

**T**he plan was submitted to the district courts of the four Churches and it is recorded that "the proposal was supported by a strong majority". The Primitives, the Bible Christians and the United Methodist Free Churches then sought permission from their Conferences in England to move towards Union. In each case this permission was granted.

The largest of the Methodist Churches, the Wesleyans, who since 1874 had their own NZ 'sub' Conference were still under

the final jurisdiction of the Australasian General Conference. In 1884 the General Conference rejected the NZ plan which included an independent New Zealand Conference. It did the same four years later.

This was a blow to the other Methodist denominations. However, in 1894 the General Conference, meeting in Adelaide, gave permission to the NZ Wesleyans to secure union on the basis of an approved plan.

An invitation was duly extended by the Wesleyans to the Bible Christians and the Free Methodists to unite. They in turn were granted permission to unite by their English parent bodies, while in NZ the Wesleyans voted in favour of union by 54 to 11. This Union was consummated on the 13th April, 1896. It created a Methodist Church with 11,790 members and 110 ordained ministers - the two smaller Churches contributing 1623 members and 22 ordained ministers.

One strand of the Methodist

family however remained outside the new Church, the Primitives, who were the second largest branch of NZ Methodism. The Primitives believed that separation from the control of the Australasian General Conference by the Wesleyans was essential for the creation of a fully independent Methodist Church of New Zealand. The 1894 decisions of the Australasian General Conference did not permit this.

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# Earthquakes push Canterbury Methodists to rethink ministry

*Christchurch and Canterbury Methodist churches have agreed to embark on a journey that will see them share resources and develop new models of ministry.*

Presbyters and lay people from churches in the Central South Island Synod gathered on September 15th to consider a set of proposals that will guide their redevelopment in the post-quake era.

Strategic planning coordinator Jill Hawkey prepared a paper that guided discussions. It was based on parish visioning sessions and the outcome of a strategic planning session the Synod held in May.

"The meeting in September was another step in an on-going effort to chart out a future for the region's Methodist and Uniting churches. Since the last synod strategic planning day, parishes have been asked to develop their own vision and mission statements," Jill says.

"They were asked to consider more than just their buildings but also their vision and mission statements. This is also the nature of the discussions that are taking place at the Synod level.

"The Church has got bigger concerns than just its buildings. We have to look at how we can support parishes to do good things in their communities, how we can strengthen our ministries, and how parishes can share their skills and resources."

Jill says the earthquakes have made these issues a matter of urgency in Canterbury but they are the same issues facing churches around the country.

One of the priorities her report lays out is to develop a variety of models for ministry in Canterbury to meet the needs of different parishes and communities.

Another is to strengthen mission and social justice initiatives in local neighbourhoods. A third is to build a modern Methodist movement.

The report states that models of ministry are needed that support congregations but reduce the financial burden they have to support stipended ministers. Jill's paper offers several alternatives to the standard model of a one congregation with one presbyter.

These include shared ministry in which



Group discussions gave feedback on a strategy that calls for Canterbury churches to cooperate across parish boundaries.

a presbyter covers two or three congregations and works with a team of lay people. Another option is team ministry, where teams made up of ordained presbyters and deacons as well as community workers and administrators might cover a number of parishes in a geographical area.

"One possibility is to develop a team ministry for the East of the city and to increase our presence and outreach in that area. As a number of the churches in the east are Union parishes, this could be a joint strategy with the Presbyterian Church," the report says.

Another option is new ecumenical ventures in which congregations of different denominations based in the same neighbourhoods work together.

Any such initiative is likely to mean the duties of lay and ordained leaders would change. For example, several lay leadership teams could cover different parts of Christchurch. Or people with specialist skills, such as a community worker or children's minister could be hired to work in several parishes or the wider synod.

Another part of Jill's report calls for churches to work with the Christchurch Methodist Mission to help congregations

engage in their local communities. While some parishes currently have active initiatives, others do not and joint programmes with the Mission or stationing mission staff in parishes are ways these could be developed.

The challenges thrown up by the earthquakes could also be a way to reinvigorate the sense of Methodism as a 'movement' of people rather than an 'institution'. This too could be done by

pooling resources and energy to support vulnerable members of the community.

"A Methodist movement could be a Canterbury wide informal group of people, who meet together regularly, to worship, pray together, talk about what's happening in the city and our parishes and to explore how we could respond together.

"It would act as a 'resource' for individual parishes which could be called on to help with special one-off events and would also take action on particular issues which may be beyond the capacity of any one church."

The discussion groups that addressed these issues were all positive about the direction the strategic plan is pointing and the need to pool resources and energies in creative ways.

On the critical issue of finance, a separate paper was presented on how churches in Canterbury could share their insurance payments across the Synod to help churches which were not damaged in the earthquake but that require strengthening. The paper said insurance money could go into a development fund and proposals to make use of that money would be considered by the Synod as a whole.

There are still a number of unknowns for the Synod because detailed engineering reports are only just being done, and this may result in more churches having to be closed. The final insurance payout is also yet to be determined.

## NZ Church leaders call for united front against child poverty

*Proposals to reduce New Zealand's unacceptably high child poverty rates need to be urgently debated and discussed, say the leaders of the Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Salvation Army and Assemblies of God Churches.*

The seven Church Leaders welcomed the release a paper from the Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on child poverty, and look forward to participating in the discussion that the report will ignite.

"The crucial issues that result in child poverty need to be discussed by New Zealand's political leaders and the wider community as a matter of priority," says Anglican Archbishop David Moxon.

"Our children are our nation's precious taonga," says Catholic Archbishop John Dew. "Adults have a collective responsibility always to strive to do our best for our children. We owe it to our children to give them a voice in this discussion and the decisions that will follow."

Methodist ex-president Rev Desmond Cooper says the Church leaders note the growing divisions and inequality in our society. "We are deeply concerned that some health indicators are greater for Pasifika children than Pakeha."

Meaningful measures of poverty and goals to reduce poverty need to be formally established, say the Church Leaders.

"It is important to measure the true picture of child poverty in New Zealand,"

says Salvation Army Commander Donald Bell. "With meaningful goals in place our policymakers can implement practical changes and measure outcomes that make a real and significant difference to children currently living in poverty."

Churches promote child wellbeing through their own programmes, says Presbyterian Moderator Peter Cheyne.

"Both formally through Church social service agencies which are among the largest in the country, and informally through activities of parishes and groups, we in the Churches are responding to the needs of vulnerable members of our communities. We look forward to contributing our grassroots experience to a debate which should concern all New Zealanders."

Baptist Church leader Craig Vernal says Church leaders hope for a cross-party response from across Parliament. "Just as we have come together as Church leaders to consider this vital issue, we ask that politicians recognise child poverty as important enough to apply a multi-party approach to reducing child poverty in New Zealand."

Assemblies of God leader Iliafi Esera says "Our advisors will be participating in any consultative process afforded by the Commissioner for Children's paper. I am shocked by the health indicators surrounding our Pasifika children. We are thankful for the Commissioner and his initiative in providing opportunity for discussion and debate."



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# Methodists to look back and ahead at CONFERENCE 2012

By David Hill

*Rev Rex Nathan and Jan Tasker have chosen the theme: 'Past, Present and Future', as they prepare to make history at next month's Methodist Conference.*

Rex and Jan will become the first two-year presidential team when they are inducted at the Methodist Church of New Zealand / Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa's annual Conference in Wellington on Saturday November 3rd. They were appointed president-elect and vice president-elect respectively at Conference 2011 under the new two-year presidential team format.

"It is fairly exciting being the first two-year president," says president-elect Rex. "Previous presidents have said that just after they get appointed in November, it's Christmas. So you're two months into your term before you really get started and then before you know it, its Conference time again."

"To have been selected as a vice president of the Methodist Church was a great honour having growing up in the church," Jan says. "And to be the first to serve two-years makes it even more special."

Rex says the theme 'Past, Present and Future' was chosen because Conference 2012 is the 100th Conference since the Wesleyan Methodists and Primitive Methodists combined to form one united Methodist Church in New Zealand.

Jan says the theme acknowledges that we are thankful for the past, we acknowledge the present and we have a vision for the future.

Each morning of Conference there will be devotions from a different group, before delegates delve into Conference business.

On Monday morning the Wesley Historical Society will explore 'God of the Past', on Tuesday Te Taha Maori will explore 'God of the Present', and finally the church's youth, led by Wellington youth leader Filo Tu, will consider 'God of the Future'.

"Today's world is certainly different to what it was 100 years ago. A lot has changed, but I am looking forward to what the three groups have got to say," Rex says.

This year's Conference has been condensed into five days, instead of the usual six. It kicks off with the powhiri and induction of the presidential team on Saturday. This means the Te Taha Maori and Tauwiwi caucuses will meet on Monday morning, before the Conference proper begins on Monday afternoon.

"We see the Powhiri as the time when we say hello and we feel it is important to have a weekend of fellowship and celebration before we do the business of Conference," Jan says.

The Wesley Historical Society will host its annual lecture on Friday evening, with Rev Donald Phillips speaking about the 100 year history of the Methodist Conference. Governor-General Sir Jerry Mateparae will deliver an address to the Centennial Dinner on Saturday evening.

On Sunday morning Conference delegates will assemble at the Wellington Town Hall, the site of the original signing of the Methodist agreement 100 years ago. A Tongan band will lead a march to Wesley Church in Taranaki

Street, for the launch of the 'Let the Children Live' campaign as a way to bring the past and the future together, Jan says.

"It is one of the exciting things about this year's Conference and it is something we would certainly hope local parishes will get involved in," Rex says.

Children's Commissioner Dr Russell Wills will speak at the opening of the Conference business on Monday afternoon, while another speaker is being finalised to speak at the 'Let the Children Live' launch.

Rex is not sure if there will be many controversies at this year's Conference but he says the topic of same sex marriage may come up.

"There might be something which comes out of left field. Same sex marriage could come up but it probably won't get much floor time at this Conference because it's not already on the agenda. I suppose it is on people's minds."

Knowing they will be presiding over the 2013 Conference, Rex and Jan have already begun the conversation. Rex says the theme is likely to be 'God in a Changing World' which should follow on well from this year's theme.



Jan Tasker



Rex Nathan

# NZ Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists pursue unity

*The New Zealand Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches are pushing ahead to create a forum for Christian unity despite that fact that two key participants in the effort to establish it have said they will not join.*

A national ecumenical dialogue to establish a body to bring New Zealand Christian together has been underway since 2005. Last year terms of reference to establish the Churches Forum for Christian Unity (CFCU) agreed, and they were presented to the churches participating in the dialogue.

The aims of the Forum are to deepen relationships among New Zealand churches to express more visibly the unity Christ called for in his church, and to carry out common missions of worship, witness, and service in the world.

Methodist Conference 2011 affirmed the terms of reference. Conference stated that the Methodist Church looks forward for the formation of the CFCU and expressed willingness to join it alongside other churches.

Methodist Mission & Ecumenical secretary Rev Prince Devanandan and President Rev John Roberts represent the Methodist Church in the unity dialogue.

Prince says in March 2012, the churches participating in the dialogue met to receive responses to terms of reference. Out of the six churches that were represented at that meeting, the leaders of Anglican, Methodist and the Roman Catholic churches reported that their church courts have affirmed their willingness to join the CFCU.

The leaders of Presbyterian Church and Salvation Army informed the group that they will not support the proposed Forum. Neither will the NZ Wesleyan Church.

The Religious Society of Friends told the group that they are happy to work

collaboratively but are not in favour of being a member of another body. The Baptist Church conveyed that they would not participate in dialogue or join the Forum.

"With the three churches committing themselves to form the CFCU and the Salvation Army continuing to be part of the dialogue we are looking into the future. The participants in the dialogue are now brainstorming over 'where to from here'.

"It should be noted," Prince says, "that the three churches that have committed to the Forum have also decided to leave it open for others to join as and when they decide to do so."

The participants of the three churches met again in September to carry forward the dialogue. They agreed to on-going theological and ecclesiological conversations. In addition, they decided to look at receptive ecumenism as a model and to survey the bilateral dialogues of the three churches.

Prince says the whole exercise over the past six years has proved that Christian unity is not a simple task

"Coming from Asia I would say that the divisions we experience as churches are mostly what we have inherited from 18th century Europe though some were caused by people of our own generation.

"While we prepare to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the gospel in New Zealand in 2014, a confession of our shortcomings and divisions that continue to disempower the gospel must be the starting point.

"If we could realise our sins of division and repent, we could look into the future with hope for the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ being lived out in this land. For this let's keep praying and support the initiatives for Christian unity."

Art at Methodist Conference - theme:

**Church yesterday, today, tomorrow**

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## Thanks from president elect Rex for messages and prayers

To the editor,

It has been two months since I was hospitalised in July suffering from pneumonia, pleurisy and a touch of bronchitis.

Prior to this, I had never personally experienced any of these illnesses. In fact, during my 46 years in banking, I took very few sick leave days and accumulated the equivalent of 12 months sick leave.

I have seen others suffering from these illnesses, and I would certainly not want to experience them again.

After spending three weeks in hospital, it seemed I was well enough to go home to continue my medication orally. After three days, however, I contracted a virus that made me feel even worse than when I first fell ill. So I went back into hospital for a further three weeks.

I have now been out of hospital for several weeks and am well on the road to a full recovery. I do still have some fluid on my lung though it should be cleared in the next few weeks.

It is timely to remind myself to take care

of my health, knowing that Conference is drawing near and that vice president elect Jan Tasker and I have a role to play as the presidential team in the next two years within the life of our Methodist Church.

My main reason for writing is to express my thanks and gratitude for the numerous lovely expressions through get well cards, letters and prayers from synods, boards, committees, rohe, Hui Poari, individuals, and family members. I am especially grateful to those who visited me in hospital.

To receive these messages and prayers from the Methodist family was very uplifting. It gave me the strength and encouragement, and I was aware that my recovery was as a result of having faith and trust in God.

The doctors, hospital staff and local chaplains were absolutely wonderful and our community is fortunate to still have such a facility within our midst.

Na reira tena ra koutou katoa.

*Rev Rex Nathan, Dargaville*

## Bible in Schools and other faiths

To the editor,

In answer to David Hines letter in your August edition, I believe that Bible in Schools should continue alongside other faith belief knowledge programmes for primary school children.

The love of God is something that children need to hear about, and this does not just come through Christianity.

I have been passionate about passing on this knowledge to the children, through several years as a Bible in Schools teacher in Matamata in the 1970s and in Whangaparaoa in the 1990s

and I have served on the North Shore Christian Religious Education committee for a short term. I have also been very active in promoting Interfaith Dialogue in Auckland over the past 12 years.

Several years ago, the late Rev Bill Morrison predicted that Bible in Schools would one day need to make room for the teaching about other faiths. I believe that God is now speaking to us to broaden our awareness of the enormity of His Great love and Compassion for us all.

*Elizabeth Cornelius, Whangaparaoa*

## Discernment programme difficult to discern

To the editor,

The language used to summarise Trinity College's discernment programme in its advertisement in the September edition of Touchstone is a prime example of what English satirist George Orwell would call 'anaesthetic writing'. You cannot read or hear it without losing some degree of consciousness.

Lovers of language take note, and for interest read Australian author Don Watson's

2003 publication 'Death Sentence - the Decay of Public Language'. Where, in contrast to words and sentences that convey clarity and meaning, he describes the often unintelligible use of language in the modern day as 'death sentences'.

As an accredited New Zealand lay preacher, I believe clear communication is paramount.

*Bethne Dodd, Oamaru*

## The reality we see

To the editor,

In his book 'The Grand Design', Stephen Hawking, asks "What is reality?" and answers with a notion of model-dependent reality.

The two great creation stories that begin our Bible are also metaphors with model-dependent reality.

Stephen illustrates model-dependent reality in this way: humans 'see' themselves walking in a straight line as they pass through a room. The goldfish sees the human as walking in a curve because of the curve of its bowl.

What is reality? Is it the straight line or the curved line? What model would the goldfish build up in its mind based on the observation that humans walk in curved lines?

People have fought over their models. Some believe they are 'right' to hang on to models that belong to medieval times or before.

Here we are in the 21st century in a wonderful organisation, the church. In her letters to Touchstone Deirdre de Zoete suggested we

modernise to be more relevant.

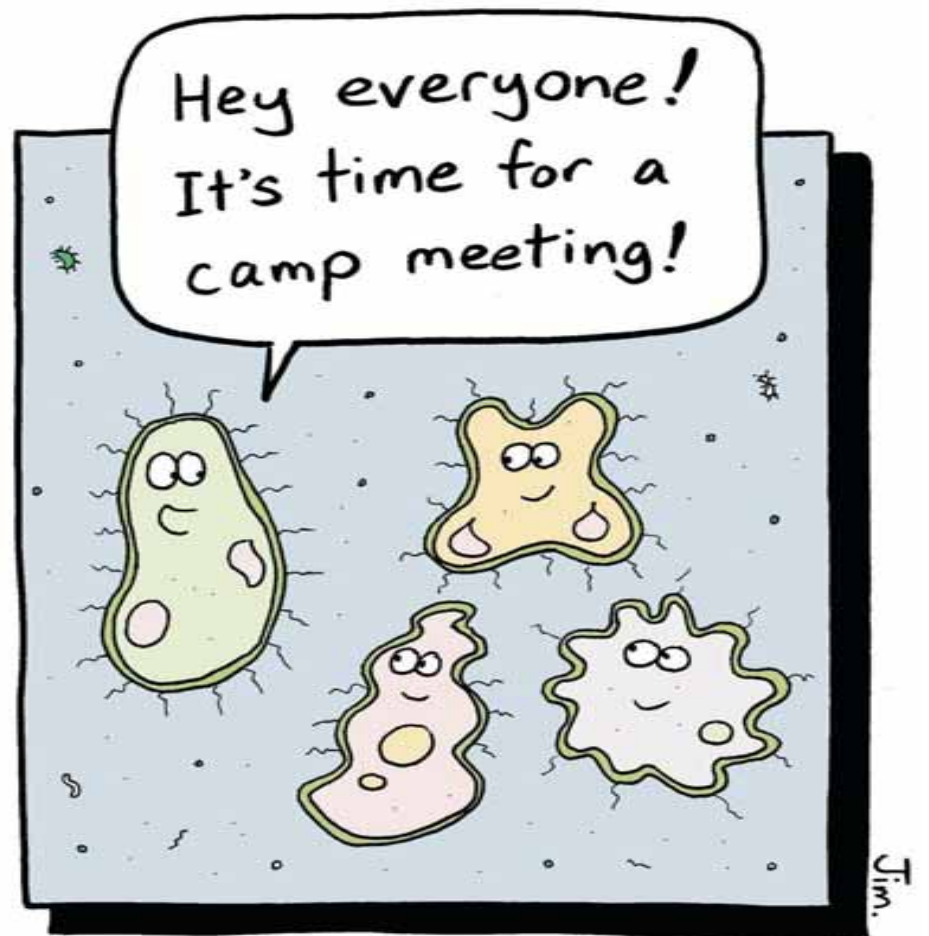
What is the churches' model-dependency? Is it up to being in the secular world? What is its authentic voice? Wasn't the 'Wesley voice' authentic in an earlier age? Wasn't the 'Jesus voice' authentic in his age? Will the coming Conference 'speak' with an authentic voice?

To be authentic, Jesus saw fit to make some important theological changes. He told his followers to have a loving relationship with Our Father/Our Parent, and to love others as you love yourself.

That is theologically different from the multi-tiered model of the Jews at that time. Pharisees were middlemen who wanted God at a distance. Not for them this 'being one with us'.

If it was good enough for Jesus to change the model of theology, then it is good enough for me to change the model of theology, and to be an authentic voice in today's world.

*Bruce Tasker, Auckland*



Primitive Methodists

## FROM THE BACKYARD

### Our connections to bees

Gillian Watkin

*The rhododendron tree is buzzing with bees. Last year the bees were noticeable by their absence so we are hoping for a good season this year. Using bees to produce honey has around for thousands of years. Did ancient people know of its really important task of pollination?*

How much do we know about such an important member of our community? I had an old book (published in 1954) about bees that never mentioned the importance of bees other than for making honey. You will find the same if you check the Biblical references. Today we understand better the interdependence of all life.

Listening to the bees doesn't rate highly on the scale of critical communication, in a world where 'the short story / big picture' news entices us to focus on topics deemed important by others. Much of it has no bearing on our immediate lives.

Our interdependence with that world is complex and complicated. Practicing the presence of God allows us to set aside the static and find our truths around what is touchable and a constant for us.

In practicing the presence quietly and steadily the invitation of the living God to participate in creation emerges along with deep questions. Those questions call us to research and contemplate. They are questions that are not satisfied with a simple Google answer. We are invited to love the questions as God's challenge.

Are bees just the pleasant noise in the garden or is there something else? We know of the direction of God to Adam to have stewardship

over the animals but the bee seems to have a significant stewardship role in caring for us. It is our little reminder of the connectedness of all God's creatures.

All of our food depends on pollination. Our breakfast cereal, our five-plus-a-day vegetables, and the grasses of the paddocks all make use of the humble bee. Did you know that exporting live bees to the Northern hemisphere is a billion dollar business for our country?

I have heard that in industrialised countries where the bees have disappeared pollination is a long laborious and costly task. Recently a beekeeper in Auckland reported a number of empty hives this year. Did you notice? When bee colonies are under threat, the idyllic dreams of the sweet life are in jeopardy.

Big questions of life and death and justice are incubated in the garden but, you know the answers seem simpler here, one step at a time. Plant more flowers and fruit trees. Use less sprays and if you must, make sure the ones you use won't harm bees.

Teach our children about the bee and do not be afraid. Don't swat them. Shepherd them outside and keep calm. If you hear a swarm, take cover and call for help. The swarm isn't looking for you, its looking for a new home.

When a bee stings, it is because it or the hive has been threatened. Most bees die after they sting. Yes I do understand about people with bee allergies but much is helped by studying the habits and patterns of bees and being prepared. Never, never kill a bee.



## The measure of a person's worth

A reflection by  
President Rev John Roberts

*I have a few favourite newspaper columnists whose writing I look forward to reading. Top of the list is Tapu Misa.*

Tapu is a fearless journalist with a deep social conscience who challenges much that goes on in our Aotearoa New Zealand society. Her regular Monday column in the New Zealand Herald has become essential reading for me.

A recent column was headed 'Worshipping the wrong kind of god.' In it Tapu writes "There are still plenty of people who measure a man's worth by the size of his bank balance".

She refers to New Zealand rich-lister Alan Gibbs who recently published a memoir 'Serious Fun'. Tapu writes that Alan can barely hide his glee at cashing in large on the sale of Telecom in 1990, along with merchant bankers David Richwhite and Michael Fay. They enriched themselves to the tune of hundreds of

millions of dollars. Alan is amongst the rich-listers the National Business Review last year said should be celebrated as national treasures.

One measure of a person's worth is in the salary gap between corporate CEOs and their employees. One study compared the salaries of nine top CEOs with the average salary of their workers. It states, "Wage gaps between workers and chief executives have grown so large that some staff would have to work for two lifetimes to earn the same as their boss's annual salary."

A more recent survey confirmed that this country's top chief executives are being paid up to 50 times as much as their average employees, and the gulf between boss and worker is widening. It has been said that the pay gap is the moral question of our time.

In the future, unrestrained increases in income for top level executives, tax cuts that favour the wealthy and disadvantage the poor, and cuts to welfare for the poor,

are likely to increase the level of inequality in our society.

In a recently published book 'Them and Us: Politics, Greed and Inequality', British social commentator Will Hutton argues that the root cause of the recent financial crisis is the neglect of fairness as a guiding principle in financial regulation, economic management and social policy.

He argues that super salaries are damaging to the rest of society and are indicative of capitalism running off course. When it comes to reform in response to the financial crisis, Hutton argues for a wholesale commitment to fairness.

Here in this country we have a corporate sector that has learned very little from the recent economic recession and its causes. It continues to be consumed by greed, as reflected in the ever increasing salaries of CEOs and the push for greater profits at the expense of consumers. At the same time there is a rising political ideology that seeks to make the most

vulnerable in our society pay for the cost of recession through so called social welfare reforms.

A theological phrase that was in vogue in the earlier years of my ministry comes to mind - "God's preferential option for the poor." The motive for divine preference is God's love that generously seeks out those that society marginalises and chooses to be in solidarity with them. As theologian Elizabeth Johnson has said: "A particular care for the poor, for those being pressed towards a premature, unjust death, characterises the living God whose heart is turned with mercy towards those who are oppressed by systemic forces."

In her column Tapu Misa quoted Francis Bacon who back in 1625 wrote "Wealth is like muck. It is not good but if it be spread." She concluded her article by stating, "A new economic order would remind us of old truths: that we are all connected, and that social institutions and economic activities must be related to common ends."

## Retreat into silence in order to hear

By Rev Alan K Webster

*I am 58. How did that happen? I still feel like a 40-year old though I have noticed my body seems older than that!*

I can't really imagine ever stopping being a minister. I can imagine that it'll change when I hit 68, however.

With these realities in mind I needed to do some serious thinking about the next 10 years. I want to finish well. I want to hit my finish line at full tilt; not shambling to a soggy stop but skidding to dramatic spray of gravel and burnt rubber.

Well, I guess none of us know just what any finish will look like. I know what I don't want, however, and it's to live an unexamined life, and to find myself asking 'How did I come to be doing this when I wanted that?'

Over the last 25 years of ministry, I have come to value silence more and more as a place to ask those kinds of questions. In the midst of ministry is too busy, too interruptive, too noisy. I want to suggest to all who would follow Jesus that to find a place away and to find silence is a wonder-filled place to be. And being is what's important. Not doing, but being.

Accordingly, I have made a more or less annual practice of making a retreat to a place of silence, a place of separation, a place of reflection. The model I like is more than three days (it takes me that long to quieten down), somewhere away from my home, and somewhere where someone can direct me.

Direction is about a fellow traveller who can ask good questions, who can suggest lines of enquiry if I get stuck. This is someone to whom I am answerable so that the exercise retains its intentionality.

I also like driving on my own, going places with a camera, and walking along solitary beaches. That's all good, and definitely in the category of spiritual health but different, to my mind, from

a silent retreat.

So I travelled to the Campion Ignatian Centre for a retreat earlier this year. This is a beautiful centre on the outskirts of Melbourne, easily accessible and relatively reasonably priced at \$A750 for the eight day silent retreat that I attended. (Shorter and longer versions are available, priced accordingly).

Timetabling your own retreat is best done by accessing [www.campion.asn.au/Campion.htm](http://www.campion.asn.au/Campion.htm), or locally by Googling 'Spiritual Growth Ministries', the inter-denominational group that runs such events here in New Zealand.

That's the technicalia...but what's it really like? It's actually not about words, so using words to describe it is a bit futile.

There's a lovely Shirley Murray hymn that runs: Come and find the quiet centre / in the crowded life we lead / find the room for hope to enter / find the frame where we are freed / clear the chaos and the clutter / clear our eyes so we can see / all that things that really matter / be at peace, and simply be (FFS10).

What's it like? Is it hard not to talk? How does it work? Well, the hardest part is mealtimes, when you'd usually catch up with people, make connections, communicate with others...and avoiding eye contact is the only way I can manage that!

However, there's a rhythm, a pace, a way of managing that retreatants quickly fall into...and indeed, back 'out of the silence', the contrast will be instructive. The best description for me, and one most people can understand, is that at the end of such an event I feel as if I have had a week-long cuddle from God.

I came out the other end this time without the clarity that I'd hoped for, planned for, and spent for. But for a couple of weeks after my return something very small happened. I was able to hear because of that week of silence. I am sure I'd have missed those sounds without it.

## PUBLIC QUESTIONS



## What about child poverty?

*The Children's Commission wants feedback on its paper 'Solutions to Child Poverty'.*

There are 270,000 children living in poverty. Of these 56 percent are from sole parent families. Poverty for Maori and Pasifika families is about double that of Pakeha families.

'Solutions to Child Poverty', states child poverty is unacceptable and can be reduced through government policies.

Addressing poverty is a matter of governance. In the book of Kings Chapter 3, Solomon asked for an 'understanding mind' to govern, an understanding of what is right. God rewards him with the insight to govern with justice. A justice approach is one in which every child is welcome and is nurtured to thrive.

Inequality and poverty have become embedded in New Zealand since 1984. Poverty means hardship. For children it means not being able to go on school trips; not having a secure or adequate home; and not having lunch or books.

The cause of child poverty is family incomes below the poverty line, which is 60 percent of the median wage. Benefits are too low and many jobs pay wages that are insufficient to lift families out of poverty.

While there is deeply embedded intergenerational poverty in Aotearoa NZ, poverty can come about through ill health, accidents or other misfortunes that remove people from paid work.

'Solutions to Child Poverty' takes a bold, pragmatic approach to focus on what we can achieve in the current economic environment. The report argues that poverty is harmful and uneconomic in

the long run.

Children who are deprived in childhood are more likely to fail at school and therefore be unemployed or involved in crime. They are more likely to have poor health and face domestic violence.

All these things are costly in financial terms, and in the loss of human potential.

To solve child poverty requires strategies to increase incomes, health, and housing. The Children's Commission says housing should be included in the government's 10 point plan for national infrastructure, along with roads, energy and high speed broadband. Investment in housing would stimulate the economy.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT POVERTY

Public Questions will be sending a response to the Children's Commission on 'Solutions to Poverty'. Please share your views with us. For the full report and summaries see [www.occ.org.nz](http://www.occ.org.nz).

How should we approach the problem of child poverty?

What should we as New Zealanders commit ourselves to?

What are some biblical and theological references that guide your solutions to child poverty?

### ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

Read the 'Solutions to Poverty' paper, or the summaries or the Public Questions Key Issues on Solutions to Poverty.

Discuss 'Solutions to Poverty' in your parish. Send your comments to Public Questions coordinator Betsan Martin by October 10th. Email: [betsan@publicquestions.org.nz](mailto:betsan@publicquestions.org.nz).

## Government permits Fijian Methodists to hold Conference

By Paul Titus

*For the first time in four years, the Methodist Church in Fiji has held its annual conference.*

Fijian Methodist Conference took place at Centenary Church, Suva over three days in the last week of August. The interim government led by Commodore Frank Banimarama has not allowed Methodist Conference to be held since 2008.

Rev Peni Tikoinaka represented the Methodist Church of New Zealand at the Conference, when MCNZ president Rev John Roberts was unable to accept an invitation to attend.

Peni says the government placed a number of restrictions on the Conference and Conference organisers were careful to remind delegates what they were. Police and army observers were on hand to monitor the event.

"The Church was not allowed to hold its big annual choir competition before the Conference. Those attending the Conference people could not stay at Centenary Church later than 8:00pm. No political talk was allowed or anti-government speeches.

"But the Conference was very well attended by people from throughout Fiji. There were about 970 official delegates and more than 1000 people attending. The



A business session of Fijian Methodist Conference. From left: general secretary and president elect Rev Tuikilakila Waqairatu, current president Rev Ame Tugau, and vice president elect Peni Volavola.

Church was able to conduct its necessary business so that was very positive," Peni says.

"It seems as if life is returning to normal in Fiji and people want to get on with their lives."

Among the key decisions the Conference made was the selection of the Church's new officers. Elected president was former general secretary Rev Tuikilakila Waqairatu and the new vice president is a layperson and former mayor of Suva, Peni Volavola. Rev Tevita Nawadra in the Fijian Methodist Church's new general secretary.

Bruce Mullan attended the Fijian Conference on behalf of the United Church in Australia. Bruce

says President Tuikilakila said the church would try to work positively with the government to establish a new constitution and prepare for elections in 2014.

Peni Tikoinaka says from the perspective of Fijian Methodists in Aotearoa, an important step the Conference took was to approve the secondment of Rev Aqakauila Bale to the Methodist Church of NZ.

Aqakauila will take up a three year appointment to minister to the Fijian congregations in Waikato-Waiariki. He replaces Rev Apakuki Ratucoka, who passed away in 2010.



Philippine bishops assess continuing human rights abuses under the Aquino presidency. From left: Bishop Solito Toquero (United Methodist Church), Bishops Arthur Asi and Elmer Bolocon (United Church of Christ in the Philippines) and Supreme Bishop Ephraim Fajutagana (Iglesia Filipina Independiente).

## Church leaders among Philippines human rights victims

By Amie Dural Maga,  
Auckland Philippines Solidarity

*On 21st September it was exactly 40 years since the late president Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines. One would think that the horrors of martial law are long over. But rights abuses have continued under the post-Marcos regimes.*

Under the nine-year Gloria Arroyo administration (2001-2010), the human rights situation was one of undeclared martial law. There were 1,206 victims of extra-judicial killings and 206 forced disappearances.

Around 30 victims were clergy and lay workers who were anti-mining activists, anti-corruption crusaders and social justice advocates. Many were members of the United Church of Christ of the Philippines (UCCP).

One victim was Rev Isaias Santa Rosa of the Legazpi City United Methodist Church. Isaias was an active human rights advocate. On August 3, 2006, armed men wearing masks stormed into his house and pointed their guns at the whole family. They beat him and dragged him out of the house. His dead body was later recovered near a creek.

In June 2011, the UCCP filed a damage suit against former president Arroyo. UCCP general secretary Bishop Reuel Marigza said, "Arroyo and the military agents under her command must be held accountable for the injustice they have exacted on the Church and the Filipino people. We have preponderance of evidence pointing to the military establishment as the perpetrators."

### On-going violence

When the current president Benigno Aquino III came to power, there were hopes that rights abuses would end. However, the Philippine human rights group Karapatan has recorded 99 killings under his two-year administration.

The victims include two foreign nationals who served among poor communities. Italian missionary Fr Fausto "Pops" Tentorio of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Mission (PIME) was shot dead on 17th October, 2011 in North Cotabato. Fr. Pops helped indigenous people set up organisations to defend their land against the encroachment

of greedy mining firms.

Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo says, "The only enemies he could make were those who wanted to silence his voice appealing for justice and peace for the indigenous peoples and for God's creation."

On July 2nd, Dutch missionary Willem Geertman, was shot by two men on a motorcycle. They are believed to be military agents.

As the National Church of Christ in the Philippines says, "Something is indeed terribly wrong when pastors and church workers are killed, arrested or go missing while they are teaching people to know, defend and fight for their rights."

### NZ support for Philippine human rights

Auckland Philippines Solidarity (APS) together with the Philippines Solidarity Network of Aotearoa and Wellington Kiwi Pinoy are engaged in human rights campaigns in the Philippines.

International solidarity movements have had some success in the Philippines. They include the case of UCCP Pastor Berlin Guerrero, who was abducted and detained in a military camp during former president Arroyo's visit to NZ in May 2007.

With the protests here and media questioning her claim that the Philippine human rights situation is all good while another pastor was missing and tortured at the time of her speech, Arroyo was pressured into calling the Philippines to order the release of Pastor Berlin.

In November 2011, the APS wrote to New Zealand political parties: "Considering that the Philippines is one of New Zealand's trade and economic partners, we believe that political stability and resolution of the human rights crisis in the Philippines should concern the New Zealand government... If elected, we respectfully ask you to convey a strong message of concern on the Philippine human rights crisis as former PM Helen Clark did in 2007."

President Aquino is coming to NZ in October to sign new trade agreements. We seek the support of New Zealanders in challenging him to stop all forms of state-sponsored human rights abuses.

## Friendly takeover creates Lifewise Rotorua

By Hilaire Campbell

*For people needing urgent mental health and addiction services in Rotorua, there is new face to a well-established service.*

The Rotorua Methodist parish established Bainbridge House Charitable Trust to provide these services, and it has now handed responsibility for them to Lifewise. The Bainbridge Trust is now known as Lifewise Rotorua.

Lifewise is Methodist Mission Northern's community and social development organisation. They hope that combining the strengths of the two teams will ensure a quality service that satisfies the expectations of the Lakes District Health Board and the Rotorua Methodist parish.

Methodist Mission Northern superintendent and Lifewise director Rev John Murray says that the move was logical.

Bainbridge Trust had a good reputation and track record in Rotorua. Staff have an extensive knowledge of local community and their premises are easily accessible to services and transport.

"For Lifewise's part, we've worked hard to ensure strong local interest and involvement in the transfer, and it has been very amicable," John says. "We've got a good relationship with Rotorua and we want to retain that."

He says the frontline work will benefit from Lifewise's management expertise and the opportunities it provides for future developments.

Bainbridge House Charitable Trust service manager Haehaetu Barrett will now be the service manager of Lifewise's work in Rotorua. She and her team, are "moving sideways", she says. They have not changed the focus of their work but being part of Lifewise means they can expand their efforts to meet growing demand.

Bainbridge Trust's core business



The staff of Lifewise Rotorua, formally Bainbridge House Charitable Trust.

was to further support the mental health needs of those already involved with community mental health services and provide assistance for people dealing with addictions. Referrals came from Lakes District Health Board emergency psychiatric teams.

The Trust provided supported accommodation and respite care for adults, health programmes, and a Kaupapa Maori cultural programme. All of this will continue under Lifewise's management.

Haehaetu says that while the clients are predominantly Maori, the uniqueness of the team is that it delivers a multicultural service.

"Hopefully, being part of Lifewise will mean that one of our priorities, expansion of a youth detoxification service, will happen soon. It's important to get intervention support for young people before the onset of adulthood," says Haehaetu.

Five years from now, Haehaetu would like to see the work of Lifewise in Rotorua going from strength to strength.

"We'd want to be delivering a good across-the-board service in mental health. This includes education and other social services that are a feature of Lifewise's work in Auckland."

Haehaetu says, meeting the wider Lifewise team was one of the highlights of the new relationship.

"We're very tiny here in Rotorua," she says, "so we need to see what's happening in the big wide world. It's also good for our team to get to know other parts of organisation so we can get an insight into belonging to an organization that is developing wider relationships."

For the future, she says, maintaining amicable relationships with the Lakes District Health Board and the wider community is vital.

"We have to demonstrate that we are part of the community to get community endorsement. Funding is always uncertain and as an NGO that's something we have to live with. But it's a great advantage to now be part of Lifewise, and they also gain because we bring a great skill base."

## POINTS OF ENTRY

NASILI VAKA'UTA  
REFLECTS ON JOB

*Interpretation is an invitation-to read and listen, to question and engage, to reflect and act, to shift and change, as well as to claim and even to resist if necessary.*

Interpretation is not about conforming to a particular dogmatic position, nor is it about confining oneself to a so-called sacred reading perspective. Rather, it is about allowing oneself the freedom to explore and be challenged, to transgress and be vulnerable.

It is about preparing to experience old stories anew, and to renegotiate meanings that are relevant to one's context and situation. One needs to open up to new possibilities and new interpretive options.

This is the kind of interpretive attitude one needs to have as one encounters challenging texts like Job. Job offers the readers several reading options or what I prefer to call 'points of entry'.

The Book of Job does not prescribe a particular way of reading, nor does it admit a single right meaning or an author's intention. We as readers are given the task

to read responsibly.

Responsible readers ask questions like these: How shall I read Job in the context of the Christchurch earthquake and its aftermath? How can I make sense of Job in situations like the Pike River Mine tragedy? How meaningful is Job to those who have experienced losses of loved ones, possession, and hope? What impact do situations of distress and despair have on the way we read texts like Job? How shall we engage with such texts and each other? Which reading option shall I take, and why?

The readings for October offer an invitation to enter the world projected by the story of Job. But where shall one enter the story? Job offers several options.

First, one can enter the story through the narrator's perspective. From this position, an adherent of the Lord is expected to be faithful, upright and do no evil in every situation, even when one's possession are destroyed, children killed, and well-being jeopardised.

The God-fearing person, according to

the narrator, does not deserve to know the reason for one's suffering. The narrator knows the reason. We the readers are told why things happened. But Job is never told; he suffers in the dark. When he asks questions, he receives no response. Even when God speaks (chap 38), none of Job's queries is addressed. Would you live in such a world?

The second option is to enter the story through Job's character. Job is ignorant of the contest between the Lord and the adversary, and I wonder how different would his reaction be if he knew about it? If I was Job, and knew about the source of my affliction, would I still be upright and faithful? Is it worthy to worship a deity who wants to be proven right at the expense of my family, my possession, and my life?

The third option is to enter the story with the sons and daughters of Job. They are mentioned but not heard. They are sacrificed yet not given proper narrative attention or a farewell. The children are portrayed as mere instruments to prove a

divine claim regarding their own father.

Why should one's children be sacrificed because of one's blind faith? What kind of message does this story give to children?

There are other reading options (Job's friends, wife and messengers). One can even enter the story through the character of the adversary (popularly translated as Satan). The adversary in chapter 1 is not described as an evil being. He is counted together with the sons of God (he is probably one of them), and the only one the Lord converses with. There is a tendency to demonise this otherworldly character, but a closer look at the story reveals that he never initiates the suffering of Job. It all begins with a boastful question in 1:8.

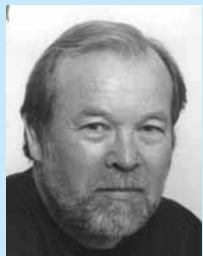
As we enter the world of the story, we have the freedom to go with the flow of the story or against it. But don't forget to ask yourself these questions: Whom shall I read with? Whose interest would I be serving? What is the goal of my reading?



## Raising a community voice

## CONNECTIONS

By Jim Stuart



*I recently attended a community meeting in east Christchurch sponsored by the Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) to inform and*

*assist local residents affected by two years of earthquakes. Wainoni Church was packed with frustrated and tired residents hoping to get some reliable information regarding the future viability of their homes and communities.*

The facilitator began the meeting by laying out the format for the evening. First there would be short presentations by the agency representatives followed by a time for questions. But it was emphasised, questions had to be 'hypothetical'!

A collective sigh swept through the residents. Bewildered, we looked at each other and struggled to understand what was hypothetical about the earthquakes. We had turned out in anticipation of

gaining some clarity.

Many of the older people present were confused and dismayed. Quietly they pondered if they would live to see some degree of normality restored to their lives. One man, who said he was over 80 years old, stood up and in restrained anger said that he had a hypothetical question: If my house is split in half when will it be repaired and made habitable again? The rest of us nodded our heads in support.

According to the dictionary the word hypothetical is derived from the word hypothesis, that is, a tentative assumption made in order to test its empirical consequences. A hypothetical question is simply a conjecture, a supposition, a presumption, a theoretical assumption.

The residents were not interested in conjectures. They wanted and needed honest answers to their questions so they could make plans for their future and know what was going to happen to their community.

After the initial presentations it became obvious that nothing much was on offer. Gradually the meeting degenerated as people talked past each other. Many

residents like yours truly left even more frustrated, quietly wondering why they had made the effort to attend and what had happened to the 'community' part of something billed as a community meeting.

While they may have been well intentioned the agencies had forgotten that people can't build or rebuild their lives on hypotheses. As they told instead of listening and reported instead of understanding, the agencies' representatives blocked out the residents' anguish and frustration. Their efforts at sensitivity largely came across as empty tokens.

The people needed empathy, recognition of their community, and a sense of hope for the future. What they were given was bureaucracy: reports, small details, and meaningless statistics.

At the height of the civil rights movement Martin Luther King struggled to get support from the government agencies of the day. He wrote: "Gargantuan industry and government woven into an intricate computerised mechanism, leaves the person outside. The sense of participation is lost, the feeling that ordinary individuals can influence

important decisions vanishes, and human beings are separated and diminished. When an individual is no longer a true participant, when the individual no longer feels a sense of responsibility to society, the content of democracy is emptied."

This is where the Church can do something the official agencies can't do. Instead of spending its energy and resources trying to put Humpty Dumpty back together again the Church could exercise its prophetic calling, and advocate as part of the community.

Challenging government agencies to work with the people to find mutually acceptable solutions is a role the church can commit itself to in Christchurch and wherever people are disenfranchised and alienated by questionable government decisions and policies

As Wesley clearly saw, the Church is not about buildings and acquiring assets; it is about building communities of compassion with people. There is a lot of work still to be done.

## Sibling rivalry and the ecumenical project

By Rev Peter MacKenzie,  
UCANZ executive officer

*The Bible is rich with stories about sibling rivalry, none better than that of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4).*

It is likely that this story became popular and written down during the early years of King David's kingdom. When we understand that, some of the story makes a bit more sense.

Cain was the first-born son, and Abel the second. We are told that Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain a tiller of the ground. Yet behind this story we have not only brothers competing but a clash of economic systems.

Cain and Abel represent something much bigger. King David's heritage was from his Bedouin/Hebrew family, traced back to Abraham. They were nomadic sheep farmers for generations before David was born. The city dwellers of Palestine, however, traced their ancestry back to Cain - the founder

of civilization. Their social system was built upon settled farming and urban living.

When Cain and Abel bring their sacrifices to God there is divine appreciation for the fat portions of the livestock, but a disregard for Cain's farm produce. There is no explanation given for why God would prefer one over the other.

In bringing this story into the new kingdom of Israel, the collators of the Hebrew Scriptures have affirmed the right of David and his lineage to take charge of the Promised Land. It is a social affirmation of the leadership of the Bedouin/Hebrew people over the Canaanites, Jebusites and the variety of other town dwellers resident in Israel.

In the outcome of the Cain and Abel story we hear that Abel wins - despite the fact that he was murdered. The keepers of sheep triumph. The Bedouin/Hebrew family overcomes



the tillers of the ground. The story of Abel is retold to affirm God's preference for the underdog. It is a reminder that in sibling rivalry it is not always the oldest that wins.

When denominations come together in a Cooperative Venture it is sometimes easy to see a bit of sibling rivalry - though thankfully not many murders! Caught up in their own traditions and systems, it is hard for some people to accept a different way of doing things. Even harder when it seems that favour is given to

'the others'. It is quite threatening to have the way that things are done here challenged by something different.

To respond to sibling rivalry (answers we don't find in Genesis) we can reinforce the fact we are in the same family, identify a common enemy or rival, and work together on a specific project. Parents with more than one child will already know this but it is equally relevant for the church.

It is hard to break down barriers in relationships by concentrating on them. Generally we need to ignore the barriers and work on what we can do together.

That has perhaps always been the ecumenical dream - not to make everybody the same as each other, but to break down sibling rivalry and affirm everyone's place in the family of God. Blessings to you all as you journey together in the Spirit.

## HONEST TO GOD

By Ian Harris

## The burden of 'sin'

*It is the oddest of paradoxes that the surest guarantor of the church's success over the centuries has been sin.*

As long as the multitudes could be persuaded that they were wallowing in sin and that death and hell loomed as their certain destiny, the

priests and preachers had a powerful psychological tool to brandish over them; and brandish it they did.

That is not so true today, though it still holds for some conservative churches. As that acute sense of sin has faded, however, fewer and fewer people are taking part in church life. Can the churches survive the loss of their historic trump card?

Possibly. But first they will have to unhook sin from many of their traditional understandings, and rethink it in a way that cuts the mustard in a secular world.

An Australian writer tells how, when she went to a Catholic school at the age of five, she learnt that somewhere in her chest there was a thing called a soul but it was blighted by a big black stain called original sin.

"This blot could never be removed, no matter how well I might behave," she says. "Jesus had endured unimaginable torments because of my sins, and each time I committed another one, it was as if I was driving another thorn into his head. Since I was rotten at the core, I would drive the thorn in many times over."

The picture contributed to what she calls "Christianity's dark tapestry of guilt and self-loathing". If that's not child abuse, what is?

In this and other ways, the triad of sin, death and hell, preyed on fear and played on guilt. It was a central element in the Christian world view for nearly 2000 years. It fostered a sense of hopelessness, punishment and ultimate annihilation, from which the church offered deliverance through Christ.

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, sin originated with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. For centuries this myth was taken as a literal description of the beginning of human life, and an explanation of how the world that God created perfect became so unsatisfactory. As science it is worthless but as myth it became one of the cornerstones of Christian

theology.

In the story, Adam's innocence was lost when he disobeyed God. The sentence was banishment from the

garden paradise, pain in childbirth for Eve, and hard labour culminating in death for all of Adam's descendants.

Nowhere does the Bible talk about 'the fall' of

humankind from perfection to a state of sin. It does not even talk about 'original sin' - the idea that all men and women are corrupted by sin through our common origin in Adam, a taint passed on through the sex act, so there is no escape. That phrase did not emerge till 200 years after Jesus' death.

The apostle Paul blazed the trail as he strove to make sense of who Jesus was and where he fitted into God's purposes. He developed a theology in which Christ was the counterpoint to Adam, born to negate the cataclysmic effects of Adam's sin.

For Paul, death is a direct consequence of sin - if there had been no sin, there would have been no death. The fact that everyone dies, however, is proof that sin has tainted us all. That idea seems extraordinary today but it lies at the heart of Paul's thinking.

What was required was a new Adam who would wipe out the consequences of the first Adam's sin, and Paul says that is precisely who Christ was. Jesus, he says, was without sin (a view subsequently elaborated in the story of the virgin birth), and lived a life of perfect obedience to God.

Furthermore, when Christ's followers graft themselves into his life, they share in his holiness. That, says Paul, cancels not only the curse of sin that comes from being a descendant of Adam but also its penalty of death: "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." All this dovetails neatly in Paul's imaginative picture, and for centuries the church affirmed it.

However, these assumptions do not square with modern understandings of the origins of human life, of a universe without a physical heaven or hell, or the biology of death. People today are more inclined to look for meaning in life without recourse to metaphysical speculation.

Can anything in all this make sense to citizens of a secular world? I shall explore that next time.



Ian Harris

## Jesus did not trust

By David Brattston

*There is no obligation for a Christian to naively trust just anyone, in all circumstances. In fact, a healthy distrust-especially in religious matters-is encouraged by the earliest Christian literature, written at a time when the oral teachings and Bible interpretations of Jesus and the apostles were still fresh in Christian memories.*

Jesus himself warned "beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves" (Matthew 7.15), and "false Christs and false prophets will arise" (Matthew 24.24).

The Apostle John added: "do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4.1). As Paul's letters show, his ministry was constantly beset by such frauds.

Having become resigned to the phenomenon, in Acts 20.29-30 he told local church leaders: 'I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.'

After Christianity had weathered false teachers and impostors for two centuries, the church father Origen tendered the following advice: "Be careful of immediately trusting just anyone that quotes the Scriptures. Examine the sort of life he leads, the religious beliefs he holds, and his intentions.

"He may pretend to be holy when he is not really holy. He may be a false teacher and wolf in sheep's clothing. He may even be

the mouthpiece of the Devil, who quotes Scripture for a purpose."

Origen was the most outstanding Bible scholar and Christian teacher of the first half of the 3rd century. Dean of the foremost institute of Christian learning for over a decade, he later established 'the first Christian university' in Palestine, from where he preached to surrounding congregations.

Whom, then, can we trust, particularly in religious matters? One apostle wrote "every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God" (1 John 4.2-3). However, as Origen noted, even some people that assert they are good Christians nevertheless ought to be investigated further.

In the middle of the second century came a book of Christian moral teaching that proved very popular and influential. It concisely states: "Trust you the righteous, but put no trust in the unrighteous" (Shepherd of Hermas Mandate 6.1.2) and then provided criteria by which to tell the two apart, and thus a guide as to a person's life, beliefs, intentions, and spirit.

Mandate 6.2 states that the messenger of righteousness is "gentle and modest, meek and peaceful...he talks to you of righteousness, purity, chastity, contentment, and every righteous deed and glorious virtue. Trust him, then, and his works."

On the other hand, "the messenger of iniquity...is wrathful, and bitter, and foolish, and his works are evil.... drunken revels, divers[e] luxuries, and things improper, ... hankering after

women... overreaching, and pride, and blustering."

In the same vein is Mandate 11: "He who has the Divine Spirit proceeding from above is meek, and peaceable, and humble, and refrains from all iniquity and vain desire of this world, and contents himself with fewer wants than those of other men.

"The spirit which is earthly, and empty...exalts itself, and wishes to have the first seat, and is bold, and impudent, and talkative, and lives in the midst of many luxuries...it never approaches an assembly of righteous men but shuns them.

"Try by his deeds and his life the man who says he is inspired. But as for you, trust the Spirit which comes from God, and has power; but the spirit which is earthly and empty trust not at all."

If readers think the foregoing article is too negative and cynical, remember that Christ himself took the same course of action: "Many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man" (John 2.23-25).

We who do not possess Jesus' powers of knowing other people's inner thoughts and intentions must fall back on our usual, limited, human methods of finding out whom to trust and whom not. These methods are outlined above in 1 John, Origen, and Hermas.

David W. T. Brattston is a retired lawyer who lives in Nova Scotia, Canada. He is a student of ancient Christian writings and his mission is to make that literature known to all Christians.

## Weather the financial storm together

By Cory Miller

*While the turbulent waters of the 2008 recession seem to be calming, as the Eurozone crisis continues to percolate, experts warn the worst may not be over.*

One person trumpeting the alarm describes herself as a roving gypsy, who wants to warn people about the economic, environmental and energy crises coming our way.

But alongside her prophecies of gloom and doom, Canadian economic analyst, Nicole Foss, is calling for communities to band together and use local resources to weather difficult times.

During a visit to New Zealand Nicole labelled the financial crisis a perfect storm, whose complex fronts have converged into the present crisis. The European Union is still at risk of being engulfed by international trade imbalances, high public and private debt, real-estate bubbles and governmental monetary policies.

Nicole says Europe is just the sign of worse things on the horizon. The globe is perched precariously and could fall into a deep depression that will be worse and longer lasting than that of the

1930s. She believes it is a question of when, not if, the Euro falls.

"The Euro as a common currency is dying, we are likely to see countries defaulting. When it does fall the impact will be monumental. Shockwaves will be felt throughout the world."

Greece will be the first of the Eurozone dominoes to fall and default, followed by others, with the potential for the rest of the Eurozone to follow. She says when the Euro falls the face of international relations as we see it will change forever.

Nicole claims we are heading into an era of de-globalization; as the economy fails things will no longer function on a large level. Governments and banks will not work.

Rather things will have to happen in communities. For awhile, we will need to think small, community working together is what will help make people happy.

"There may be less privacy, less autonomy if we work together," she says. "But we might discover what it means to be human if we forget about the rat race.

We must pool our resources and

look for empowerment and engagement that matters."

She offers a plan of action with three things to do:

1 - Get out of debt, burgeoning debt is compounding the financial crisis. One approach is to use the wealth and pool it across the generations. "The older generation has a significant amount of savings sitting in the grip of the system, they could come together as a family and decide to wipe off everyone's debt.

2 - Hold cash. Because banks are at risk of a systemic failure, it is important to have cash on hand. Not thousands, or you may become a target for brigands but enough for a few months.

3 - Gain control over our own existence. Nicole says you can grow your own food, have supplies of water, be dependant on yourself as much as possible and look to the local community.

It all seems a big extreme but Nicole's ideas come from an impressive list of qualifications in biology, air and water pollution control, and international law.

The future belongs to the adaptable, she says.



## South Auckland is the gout capital of the world

*Gout is a chronic condition and one of the more than 140 different forms of arthritis. That it is arthritis comes as a surprise to people.*

There are a number of common misunderstandings about gout but there are things you can do to manage it.

### Five myths about gout:

- Gout is a rare and minor condition compared to other health problems.
- People with gout bring it on themselves by drinking too much and eating the wrong foods.
- Gout is a 'normal' part of life, and you just put up with it.
- Medications for gout should be taken for acute attacks only.
- Gout doesn't have any cost to the health system in NZ.
- Gout is caused by eating rich foods and drinking red wine

### Debunking the myths:

Maori and Pacific men, due to their genetic make-up, are more prone to developing gout than other ethnic groups. Gout is caused by the build up of uric acid in the body, which forms crystals in the joints. People with gout also have a higher chance of getting heart disease, diabetes and kidney disease.

Gout is one of the most painful types of arthritis. In a gout attack the pain can be so severe that people are unable to walk for days.

Pain medicine can help but it does not treat the gout. If left untreated gout can become a chronic disease that reduces the quality of life. During an acute flare up of gout, the gout patient may be dependent on family members for basic care such as toileting, washing, and providing food.

Gout is very treatable. The safest treatment is allopurinol tablets taken every day. Allopurinol will lower the uric acid to and help prevent further gout attacks.

Other helpful recommendations for preventing



*Exercise and maintain a healthy weight to avoid gout flare ups.*

gout attacks include: exercise, avoiding food and drink which can trigger gout attacks, and maintaining a healthy weight. Foods that can bring on gout are sugary fizzy drinks, fruit juice, beer, too much meat or seafood.

### Key messages:

- Gout is not only a pain in your toe; it's a WAKE UP call to take care of your heart, health and well being.
- Gout is not cured, even when the pain goes away but lifestyle changes and medication such as allopurinol can stop gout's effects
- Your genes play an important part in gout. It is not just your kai.
- Gout is increasing in incidence across all ethnicities in New Zealand.

For more information please call an arthritis educator on 0800 663 463 or visit the Arthritis New Zealand website [www.arthritis.org.nz](http://www.arthritis.org.nz). Arthritis NZ has educators designated to work with Maori and Pacific people.

25th September to 1st October is Arthritis Appeal Week.

## Transition for Theology at Otago

*Over the past two years the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Otago has transitioned to a new model of delivery for its distance Theology programme.*

Previously, the main mode of teaching was through audio-conferences. "These were good", says Dr Tim Cooper, who is the Theology distance programme co-ordinator, "but we felt we could do better".

The new approach is a blended learning model that integrates audio-conferences with face-to-face teaching days in the main urban centres and online learning.

Tim says, the change has been well received. "As teachers, we like nothing better than to be in the classroom with our students. The teaching days allow us to provide that to our distance students."

Recently the Department surveyed students asking for their assessment of the new model. A total of 93 percent indicated their satisfaction.

"We couldn't have hoped for a better response", says Tim. "I was impressed by the way in which students recognized that not everyone has the same learning style, so a blended-learning model meets the needs of a wider range of students."

With a change of this magnitude it was important not to lose what was good about the old model, and the strong reputation the Department had built up over more than twenty years of distance education delivery.

"We appear to have met that challenge successfully", Tim says. "We will go on reviewing the effectiveness of what we do, but the new model is here to stay."

## Biggest Losers shed unhealthy habits

By Cory Miller

*Two Pacific congregations have taken on the Biggest Loser challenge to shed both kilos and unhealthy habits.*

Members from New Plymouth's Fitzroy Samoan Methodist and Hastings Wesley Methodist are currently taking part in the weight loss program, designed to motivate and encourage small but very important lifestyle changes, including weekly exercise sessions and healthy food choices.

Sinivia Isaia is one of organisers of the New Plymouth congregation's Biggest Loser competition. She says an 'emergency meeting' around the health and fitness of some of its members led to them launching their own version of the reality TV show.

Sinivia says her church is quite active in the community and regularly performs at various events. However, some people's physical weaknesses were slowly beginning to pose problems.

"At an event in June we noticed several of our males were sweating after only the second item. It was obvious something needed to be done, about our health, if we wanted to continue to be able to spread God's word," she says. "How can we spread his word if we can't move?"

And so 21 people, aged 14 to 73, decided to partake in the Biggest Loser programme, that will run from June until December this year.

It was a similar need that set members of the Hastings congregation on their own Biggest Loser challenge last year.

Hastings co-ordinator, Suega Tanielu says it was obvious some changes were needed to improve overall wellbeing.

"There was a need to lose weight; a lot of our people had health issues in relation to being



*Hastings' Samoan Methodists do Zumba and aqua jogging in their Biggest Loser completion.*

overweight," Suega says. "We saw this as a fun way to lose weight."

It was a successful first year, with the 33 members going from an average weight of 112 kg to 101 kg in five months. The person who earned the Biggest Loser title lost a total of 20kg.

This year its members are once again contending for the place of the Biggest Loser, in a programme running from May to December.

The Hastings congregation holds Saturday morning weigh-ins to keep the participants on track. That is followed by exercise at 7am, such as Zumba classes, aqua jogging, walks to the gym and pump classes.

"Some have never done much physical activity before but they are enjoying it," Suega says. "People become more active rather than just going from work, to home, to church."

While the exercise is paying off, Suega says there is still some work to be done around healthy eating.

Despite these challenges there have been some long-term benefits. Many have continued with the gym and exercise classes even after the programme ended last year.

While the New Plymouth Biggest Loser competition is only in its first year, Sinivia is confident things are going well.

The group of 21 is split into three groups who individually train together during the week before coming together on the Saturday to do a range of activities from Zumba, to swimming, running and circuit training around the church. One participant lost five kg in just seven weeks.

Sinivia too says eating healthily is the area where the group needs encouragement. It is tough when church and community life often has food as the central focus.

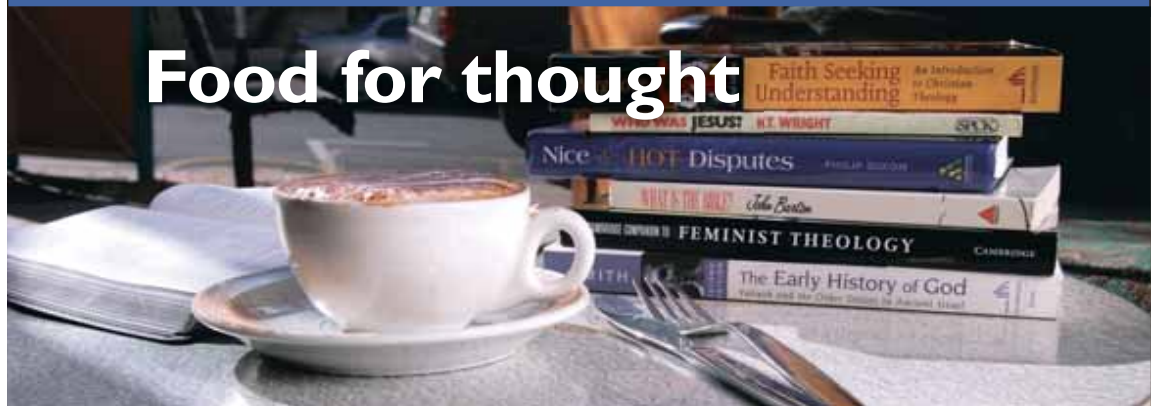
"We are trying to shift away this focus on food and from the Pacific Island translation of bring a plate, which in the Pacific way becomes four pots."

With advice around healthier options things have slowly begun to change.

"The programme is about encouraging them to make small changes that fit in with their lifestyle. We take our Pacific, Samoan knowledge and adopt that to our lifestyles," Sinivia says.

## Theology from Otago

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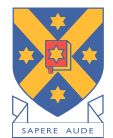
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Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtāgo

NEW ZEALAND

# Contemporary Christian understandings of marriage

By Rev Trevor Hoggard  
*Throughout the Methodist world marriage is seen to be the faithful, life-long union in body, mind and spirit between one man and one woman.*

In most countries where Methodism is found, such a traditional definition is the only legal form of marriage in that country. However, there is a range of opinion on the matter and views are changing both within the Church and in wider society. It remains to be seen how widely these more recent views will be held in the future.

The following represents my personal understanding of the three main schools of thought to be found among Christians and in secular society.

## Traditional defence of heterosexual marriage

This view is held by the vast majority of Christians in the world from the Catholic to the Orthodox to the Pentecostal wings of the Church and also reflects the opinion of other world faiths, such as Islam, most of Judaism and other faiths originating from the Indian subcontinent.

The idea is based on the notion that God has created humanity and chosen to make us male and female so that we have to come together in love to survive as a race. It holds that male and female are complementary to each other and that the full expression of humanity is only found by taking both the male and female together.

It is more than just a statement of obvious physical facts when the Bible says that the two shall become one. With the combined



Traditional Christian views of marriage are out of step with secular notions.

gifts of their respective sexualities, male and female, equally but in their own distinctive ways, contribute to the conceiving and nurturing of children.

Christians believe that such marriage should be based on the free self-giving of the two partners in love - in the manner that Christ gave himself freely in love for the Church, the Bride of Christ.

Therefore Christians do not accept marriages that are arranged against the will of the parties concerned. Because there is no greater commitment than love, marriage should reflect the total giving of self for a life-long union. Because God is faithful, Christian marriage demands life-long faithfulness.

Christians believe marriage

should be between one man and one woman to reflect the existential equality of the sexes.

Catholic doctrine states that gay relationships are always "disordered", meaning that they do not conform to God's plan for creation in which male and female are designed for physical sexual union, whereas same sex partners are not so naturally designed.

Marriage cannot be between members of the same sex because marriage in a country such as New Zealand is primarily an institution of the Christian faith - shared by other religions such as Judaism from whom the institution was passed to Christianity. Marriage must therefore conform to Christian tradition based on biblical and natural precepts.

Western media often condemn those who speak out in favour of traditional marriage as 'homophobic'. This term may be justifiably applied to those who persecute or otherwise abuse gay people but when it is applied too indiscriminately it simply shuts down any possible dialogue between opposing points of view. This is particularly unfortunate when it happens in democratic countries.

### The middle road

The middle road is trodden by increasing numbers of Christians, particularly those living in secularised Western societies. These people value the tradition of heterosexual marriage and see marriage as a gift of God and the ultimate expression of human commitment. These people support marriage as much as the traditionalists.

They differ, however, in their assessment of what it means to be gay. These middle of the road people contend that no one chooses their own sexuality; it is

something with which we are born and which expresses itself from an early age of development, most obviously post-puberty.

Being gay, they contend, like being heterosexual, is just the way you are born. It is not the result of some moral choice but an expression of the innate self, even if being gay only affects a minority of people, it is an outward expression of an inner reality.

Other than being attracted physically to a member of the same sex, gay people have identical needs as heterosexual people for physical fulfilment, companionship and romantic commitment because the change of object of their attraction does not change the quality of love itself.

Gay couples, at the end of the day, are just people falling in love - that most wonderful of human experiences. Therefore, it is in the name of love that middle-of-the-road Christians may support gay marriage, or at least civil unions.

Some Christians would support the right of gay couples to receive their full civil rights to be in a legally recognised partnership but would resist the move to call such a relationship 'marriage'. For these Christians, marriage is a word with too much specifically Christian heritage to be taken by secular authorities and applied to something other than it already means.

They would support the use of the term 'civil union' for such relationships. Other middle-of-the-road Christians may go further and agree that the term marriage can evolve its meaning to cover gay relationships.

Such Christians acknowledge traditional values and know that Christian scripture and tradition have resisted gay relationships most strongly but they would contend that Christian understandings change over time. Therefore to support gay marriage is to support the higher things to

which we are called as Christians, which include graciousness, justice and above all, love.

### Secular liberalism

Most Western media are now dominated by a secular worldview which makes the conversation between them and the traditionalists increasingly distant and mutually incomprehensible. For those raised in a modern Western, liberal society almost all meaningful contact with the Bible as a living document of faith or a living faith tradition has been lost.

Most of the values found in secular democracies have been bequeathed them through the Christian tradition but this is less and less acknowledged and less and less relevant.

For this group, it has been forgotten that marriage was transferred from the Church to the State in the years when Church and State were much more closely linked. So for this group, marriage is clearly and obviously a matter for secular legislation to decide upon and Christians are just one interest group among many.

In multicultural societies, it makes sense to have such matters in secular hands; to have one section of society now lay claim to such a central institution would be unthinkable. To hand back marriage to the Christians would be as unthinkable as legislating for butchers to fulfil sharia law.

For secularists, the arguments do not involve religious notions. They are all about human rights and social justice. Religious viewpoints are largely irrelevant to them but if faith groups make up a large voting constituency, special arrangements are usually made to allow religious groups to opt out of compliance.

The current proposal states that Christians would not be forced to conduct gay marriages against their conscience.

As secularisation continues apace with each generation, liberals believe the blockage represented by religious conservatives simply needs to be carefully negotiated but they have no right to stand in the way of progressive social legislation.

People have the right to associate with whom they wish and fall in love as they please. They should not be denied the same rights and privileges as other members of the community on the grounds of sexual orientation. To discriminate against the gay community is as unjust as to discriminate on grounds of colour.

The growth of the middle-of-the-road Christian view convinces liberal secularists of the unassailability of their rational arguments and encourages them to believe that the liberal view will eventually come to be the most widely held view across all free societies.

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# SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

# PROS & CONS

**The Marriage Amendment Bill is currently making its way through Parliament. It amends Marriage Act 1955 to clarify that a marriage is between two people regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. It would allow same-sex couples to marry.**

The explanatory note to the Bill states that marriage is a fundamental human right and limiting that human right to one group in society does not allow for equality. This bill would align marriage to the NZ Bill of Rights Act and the Human Rights Act.

The Bill retains prohibitions against people marrying those who are closely related to them by blood or marriage.

## God's inclusiveness encompasses same sex marriage

Rev Uesifili Unasa is chaplain and University of Auckland. In August he organised a public forum to explore the bill that would bring equity to marriage. He shares his thoughts on why he supports the Bill.

As a Christian and a presbyter, I have always felt that the Church is about recognising God as a loving God; a God who affirms all those who have been marginalised by society. This sense of God's inclusiveness has undergirded my attempts to live a full Christian life and preach the faith as a presbyter.

In essence, supporting gay marriage is about the acceptance and recognition of all of God's people. It is not just how we talk about people, but also how we live with them.

My support of gay marriage is based on two key concepts.

Firstly, it is about having a fair and equal New Zealand society. All New Zealand citizens must have the right to choose how they live, to be able to be formally and legally married; irrespective of whether they are a man and a woman or of the same sex.

However, within the NZ legislation of the Marriage Act 1955, same sex-marriage and couples are discriminated against. The law as it stands at the moment is a form of institutional discrimination.

Secondly, opposing gay marriage is theologically unsound. There is no theological justification against gay marriage.

The New Testament narrative on the ministry of Jesus often finds him with the outcasts and undesirables of so-called decent society. As a Christian and presbyter, Jesus must be the model on which I base the way I live with

myself and with others.

It is for these reasons gay marriage must be supported and legalised. Discrimination against homosexuality must have no place in our churches or society.

It is a personal choice who each individual wishes to share their love with. This is a choice that should be a fundamental part of New Zealand society.

Gay marriage should not be seen as an attack on the institution of marriage or the traditional values of the Pacific people. Instead it should be seen as a manifestation of the highest values and aspirations of our Christian faith and Pacific cultures.

To love, respect and honour is central to Christian marriage. Marriage is about recognising and celebrating this love that brings people, regardless of sexual orientation, together.

The Church, Pacific churches included, must face up to these new questions and challenges posed by the evolving spiritual and secular worlds.

Social issues, such as gay marriage, are not only questions about our dynamic secular culture. They are spiritual and ethical issues that must be addressed with meaningful and wise counsel.

There is a great need for deeper thinking, removed from out-dated fear and unquestioned cultural assumptions.

There is a need, from the Pacific perspective, to distinguish between culture, norms, religious practice and a theological understanding that is in line with the 21st century.

We, in the New Zealand Methodist Church are in a pivotal position to lead these discussions and a more contemporary informed theology. We know from our own experience how to articulate clearly and live respectfully with issues of gay ministry in our church. So, why not gay marriage?

## Marriage is sacred and should not be disturbed

New Zealand Christian Network is a network of churches and Christian leaders that seeks to present a biblically orthodox position on social and religious issues. The Network took part in drafting a statement by church leaders opposed to same sex marriage. This is a summary of some of the points they have raised on the issue:

This issue is not about equality but about the nature of marriage. All human beings are equal in the sight of both God and society but not all relationships are the same. Marriage has uniquely been

about the union of male and female. The State should not presume to re-engineer a basic human institution. The complementary role of male and female is basic to the very character of marriage, along with having and raising children. Same-sex relationships are intrinsically different, so they can never be regarded as true marriage.

Parliament needs to take seriously that, for a very significant proportion of the New Zealand public, marriage is more than just a legal agreement or social contract. It has a sacred character to it, and that many people - Christian and otherwise - feel very strongly that the nature of marriage should not be interfered with.

In 2004, the public was assured by the Prime Minister and other MPs that marriage would be respected as the union of a man and a woman, and that civil unions were a good and acceptable alternative,

offering equivalent legal protections to marriage itself. It is now time for Members of Parliament to recall and honour those assurances.

New Zealand Christian Network wants the government to set up a Royal Commission to investigate properly the issues involved in the marriage definition amendment bill.

The issue certainly involves far more than equal treatment for homosexual people. If it were only that, then the matter would be simpler.

Instead it involves the issue of human rights for children, both adopted and produced by artificial reproductive techniques. We do not want to cause offence but the limited research available suggests that there are better outcomes for children raised by heterosexual parents compared to same-sex parents.

The role of members of the New Zealand House of Representatives

is to represent the interests of all New Zealanders, not just those of particular minority groups.

By confusing marriage with other forms of civil union, the bill would undermine the unique importance of marriage in society. Marriage is a union based in the natural order which has been fundamental to human societies throughout history.

If politicians take the step of treating marriage as something which can be redefined at whim rather than recognising its natural-based dimension, then there is no rational argument which could be used to oppose any other variation which a minority group may push for in the future.

The important question people and politicians must ask is 'would this law change really be in the best interests of New Zealand long-term?' In our opinion, the answer is 'no'.

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## Corporate control of food on the rise

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance hosted the launch of the fifth edition of the 'Right to Food and Nutrition Watch' in Geneva, Switzerland on September 25.

The event was part of the build-up to the Churches' Week of Action on Food and World Food Day in October. The pre-launch publicity revealed the title of the fifth 'Watch' was 'Strategies to Regain Control'.

The media advisory sent out to Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance supporters poses the key question: Who decides about global food and nutrition?

While the pre-launch advisory is written in the language used by aid and development professionals the content is striking in that it notes the same concerns as those that have shaped this year's CWS Christmas Appeal.

This year's Christmas Appeal has the theme 'Save My Place / A Place to Till and Keep' and looks at land grabbing, ownership and food justice issues and solutions. These issues are driving growing global concern about land and food production ownership patterns.

Published by a collective consortium of 15 civil society organisations the 2012 Right to Food and Nutrition Watch analyses the increasing influence and control of agribusiness on food and nutrition.

It also describes the worrisome trend of



Growers like this woman in the Philippines can only be self-sufficient if they retain control of their land.

governments and multilateral organisations increased recognition and promotion of the private sector and related philanthropic foundations as important stakeholders in the struggle against hunger and malnutrition.

The 'Watch' highlights the "lack of adequate public regulation and the blatant conflicts of interest in these developments."

On the positive side it also promises that the 'Watch' will describe the new strategies of social movements and other groups to regain people's

control over food and nutrition by "effectively occupying political decision space in local, national and global governance structures".

With this year's 'Watch' the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance hopes to raise global awareness of the justice issues that are changing the nature of the debate about food.

As investment funds, commodity speculators and some nations take over prime land and food production sites in the developing world, the effects are increasingly apparent.

To hunger produced by drought, climate change and over population another dominant force has emerged, the 'commodification' of food production as an investment vehicle.

It is a justice issue that CWS and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance are determined to see revealed, challenged and changed.

## World's churches call for fair food

*Demands for a fairer food system are growing as poor people realise that they are faced with a miserable future without adequate food. Many of Christian World Service's partners are involved in campaigns to make food fair at the same time as they help poor people grow more and better food for their family.*

CWS is inviting churches to join in an international week of action from 14-21 October to focus on food justice. CWS will provide worship and action resources for the week and share stories from partner groups working for change. Some of the resource material comes from Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the Iona Community has prepared a liturgy for food and farming.

"CWS asks churches to take time to remember those people who do not have enough to eat, wherever they are, and to look at the reasons why," says CWS national director, Pauline McKay.

Mounting concern about people's inability to grow or purchase adequate food is fuelling global campaigns for food justice. Campaigns for a Living Wage and against child poverty are responding to the situation in Aotearoa New Zealand where people are also hungry. Taking part in these and other campaigns are ways of advocating for the right of all people to adequate food.

CWS partners are helping farmers grow more food on the small plots of land available to them through agro-ecological methods. By using improved traditional methods without the high costs of hybrid seeds and fertilisers, they are

able to cut costs and better feed their families.

Some partners are pointing to government policies and industry practices that are pushing people closer to starvation. With more than 900 million people going hungry each day, access to food remains a cause for concern.

Supporting the work of CWS partners will enable them to train farmers and advocate for the poorest rural people.

While food prices fell by 0.5 percent for the year ending in August according to Statistics New Zealand, globally they are on the rise. The World Bank reports that they rose 10 percent in July with maize prices rising a record 25 percent in the same month. In Malawi maize prices soared by 174 percent over the last



While Malawi's farmers are resourceful, they face high grain prices this year. Photo Paul Jeffrey ACT/Alliance.

year and there are growing concerns that widespread drought will see the cost of staple foods continue to rise.

In June a UN report noted that Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines, which are reliant on wheat imports, are also highly vulnerable to price hikes.

There is also concern about the impact of the huge import orders placed by China this year. China is one of the world's largest consumers of cereals which adds significance to reports in the China Daily newspaper that imports of all kinds of grain had increased by 41.2 percent in the first half of 2012.

These are among the many reasons why churches and their supporters should take the time to look at food issues in October.

## A taste of poverty - Manukau couple 'lives below the line'

By Marie Sherry

*A Manukau couple recently spent five days living on \$2.25 each per day to raise awareness and money for people living below the poverty line.*

Alan and Emily Worman took part in the international Live Below the Line challenge, which encourages participants to feed themselves for \$2.25 a day or less - the equivalent of the extreme poverty line. The challenge ran for five days starting on September 25.

Live Below the Line aims to give participants a glimpse into the lives of 1.4 billion people who have no choice but to live below the poverty line every day, and who have to make \$2.25 cover a lot more than food.

The challenge is an initiative of the Global Poverty Project, which educates communities about poverty and encourages people to take action against it.

The Wormans decided to take part in Live Below the Line after discussions about poverty with the youth group they run at Crossroads Methodist Church in Papakura. They felt that the challenge was a practical way to help teach the youth group members about the realities of poverty, and to raise general awareness.

Alan and Emily planned their food ahead of the challenge and even had trial meals, which included 50g of uncooked pasta and half a tin of baked beans.

While they've been involved in other charity fundraising ventures, the poverty challenge is new for them. They were inspired by the parable of Jesus feeding a multitude with five loaves and two fish.

"What appealed to us was the idea



Methodist youth workers Alan and Emily Worman took part in the 'Live Below the Line' challenge to raise awareness of poverty. Photo courtesy Anna Loren / Manukau Courier.

of the personal challenge and the fact that people are actually doing this in real life," Alan says.

"From our conversations I realised that fresh fruit and vegetables were going to go quickly off the list, as well as butter and milk. We saw that this must be possible, but how? We see it as a great way of raising awareness."

They realised their diet would have to consist of a lot of tinned, low-quality food and a limited range of meals.

The Wormans entered the challenge under the name 'Team Science in a Van', together with Emily's sister Edith Lange. Science in a Van is the name of their business, which presents science to schools in fun, interactive ways.

See Page 14

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## Kia ora, neighbours!

Two of the community outreach programmes at Hamilton's Chartwell Church have come together to develop a relationship with their neighbours across the park, the Miropiko Te Kohanga Reo.

The two projects at Chartwell Church are the Cakes to Businesses & Community and the Community Garden Project. One day last April, a group from the church delivered cakes and scones to the staff and the children of the kohanga reo.

This wonderfully noisy, happy occasion, was a great opportunity to say a big 'thank you!' to the staff at the kohanga reo for the important work they do, for being a wonderful influence in children's lives, for

enriching our community, and for going the extra mile.

Following a conversation that day with kaumatua Hone Dickson, Anna Cox and Glenda Jamieson returned several days later to learn more about the background of the kohanga reo, as well as the work that is being carried out there.

Hone explained that the term 'kohanga reo', or Maori language pre-school, literally translates to mean the place or nest of the Maori language. Part of that conversation was about the kohanga reo's need to establish a new vegetable garden.

By mid May, members of the Chartwell Church's Community Garden group had cleared away the remaining pumpkin plants from a plot on the church property. They then met with Hone and his colleague

Hamaka Peters, to further explore the idea of creating a vegetable patch within the grounds of the kohanga reo itself.

They came up with the idea of a joint garden, involving people from the kohanga reo and the church. They decided to build two raised vegetable garden beds.

The work was timed to coincide with the celebration of Matariki on June 29th. Matariki is also known as the Maori New Year, and it is an occasion where members of the whanau come in to the kohanga to celebrate and share a meal.

Funds, labour and materials were slowly gathered for the project. The raised gardens were built at Miropiko Te Kohanga Reo and those involved enjoyed a lunch to celebrate Matariki.



Students and church people plant mustard seed in the kohanga reo's garden

The church people who have worked hard on these projects include Bob Dawson, Avril Jacobs, Margaret Henshaw, Judy Holdsworth, Anna Cox, Glenda Jamieson and Rev Ken Olsen.

The group has continued to be involved with the kohanga reo. They have learned about gardening with the Maori calendar and have worked with the children to plant mustard seed to build the fertility of the soil.

A mandarin tree, donated by the

Chartwell Garden Club that meets in the church hall, has been planted in the kohanga reo's front garden

The kohanga reo staff say the food gardens (maara kai) are valuable for the children because they benefit from the fresh vegetables and fruit, and learn gardening skills.

Through these events Chartwell Church and Miropiko Te Kohanga Reo have built, and they see one another as part of their extended whanau.

# Kidz Korna!

## Welcome to Kidz Korna for October

I'm still waiting to hear from you telling me what is happening in your church so we can share it with children all over New Zealand. It will soon be time to think about what special things you will be doing for Christmas. Take some photos and write a few words. Send it to me (my address is at the bottom of this page) and I will share your article in Kidz Korna. Thank you, Chartwell Cooperating parish for telling us about Messy Church. It sounds very exciting. It's great to have families worshipping together and having fun.

## MESSY CHURCH AT CHARTWELL

By Gwen Kentish, Chartwell Cooperating Church, Hamilton

This is a place where people of all ages come together to meet Jesus through hospitality, friendship, stories and worship.

It is high impact and fast moving with time to share stories and food, to be creative and build relationships.

Messy Church is a fun-filled expression of Christian community outside the traditional Sunday worship. We hold it on the second Sunday each month from 4:00pm in the Church hall.

Over the past year it has provided a bridge for Mainly Music and Toy Library families and others to engage with Church. The theme for the recent August



gathering was Love your Neighbour and explored The Good Samaritan story.



Messy Church is a fun place to share stories, learn about Jesus, eat together, and be creative.

## For the Bookshelf

### THE SHEPHERD GIRL OF BETHLEHEM

By Carey Morning with illustrations by Alan Marks  
A Lion Children's book, 32 pages

It seems a bit early to review a book about the Nativity but this is a beautifully illustrated book telling the story in an original way.

A little girl helps her father, caring for their sheep, during the daytime. She isn't allowed to go with him at night but one night she sees that it isn't dark at all. Her room and the sky outside are lit up by a bright star.

She gets up and goes to where she knew the sheep were but she can't see her father. Looking into the distance she sees him with other shepherds walking towards a stable. Running to the stable she finds not only her father but a tiny baby in his mother's arms.

I liked this story the moment I read it. It is different from the usual nativity stories and simply told with lovely illustrations. It is a story that can be read aloud and shared with the whole family.



## PUZZLE CORNER

Solution to last month's Wordsearch:  
Consider the lilies of the field.

How many words of three or more letters can you make with the letters of TOUCHSTONE?

There is a \$20 book token for the person who sends in the longest list.

Send in or e-mail your list to me:

Doreen Lennox  
Unit 4 St John's Close  
22 Wellington Street  
Hamilton 3216  
dlennox@xtra.co.nz

ON SCREEN

A film review by S and S Taylor



THE SAPPHIRES

I was born in 1968. That was the year that Martin Luther King was shot. It was also the year four Aboriginal sisters from rural Australia found themselves in the midst of the Vietnam war.

Based on a true story, 'The Sapphires' is an endearing mix of comedy, song and romance. In response to a newspaper advertisement and aided by out-of-luck Irish disc jockey Dave Lovelace (Chris O'Dowd) the four young women - Gail (Deborah Mailman), Cynthia (Miranda Tapsell), Kay (Shari Sebbens) and Julie (Jessica Mauboy) - sing their way into a war. Travelling through Vietnam, entertaining American soldiers, they discover love and sorrow, dreams and reality.

An indigenous movie demanded an indigenous cast, and this required scouring through Aboriginal communities around Australia. It is a credit to the emerging indigenous film industry in Australia to find actors as talented as Deborah Mailman.

With 11 movies in 2011 and 15 in 2010, it suggests that this is a community that is both creative and healthy. In the period 1970-

1979, there were nine indigenous movies, compared with 135 in the period 2000-2009. See diagram.

The use of black and white archival footage of Martin Luther King as well as indigenous Australian campsites skillfully adds a historical layer to the song and soul. Issues of ethical significance are raised, without the storyline being consumed.

'The Sapphires' began life as a stage musical. Indigenous writer Tony Briggs then crafted the song and dance genre for the big screen. He drew on the lives of his mother and three aunts, their love of music which led to their work in Vietnam in the late 1960s. All four are alive today, working for health in their indigenous communities.

Kiwi audiences will see similarities with the art of Maori comedian, Billy T James. Both employ the genre of musical comedy. Both share a public story of beginnings in Vietnam and use humour to gently poke at issues ranging from racism to indigenous experience.

Christian audiences will see similarities with the Biblical story of Ruth. First, in the sentiments of

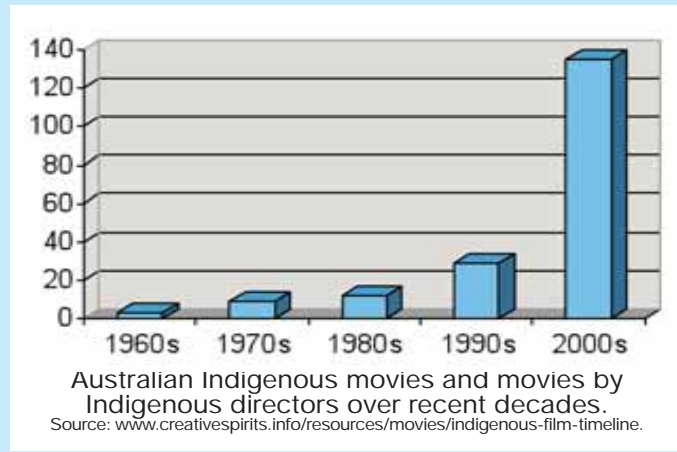
a handwritten marriage proposal and the display of a sacrificial love that is willing to embrace "your people as my people." Second, in the scene where a mother welcomes a long-lost daughter, stolen by officials enacting the White Australia policy of the 1950s.

These scenes give this movie a real power, human tragedy made more poignant by the backdrop, including the death of Martin Luther King.

The Sapphires offers a poignant reminder of the social, ethical and communal heart of God. The sacrificial actions of kinsman redeemers open the way for redemption in community.

This is seen most clearly in the Christian tradition through 'ubuntu' theology, the concept made famous by Desmond Tutu in which 'I am because we are'. This reminds us that in God, and thus among God's people, indeed 'without me, there's no you'.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is director of Missiology, Uniting College, Adelaide. He writes widely in areas of theology and popular culture, including regularly at [www.emergentkiwi.org.nz](http://www.emergentkiwi.org.nz).



# Job's eloquent sufferings

The Book of Job creatively addresses the problem of suffering. As a work of literature it is unparalleled in Scripture. To the modern reader the arguments presented by Job's friends are somewhat irrelevant, though they are beautifully phrased.

The story offers some inspirational ponderings. To complement October's OT lectionary readings I recommend you sample chapters 1-4, skim and dip a bit; then read chapters 38-42.

Bible Challenge

	Job (RSV)
A blameless and upright man, named	J ___ 1:1
Among his many blessings were seven	___ O ___ 1:2
He regularly made ___ offerings to God	B ___ 1:3
God and ___ made a wager over Job	S ___ 1:8
Job rent his ___ and shaved his head	___ E 1:20
One of Job's 3 friends was ___ the Shuhite	___ L ___ 2:11
Job's wife said to him, 'Curse ___ and die.'	___ O ___ 2:9
Job: 'I am not at ease nor am I ___.'	Q ___ 3:26
Eliphaz: 'Can a man be ___ before his maker?'	___ U ___ 4:17
Zophar: 'Can you find the ___ things of God?'	___ E ___ 11:7
Job: 'I have understanding...I am not ___ to you.'	___ N ___ 12:3
Job: '___ carefully to my words.'	___ T ___ 13:17
'Man comes forth like a flower and ___.'	___ S 14:2
'The mountain falls and ___ away.'	___ U ___ 14:18
Eliphaz: 'You choose the tongue of the ___.'	___ F ___ 15:5
...'Your own lips ___ against you.'	___ F ___ 15:6
Job: 'Let the Almighty ___ me.'	___ E ___ 31:35
Then the Lord answered Job out of the	___ R ___ 38: 1
God: 'Who stretched the ___ upon the earth?'	___ I ___ 38: 5
Job: 'Behold I am of small ___'	___ N ___ 40:4
The Lord ___ Job twice as much as before	G ___ 42:10
And, Job died, an old man full of	___ S 42:17

Answers: Job, sons, burnt, Satan, robe, Billed, God, quiet, pure, deep, inferior, listen, withers, crumble, crafty, testily, answer, whirlwind, line, account, gave, days. © RMS

## Alan and Emily dip below the line

From Page 12

They sought sponsors and donations for the challenge and are donating all of the money they raise to TEAR Fund's Share and Care project, which helps rescue girls from human trafficking in Nepal and supports mothers and children in India and Ethiopia.

Alan says while all of the charities that have partnered with Live Below the Line are extremely worthy, he and Emily have spent time working in the slums of India and have a special affiliation for the country and its people.

They have received a lot of interest in the challenge from their friends and family.

Christian World Service (CWS) and Oxfam are among the partners of Live Below the Line. Sponsorship and donations can be made through [www.livebelowtheline.com/nz](http://www.livebelowtheline.com/nz).

## Earthquakes ring wedding bells

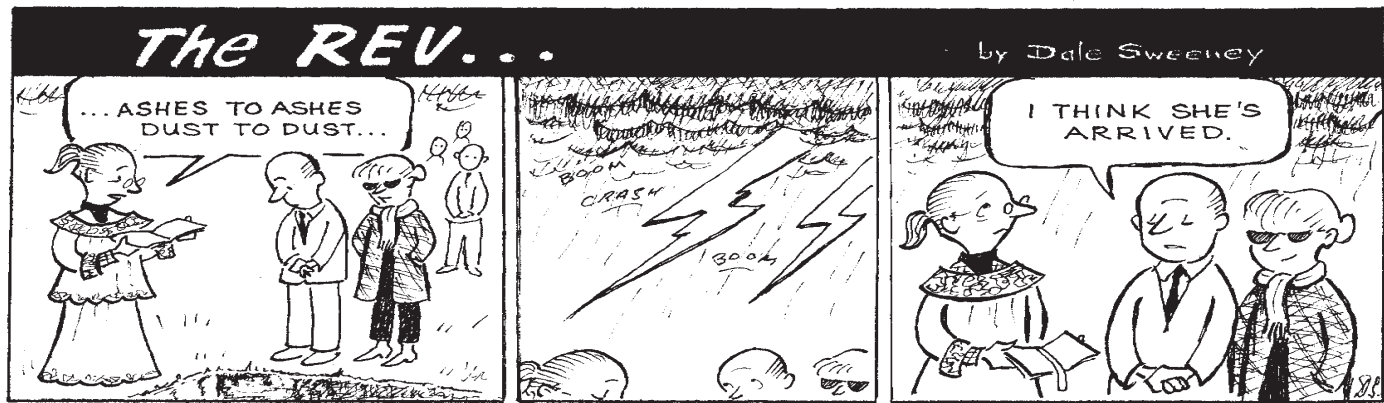


Geoff and Kathy Thorpe

That love knows no age limits was reconfirmed last month when Christchurch's Wainoni Methodist Church organist Geoff Thorpe (87) married parishioner Kathy Strettle (84).

The pair reside at the Condell Village retirement home and met as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes. Being from the UK Kathy was unaccustomed to the shakes and Geoff supported her during the traumatic aftermath.

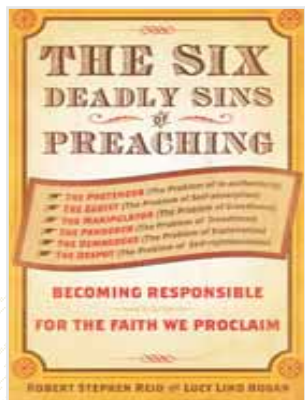
After they travelled together to visit family in the UK, Geoff proposed and they were married on September 22nd.



# The Six Deadly Sins of Preaching

By Robert Stephen Reid and Lucy Lind Hogan  
2012, Abingdon Press, 128 pages  
Reviewer: Peter Taylor

*As a presbyter I was looking forward to reading this book, seeking reassurance that my preaching was relatively sinless and the tools to spot the sinning signs of colleagues!*



I was disappointed by the first chapter; I almost succeeded in swallowing the kind of language which leads to verbal indigestion. For example "Where traditional ethics often focus on the anticipated end products of actions, this conception of ethics assumes that the issue of who is doing the preaching and the choices he or she is making is what matters formatively for the faith of the community and for that person's own faith formation." This is to say, what matters is not just the sermon but also the character of the preacher.

If language like this puts you off, just skip the first chapter. The rest of the book has its moments but is generally readable and enjoyable.

My main concern is that it was written for the USA context.

Evidently in American culture folk commonly leave one church to go to another because the latter gets better sermons.

In New Zealand we change churches because of strained relationships or worship styles - not mediocre sermons. Given this American context with its desperate need to retain congregations at all costs you can see why preachers might 'borrow' sermons or sermon illustrations from books or the Internet, pretending they are their own. Whilst I might occasionally use someone else's ideas (after all what else is '10 Minutes on a Tuesday' for?), largely the whole sermon is mine, including the gaffs and ad libs.

This said, the book offers insights into what should lie at the preacher's heart and the various irresponsible traps into which all preachers are liable to fall.

The Six Sins are Inauthenticity, Self-Absorption, Greediness,

Trendiness, Exploitation and Self-Righteousness. They are well explained with examples, some of them entertaining and insightful.

For me the same Six Sins are also found in church leaders; so the book is useful in looking at those with power in the church, local or national, and indeed politicians. For instance, it is easy to misuse power to persuade (bully?!), others inappropriately. Many church splits testify to this.

There is a chapter that sounds like an infomercial "Wait! Wait! There's More!" giving what the authors call missteps (less serious than sins). These are probably more like what we see in our context and therefore well worth reading.

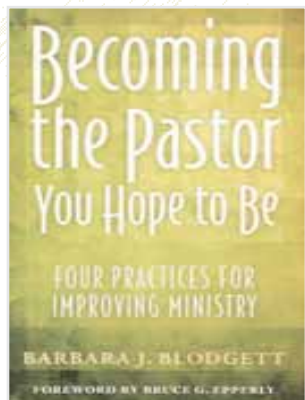
And there is a final chapter giving a code of ethics for preachers.

The book is aimed at preachers, ordained and lay, but even those in the pews could find in this book the tools to keep their preachers and leaders in order. Of course, my congregation in Invercargill need not bother, as I'm OK and my stewards are OK.... Aren't we, guys?

# Becoming the Pastor you Hope to Be - Four Practices for Improving Ministry

By Barbara Blodgett  
2011, Alban, 181 pages  
Reviewer: John Meredith

*This book discusses how ministers may contribute to their own development as producers of high quality work in church and society.*



The author draws on her own experience as parish minister, supervisor, teacher and researcher. She writes from the conviction that all ministers are called to be involved in a constant process of learning, growing and striving for excellence. She defines excellence as "doing simple things with care and conviction", and argues that the vitality of congregations depends on this.

The four practices Blodgett outlines are (1) feedback (2) mentoring (3) peer group learning, and (4) peer group practice.

Beginning with feedback Blodgett writes that, while we all like to think we have done well and welcome being told so, praise does not necessarily motivate us to do better. When couched in general terms praise gives no indication of the effect of a particular action.

While praise may be offered, we must seek feedback, usually by requesting comment from trusted individuals, or by seeking

more detail from people who offer unsolicited comment.

There is an important difference, for example, between being told, 'That was a great Bible study', and 'That was a great study because it helped us connect the story to our lives'. People may be trained to observe what they see and hear and this is the basis for helpful feedback. Negative feedback may also be helpful when it is more than unreflective criticism.

A mentor is a wise, trusted and experienced person who acts, in effect, as a coach, helping people develop into their role as competent practitioners. Mentoring may include advice, but will also challenge and confront. A good mentor will counsel and encourage but never control.

A peer group is one where ministers may be among those who share the same role and similar experiences. Here we can drop the façade of pastoral perfection that a congregation may expect. Blodgett says a peer group should be stimulating and

constructive, and not simply a platform for airing frustrations. An agreed understanding of confidentiality will make peer groups safe and productive.

In the final chapter, Blodgett focuses on formation for leadership in public ministry, i.e. ministry engaged in dealing with problems wider than a particular community of faith.

She suggests that to minister in Jesus' name consideration must be given to his roles of prophet, priest and king.

The prophetic role is one of speaking out and giving voice to vision. Priestly ministry is one of standing with people in need of support or advocacy. Jesus redefined kingship in terms of empowering the people he led. This involves building relationships and offering encouragement as communities deal with complex problems and local issues.

Blodgett believes that the practices she outlines can build a strong foundation for excellence in ministry. These are simple practices clearly explained. While written for those who fill a specific role, there could be value in using this book as a basis for discussion and reflection among all church leaders.

Review copy courtesy Epworth Books.

# Scrim - The Man with a Mike

By William Renwick  
2011, Victoria University Press, 308 pages  
Reviewer: Donald Phillipps

*The generation who knew Colin Graham Scrimgeour, or 'Scrim', as a national figure is dwindling. Therefore William Renwick's recently published biography is a more than valuable contribution to our national self-understanding.*



The trauma of the Depression years and the first Labour government's creation of our social welfare system have been stamped on our collective memory. They run the real danger of being idealized, to the point where we honour the myth rather than the reality.

It is very much to Mr Renwick's credit that he writes a balanced account of a man who was capable of surrounding himself with a sort of heroic aura, often enough at odds with the facts. Without being cynical he reminds the reader that what Scrim wrote about himself, particularly in his later years, was often contradictory and self-serving.

Nevertheless, we are given a life that we can admire, and whose importance is not to be denied despite its inconsistencies.

Scrim came from a poor farming background in the Wairoa district of Hawkes Bay. His identification with the poor was natural and life-long. Despite a limited education he had a natural facility with words and his ability to articulate the dreams of the poor gave him his authority when they needed someone to inspire them.

He became a Methodist Home Missionary almost in spite of himself. His friendship with Edwin Cox and then Arthur Seamer, two powerful leaders and intellectuals in 1920's Methodism, pushed

him in the direction of ministry.

It should be emphasised he was never a 'regular' Home Missionary. He always did things his way. At Putaruru, at Kaitangata, at Kawakawa in the Bay of Islands, he did what he wanted to do. He didn't preach sermons, he spoke of Jesus the Carpenter rather than Jesus the Christ.

It was Seamer who believed he had the potential to lead the Auckland Central Mission as the Depression started to bite. It was Seamer who, in effect protected Scrim from the doubters and the 'rule-keepers' within the Connexion. Mr Renwick doesn't mention him, but Tom Olds, was given the nominal leadership of the Mission in order to shield Scrim from the normal demands of the

Connexion.

It was from this base, with its first-hand contact with the growing numbers of poor people seeking assistance, that Scrim created his ministry. It was unique to him, and it emphasised his flair for getting to the places where the greatest need existed.

If he couldn't be there in person, he could speak to them over the new-fangled radio. The Friendly Road was the most widely-known radio programme in New Zealand by 1935.

Scrim not only gained a place in the hearts of the ordinary woman and man, he was recognised by the Labour Party as a key opinion-maker. Michael Savage, John Lee and Scrim became

good friends. Savage acknowledged the role Scrim played by appointing him the first director of commercial broadcasting in this country.

But when Scrim finished at the Mission, there was no Arthur Seamer to protect him. He was out in the dangerous world of party politics. He was reviled by the conservatives and most of the media, and mistrusted (for his seeming ambition) by a growing number of the Labour Party leadership.

He was doubtless feared too, because of his public popularity, and Scrim wasn't averse to taking advantage of this.

Much of Mr Renwick's book deals with Scrim's decline and fall - his failed attempt to get into Parliament, his dismissal from his position (unheard of within the Public Service up to that time), and his departure for Australia and a new career in radio and the new medium television. The story of his later life makes relatively sad reading. He was a man re-writing his past and yet a man ahead of his times, with a vision of what might be achieved through the public media.

When John Wesley died the most notable journal of his time described him as the best known gentleman in England after the king himself. Scrim's close friend, Ian Mackay, wrote, but did not publish, his own life story. In his notes he described Scrim as "the most influential man in the country" during the depression and early years of the Labour government.

That is sufficient in itself to justify William Renwick's well-considered contribution to this seminal period in New Zealand history.

<p><b>MARCUS J. BORG</b> <b>Evolution of the Word</b> Marcus Borg puts the New Testament books in the order they were written, to show their historical context and how the key ideas of Christianity took shape. Hbk. \$49.99*</p>	<p><b>PRAYERS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS</b> Handy prayers to use in public worship. Includes invocations, opening prayers, prayers of confession, and pastoral prayers. \$24.00*</p>	<p><b>Jesus Poster Sticker Book</b> Huge detachable poster map of Bible lands, plus reusable stickers. \$9.99*</p>	<p><b>Why Did Jesus, Moses, The Buddha &amp; Mohammed Cross the Road?</b> Brian McLaren explores how people of different religions can keep their own faiths and still respect others. \$29.99*</p> <p><b>Order now from</b> <b>Epworth BOOKS</b> <a href="http://www.epworthbooks.org.nz">www.epworthbooks.org.nz</a> sales@epworthbooks.org.nz PO Box 17255, Karori, Wellington 6147. 338 Karori Road, Karori, Wellington 6012. Toll free: 0800 755 355 Ph: 04 476 3330 *Plus p&amp;p: \$5.50 for 1 or 2 items, \$7.00 for 3 or more.</p>
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# Centenary of Methodist Union

From Page 1



Wesley Church, Wellington was where the Methodist Union documents were signed in 2013 and where the Conference will celebrate its centenary.

The Primitives ultimately had to wait until 1910 for the General Conference to agree to an autonomous New Zealand Conference. Two years later, in 1912, the Primitives voted by over 78 percent to adopt a Basis of Union with the Methodist Church.

At the same time Methodist quarterly meetings throughout NZ showed overwhelming support for union with the Primitives.

The result was that on Thursday,

February 6th, 1913, some 300 ordained ministers and lay people marched from the Wellington Town Hall to Wesley Church, Taranaki St, singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. They were of course not marching to 'war' but to peace and unity amongst the branches of the Methodist family. The formal signing of the deed of unity at Taranaki Street was witnessed by Governor General Lord Liverpool and Prime Minister William Massey.

It would be a mistake to leave the Methodist quest for unity there. In addition to our Wesleyan origins and our positive experience of union as Methodists, there is undoubtedly a third reason, the New Testament imperative "That they all may be one...that the world might believe" (John 17:21). All three factors have contributed to a continuing quest.

The latter was particularly highlighted in the 1960s and 1970s as a number of key Methodist leaders, such as Rev Ashleigh Petch and Rev Bill Morrison, strongly endorsed the cause of Church Union. These leaders were by no means alone. A grassroots referendum on Church Union held in 1972 amongst Methodists showed an amazing depth of support in the Church (86 percent in favour) for the creation of the then proposed United Church with Anglicans, Presbyterians, Churches of Christ and Congregationalist participation.

The union didn't happen but the Methodist response was indeed a testimony to the legacy of the Wesleys, to the positive experience of Methodist union, and to the power of the Gospel itself. The question for us now is will we honour our birthright, our history and the Gospel, and continue the quest for Christian unity?

## Hymn for the 100th Anniversary of Methodist Union

By Norman Brookes

*This hymn is written to go with the tune for Onward Christian Soldiers as that was the hymn sung during the Methodist march of unity and witness in Wellington in 1913. We have long since given up on the original words but the tune remains of value.*

Onward, Christians onward, till the task is done,  
When all barriers broken, we are truly one.  
One in Christ who leads us, saviour, guide and friend,  
Bring us into union, let divisions end.

Onward, Christians, onward, till the task is done,  
Till all barriers broken, we in Christ are one.

Onward Christians onward, learn from what is past,  
How the Wesley families became one at last.  
Leaving pride behind them, setting power aside,  
Partners in the Gospel, walking side by side.

Onward, Christians, onward, till the task is done,  
Till all barriers broken, we in Christ are one.

Onward Christians onward, yet there's work to do,  
Barriers still divide us, split God's Church in two.  
End these old divisions, let us live as one,  
Till in Christ united, see God's kingdom come.

Onward, Christians, onward, till the task is done,  
Till all barriers broken, we in Christ are one

Tune: St. Gertrude MHB 822. ©Norman E. Brookes

# Steps to full Methodist Union in New Zealand

METHODIST ARCHIVES

By Rev Gary Clover

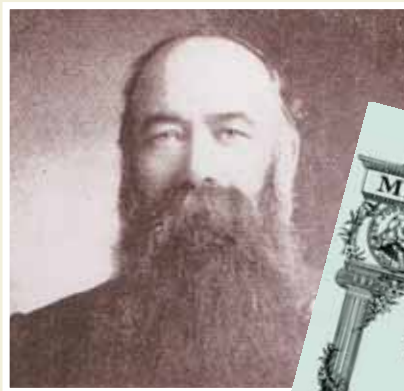
*The first Methodists in New Zealand were missionaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society founded in the UK in 1814. In New Zealand the Society's work began when Rev Samuel Leigh arrived in the Bay of Islands in 1822. In 1855 the New Zealand Wesleyan Mission came under the jurisdiction of the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Conference and became the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Church in New Zealand, serving mainly settler communities.*

In 1844 the Primitive Methodists set up a mission in New Zealand when Rev Robert Ward began holding services at New Plymouth in Taranaki amongst newly arrived English settlers. By the end of the 19th century the Primitive Methodists had grown to be the second largest Methodist denomination in New Zealand.

They were followed by two much smaller Methodist denominations, the United Free Methodist Churches which commenced operations at Rangiora in North Canterbury in 1860, and the Bible Christians in Christchurch in 1877.

In 1872 the New Zealand Wesleyans gained semi-autonomy from the Australasian Conference with authority to hold annual New Zealand conferences. The first was held in Christchurch in January-February 1872.

During the later 19th century, suggestions for Methodist union in New Zealand were raised within the wider context of moves towards evangelical Protestant union between the Congregational, Methodist and



Layperson and former president of the Primitive Methodists Charles Luke was elected vice president of the united Methodist Church.

Rev William Ready's Methodist Union ticket.

Presbyterian churches. This was part of a global trend in Methodism and other denominations. At the beginning of the 20th century there were a series of ecumenical conferences, and in the 1910 the World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh.

In earlier times there had also been some fraternal co-operation and social mixing, especially among the smaller Methodist denominations. Sharing in the campaigns for women's suffrage, temperance and prohibition, as well as New Zealand-wide evangelistic campaigns by overseas evangelists, created further

opportunities to develop trust and understanding between Methodist groups.

1896 saw the formal union of the Australasian Methodist (Wesleyan), United Free Methodist, and

Bible Christian churches. The Primitive Methodists held back from joining this union. Their principal difficulties were theological - they allowed stand-alone lay presidents of Conference and synods and held out for greater equality in general between clergy and laity.

The Wesleyans, in particular, were dominated almost exclusively by ordained clergy and did not have lay membership of Conference until 1872.

Primitive Methodists from an early time also allowed women to be members of quarterly meetings, and as members of Conference. Interestingly, these theological differences over stand-alone lay presidency of Conference and lay superintendency of synods are still debated in the New Zealand Methodist Conference today.

Church governance was the other major block to Primitive Methodists uniting with the Methodist church in 1896. Early on

New Zealand Primitive Methodists gained independence from the English Primitive Methodist Conference and voted to stay out of the 1896 union until the New Zealand Methodist church gained full independence from the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

This was not finally granted until 1912. With this barrier out of the way, on February 6, 1913 the two Churches merged their separate conferences at a formal ceremony in the Wellington Town Hall presided over by the New Zealand Governor-General and witnessed by the Mayor of Wellington.

This union was not achieved without major opposition from within the Primitive Methodist Church. Although the Wesleyans compromised to allow lay vice-presidents alongside ordained presidents of Conference, David Goldie, a prominent layman and lay president of the Primitive Methodist Conference, and father of well-known New Zealand portrait painter J.F. Goldie, was one who never reconciled to the union.

Nevertheless, within a year commentators were reporting the union a complete success, not the least because the new church saw a jump in attendance and membership as many nominal Methodists came out of the woodwork to participate in the new union.

The Centenary Conference of this 1913 union is to be held in Wellington in November this year.





## LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

## Tertiary education launchpad for exciting careers

By Joshua Robertson

*As we near the end of another year, many high school students are gearing up for final exams and, of course, contemplating options for the future. Hopefully many of you have already mapped out your future career paths but, life being the way it is, I have no doubt there will also be many who are still wondering 'where to from here?'*

*As part of a two-edition special feature, I spoke to a handful of young people from around our Methodist Connexion who have been in your shoes recently. Read on to hear their stories. May their tales and experiences serve as encouragement and inspiration for you, as you decide on which horizons to explore.*



**Grettel Williams (19)**  
Hastings Wesley Samoan  
Methodist Church

Growing up as a young Samoan girl in the Hawkes Bay, it became apparent to Grettel that there was a lack of Pacific people working in the health sector. This sowed the seed that would blossom into a strong desire to become a health professional.

Grettel is now close to completing her first year of a three-year Bachelor of Science degree in Anatomy at the University of Otago. Moving from the sunny Hawkes Bay to the chilly depths of Dunedin was a big move for Grettel, as was her first experience of living away from home and family.

However, she has managed to acclimatise and is enjoying life in the south.

"I'm really enjoying it in Dunedin. It's a safe and happy place to live in, especially being an environment filled mainly by students. This has helped me adapt to Otago life knowing there are so many others who are experiencing student-life for the first time also."

Grettel has made some friends in Otago and also found support via various student organisations such as Pacific Island Health Professional Students' Association (PIHPSA) and by meeting people at different churches she has attended while in Dunedin.

Following completion of her Bachelor of Science degree in Anatomy, Grettel has aspirations to studying post-graduate medicine to become a general practitioner.

She cannot stress enough how important it is to follow your aspirations.

"If you're passionate about something go for it! Set your goals and work hard to achieve it. Don't give up. The journey will be well worth it in the end. Just remember - I can do all things, through Christ who gives me strength, Phillipians 4:13."



**Morgan Allen (18)**  
Devonport Methodist  
Church

After leaving Takapuna Grammar school in Auckland's North Shore, Morgan wasn't completely sure of what he was going to do next. What he did know, however, was that he had a passion for sound and music, having played in bands since the age of 12.

Morgan had also done what a lot of musical Kiwi kids do - get together with mates for band practice in the good ol' garage! He had also worked as a volunteer in a recording studio. All these combined led him to making the decision to pursue formal training in the field of audio engineering.

Morgan is now studying towards a Diploma in Audio Engineering at the School for Audio Engineering (SAE) Institute in Parnell, Auckland. SAE is a world renowned institute which has schools set up around the globe.

Among other things, Morgan's course focuses on developing sound recording, editing and mixing skills using different media formats. It also teaches various aspects of audio work for sound recording studios, post-production studios and radio-television broadcasting stations. Following completion of his Diploma in Audio Engineering, Morgan may look at undertaking further study towards a bachelor degree.

"I'm really enjoying the course and gaining some great sound engineering experience which should put me in good stead for future employment opportunities in this industry. I would definitely encourage other young people to follow their dreams and pursue training in a career that you emotionally connect with!"



**Litea Aholelei (21), Pulela'a**  
New Lynn Tongan  
Methodist Church

Born and bred in West Auckland, Litea has recently completed a Diploma in Pacific Performing Arts from the Pacific Institute of Performing Arts (PIPA) in Auckland.

Growing up in a traditional Tongan family, and being the youngest daughter of a well-known 'punake' (tutor of Tongan arts), some may not have been surprised by Litea's chosen direction in life. It almost didn't happen, however.

Three years ago, unbeknown to Litea, a cousin actually enrolled her into a summer series of workshops run by PIPA. After attending the summer school workshops, Litea fell in love with the performing arts and decided to take up the fulltime two year diploma course rather than go to university as originally planned.

Litea was already an accomplished Tongan dancer, and she enrolled with the intention of majoring in dance. She soon discovered, however, that all students were exposed to dance, drama and singing and this has helped mould Litea into a well-balanced all round performer. Litea is now performing professionally in shows and also teaching performing arts at several primary/intermediate schools.

The youngest child of Mafila and Ovava Aholelei, Litea has also definitely inherited her father's passion for teaching others different aspects of Tongan performing arts. She has been involved for many years as a tutor of Tongan cultural groups at various secondary schools who have gone on to place well at the Auckland Secondary Schools Polyfest.

Litea plans to continue teaching performing arts, with a particular focus on reaching out to Tongan youth and using the valuable skills gained from her training to share her vast knowledge of Tongan dance, song, language and culture.



**Miriam Jane Hulston, (18)**  
Upper Riccarton Methodist  
Church

Miriam was born in Wellington and raised in Christchurch. She now finds herself back in the windy capital city studying towards a Bachelor of Design at Massey University (Wellington campus). She is in the first year of a four year degree course.

Miriam attended Burnside High School in Christchurch, where she discovered a love for art and design and in which she excels. Massey University's reputation for having an excellent School of Creative Arts made it an easy choice for Miriam to make the move north to undertake her studies.

Despite it being the first time for Miriam living away from parents (Graham and Judy) and her two brothers, she is still surrounded by family. "I have been lucky to have some of my aunts and uncles and cousins living here in Wellington. I miss my church family, but I love going back in the holidays" says Miriam.

"I have made some really nice friends here in Wellington and my flatmates are amazing. I would recommend Massey to others. It has a real community feeling to it. Everyone is really friendly and helpful."

In the future Miriam hopes to continue on to doing a Master's degree in design and one day start a company that specialises in design for publication. Miriam says "All I can really say to other young people, is do something you love. Uni is hard work but it is great to learn more about the field you are interested in. Don't just dismiss the idea of university because of the time and hard work it involves."



**So'otaga Misikei, (19)**  
New Plymouth Samoan  
Methodist Church

So'otaga is in his second year of a two-year Diploma in Creative Technologies course at the Western Institute of Technology, Taranaki. The course covers topics from graphic design to fine arts such as painting.

From a very young age, So'otaga had a passion for drawing and sketching. By the time he found himself in his final year at high school, his dream of becoming an artist was as strong as ever. He followed this dream by enrolling in his current course. So'otaga cites British street artist Banksy as one his major influences.

So'otaga has begun to put his new skills to use at his church by designing T-shirts for youth group uniforms and making signs for church events. He has also used his talent to help in the community by painting murals at a local rest home.

With his diploma course coming to an end, So'otaga already has an eye to his future. He has enrolled at the Wellington Institute of Technology (Weltec) for 2013. A year of study at Weltec, will see him attain a Bachelor of Visual Arts.

So'otaga's journey over the last two years hasn't been easy. He has juggled part-time work, as well as church and family commitments with his full time study. He pays tribute to the great support he receives from his parents, older sister, and, of course, our Heavenly Father for helping him overcome the obstacles he has faced.

So'otaga's word of advice to other youth: "Education should be a priority because it provides you with endless opportunities and options for a good career. Follow your dreams and make it a reality!"



## Meet the new Miss Samoa - raised in Papatoetoe!



Miss Samoa Janine Tuivaiti, at left and pictured with supporters Corinthian and Gloria at Auckland Airport.

On 7 September 2012, in Tuana'imato, Samoa, Janine Nicky Salu Tuivaiti was crowned Miss Samoa 2012-2013 by the outgoing Miss Samoa, Olevia Ioane.

Along the way to winning the title, Janine also won the Miss Photogenic and Best Talent awards for her beautiful rendition of the Samoan national anthem.

Sponsored by Thomsen's Bridal Couture and funded by the Samoan government, Janine is a 20 year old New Zealand-born Samoan who is studying law at the University of Auckland. Formerly a student of Baradene College of the Sacred Heart, she hails from Faleasiu-uta and Levi Falelatai villages in Samoa.

Janine is an active member of Pameko Junior Youth and tutors the Samoan congregation choir at Wesley Papatoetoe Methodist Church, which is led by her uncle, Rev Paulo Ieli.

Janine's supportive youth and church family have followed and encouraged

Janine on her journey.

The youth members mainly kept each other updated with what was posted on the Miss Samoa Facebook page. Pameko Youth also prepared a short video message online wishing her all the best for the competition. Most importantly our church prepared with supporting her by keeping her within our prayers within our services, like one big happy family.

A showcase event was held at Papatoetoe Wesley Methodist on August 24th, which included Janine's families, friends, and church peers. They all showed their great love and support as she prepared to depart for Samoa. This was a night filled with lots of laughter, performances and blessings for Janine.

Janine's church family are understandably excited, and eager to catch up with her. "We are now preparing a homecoming event for our newly crowned Miss Samoa at Papatoetoe Wesley Methodist. We plan on surprising her with

the presence of all her supporters, who have supported her throughout her journey in the competition as she will return with the Miss Samoa 2012 title. However, she will be doing a lot of travelling in her new role as Miss Samoa and we continue to wish her all the best with her endeavours."

Janine will travel to Pago Pago, American Samoa in December as Miss Samoa 2012-2013, to compete in the Miss South Pacific pageant. Her family and friends we wish her all the best in her reign and her journey as Miss Samoa - O ou mama na Janine, la fa'amanuia tele lava le Atua ia te oe!

Janine says the preparation for the event has been physically and emotionally draining, as it is such a large scale event. It was also her first time in Samoa. But having her mother and aunty chaperone her she has been a great morale booster. "Everything is about family, at home or at church. It's all one."

Janine's aunt Paia Ieli describes her as

quiet but strong, a fantastic all-rounder who can sing and dance, and even do Palangi rock and roll. "We are all so proud of our little girl."

At the age of 7 Janine co-hosted a children's programme on Samoan radio, and later fronted a rest home request session for Pacific Radio, as well as other public events. She says she had never dreamed of entering the Miss Samoa competition - "the opportunity just arose, and things happen for a reason."

Funded largely by the government, the Miss Samoa competition has been running for over 20 years. Janine stresses that it's not just about looks. "It's about the whole person. Miss Samoa has to portray what it is to be 'tamaiti', a role model for young unmarried women. She must command respect but should also know her place." Janine says it's about modelling traditional spiritual and family values. "Miss Samoa must also be immersed in Samoan history and culture, and speak fluent English as well as Samoan because she will be an ambassador for her country."

In her new role Janine will travel overseas to help boost Samoa's economy by promoting sustainable tourism in Samoa, as well as gaining exposure to other cultures. "With God on my side, anything is possible."

Janine has a year's leave of absence from her law degree but hopes eventually to work for young families, and later, become a judge. She has always followed her mother's example in encouraging young women into education, as the way to a satisfying life. "Women can do anything," she says.

Contributors to this article are Silauli'i Rachel Siaea, Lynley Tai, and Hilaire Campbell

## Nai Lalakai

NAI LALAKAI MAI NA WASEWASE KO VITI KEI ROTUMA E NIUSILADI

### Na Lotu Wesele E Viti Kei Rotuma - Na tabaki bobu ni Lotu

Na i Tukutuku mai vua na Peresitadi ni Lotu Wesele e Niusiladi

E na vula ko Julai ni yabaki oqo, e ra a gole yani ena dua na i lakolako ni veisiko kei na veitokoni vakalotu na Peresitadi ni Lotu Wesele e Niusiladi ko Nai Talatala John Roberts, ki na Valenivolavola Liu ni Lotu Wesele e Viti kei Rotuma.

Na i lakolako oqo e muria na kena sa laurai ni sa yaco tiko na veitabakisobu ki na matalotu Wesele e Viti mai vua na matanitu veiliutaki vakamataivalu e Viti ena gauna oqo.

E vakaraitaka na Peresitadi ni sotava tiko na lotu mai Viti ena gauna oqo e dua na gauna dredre sara.

Ni oti na vuaviri ni Tiseba 2006, e sa sotava tiko mai kina na Lotu Wesele na i tovo ni veivakatogani me yacova tiko mai na gauna oqo.

E dina ga ni ra sa saga tiko na veiliutaki ena Lotu Wesele mera veivosaki ka veivakameavutaki kei na matanitu veiliutaki, e sa tosoya tiko ga na i tovo ni veivakatogani ki na lotu.

E sa kau oti ki na mataveilewai e ruasagavulu na veibeitaki vakalawa ka ra beitaki tiko kina ko ira na i liuliu ni Lotu Wesele e Viti ka sa vakayalia kina na Lotu e dua nai wase ni i lavo levu.

E gadreva na matanitu veiliutaki me solia taumada e dua nai vola tara ni se bera ni vakayacori na bose vakayabaki ni Lotu.

E dina ga ni a sa solia na matanitu na

veivakadonui me vakayacori na Koniferedi e na yabaki 2011, ia e a qai tauri lesu tale na veivakadonui oqo ni sa vo ga e vica na siga me vakayacori kina na bose vakayabaki ni Lotu Wesele e Viti.

E vakaraitaka na matanitu veiliutaki ni sega ni vinakata me rau liutaka na bose oqo ko i rau na Qase Levu kei na Vunivola Levu ni lotu.

E vakaraitaka tale ga na matanitu veiliutaki ni na vakadonuya ga me liutaka na bosa na Qase Levu kevaka e bosa na nodra digitaki na vakaillesilesi vou ni lotu.

Ni bera ni laveti na i vakaro ni matanitu veiliutaki ka vakatokai tiko na Public Emergency Regulations (PER) ni yabaki 2012, a sa vakatabui tu na Lotu Wesele e Viti me ra vakayaco bosa, ka ra vakatabui talega ko ira nai liuliu ni Lotu me ra gole yani ki vanua tani me ra laki tiko ena vei bosa tale e so.

E na gauna oqo, e veivuke na Tabacakacaka ni Ovisa na kena yadravi na veika maroroi eso e Viti ena ruku ni lawa ka vakatokai na Public Order Amendment Decree 2012 (POAD), ka mai vukea kina na kena mai tomani eso na veiqaravi me vaka na vei na sotasota vakalotu eso.

Ni ra sota na Komiti-ni-leqa ni Lotu Wesele, e kena dodonu me tiko kina na mata mai na matanitu veiliutaki vakamataivalu, ia ka me ra sota ga e na Centenary Church e Suva mai na walu na

mataka kina ono na kena yakavi. Nai tuvatuva ni bosa me kua ni okati kina e dua na ka vaka politiki, ka me vakau talega ki vei iratou na matanitu veiliutaki nai tukutuku ni bosa.

E sa solia na i vola tara na matanitu veiliutaki kina Lotu Wesele me qarava na Koniferedi ni yabaki oqo 2012. Kevaka sa vakamuri vakavinaka na veika era vinakata na Tabacakacaka ni Ovisa ka volai tu e nai vola tara, e sa na qai soli na veivakadonui ni sota ka sa nai matai talega ni ni Koniferedi ni Lotu Wesele e Viti ni oti vinaka e va na yabaki.

Nai vola tara ni sota oqo e sa vakadavori vata talega mai kei na veika me vakamuri me vaka na : kena vakayacori na Koniferedi ena loma ga ni tolu na siga (ka sega ni rua na macawa me vaka na kenai vakarau e liu); Na bosa me na vakayacori ena loma ni bai ni gauna mai na walu e na mataka kina walu ena kena yakavi; na bosa kece me na vakayacori ena loma ni bai ni Lotu ena Centenary Church e Suva; ka me veivosaki taki ga na veika vakalotu ; me kua sara ni veivosakitaki kina na veika vaka politiki; ka me kua talega ni kerei me toso tale na gauna ni bosa; ka me kua talega na veisivisi sere (me vaka a dau vakayacori tiko mai liu).

Na Lotu Wesele taudua ga e vakayacori tiko kina na veivakatogani oqo baleta ga ni ra vakaraitaka vakadodonu na cala

ni veiliutaki vakamataivalu, ka ra sa mai sotava talega kina na lewe ni Lotu na veika dredre ena gauna oqo.

Na veivakatogai ni matanitu veiliutaki kina Lotu Wesele e basuka sara tu ga na lawa ni nodra dodonu na veimata lotu, ka volai tu ena i vola ni veidinadinati ka vakatokai na "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" ni yabaki 1948. Na veika e yaco tiko oqo kina Lotu e tarova sara tu ga na nodra dodonu na lewe ni Lotu Wesele mai Viti. Na Kalou vakataki koya ka vakatakilai ena i Vola Tabu, e Kalou yalo dodonu. Na veika e tawa dodonu, me vaka na veika e yaco tiko oqo kina Lotu Wesele mai Viti e sa dodonu me laurai sara vakavinaka.

E ra a vakaraitaka talega na Peresitadi ni Lotu Wesele e Niusiladi ni sa kena gauna me dinata na matanitu veiliutaki na veivosaki e so, sega walega kina Lotu Wesele, vei ira talega na veimata Lotu tale e so e Viti, e na vakanuinui me biu laivi na veivakatulewa veve ka veisosomitaki kei na vakatulewa dodonu ka vakarautaka talega na sala vinaka e so me yaco kina na veiliutaki dodonu ena veidigidigi ni yabaki 2014.

Talatala John Roberts  
Peresitadi, Lotu Wesele E Niusiladi  
18 July 2012

# O kooko 'a Siopau: Ke hiki ki he Hisitolia

## Fakahisitolia Misinale 'a e Siasi Metotisi Tonga 'Onehunga

'Oku 'ikai ko ha me'a fo'ou 'a e misinale ia, pe ko e katoanga tukumo'ui 'a e ngaahi Siasi, he ko e fatongia tukufakaholo ia 'a e Siasi talu 'a e tu'uta 'a e Lotu Fakakalisitiane ki si'otau ki'i fonua.

Ka na'e ki'i kehe 'a e misinale ia mo e tukumo'ui ko 'eni 'a e Siasi Tonga Metotisi Onehunga he na'e malanga mo tatakai 'a e ouau fakalaumalie 'o e 'aho ia 'e he Faifekau Pule 'a e SUTT 'o Nu'usila ni, Faifekau Lopini Filise, pea mo e kainga

lotu mo e Kau Hiva 'Eiki mei he Siasi Uesiliana 'o Tonga 'o Tuingapapai 'o Uesile 'o Mangere. Ko e toki hoko eni ha me'a pehe pea ko e hokohoko atu pe eni 'a e ngaue fakataha mo toe vaofi ange 'a e ongo Siasi SUTT mo e Siasi Metotisi Tonga 'i Nu'u Sila ni.

Fakafeta'i ki he ngaue mai 'a e fu'u ivi 'o e Laumalie Ma'oni'oni 'o mana ki he ngaahi loto'i Tonga kotoa pea malava ai 'a e me'a na'e ta'e malava, nonga mo e loto

na'e ta'e nonga, fiefia 'a e loto na'e mamahi, pea hakailangitau 'a e ongo Siasi. Ke 'o e 'Otua pe 'a e Langilangi mo e Kololia.

Ko e toki katoanga fakalaumalie mo'oni pea na'e liu 'a e tokotaha kotoa kuo nekeneka hono loto mo e laumalie, pea pehe ki he sino - he ne toatu 'a e ngaahi pola mo e ngaahi "laulau", kae mahulu atu foki mo e ngaahi 'umu mo e ngaahi ha'unga - pea tali 'aki 'e he Siasi 'Onehunga 'a e Siasi SUTT 'a e puaka toho 'e 5 mo e

pulu kakato 'e 2. Ko e ongo Siasi foki eni na'a na fakafongia 'i 'a Nu'u Sila ni, 'aki 'enau hiva fakatahataha, ki he Konifelenisi hono 89 'a e Siasi Uesiliana Tau'ataina 'o Tonga 'i Nuku'alofa 'i he mahina Sune 2012.

Fakafeta'i 'e Ngaue. 'Oku 'i ai 'a e tu'amelie lelei ki he kaha'u.



Faifekau Malanga, Faifekau Lopini Filise, Faifekau Pule SUTT 'o Nu'u Sila



Ongo sekelitai: Tali-ki-Vaha Latu'ila mo Kalolo Akoteu hono fakama'opo'opo 'a e pa'anga misinale 'a e ngaahi Kalasi 'Aho.



Kau fefine tu'u noa'ia pe kae sai pe he na'e lahlahi 'enau peleti.

## Ha'elea 'e Tupou VI mo Kuini Nanasipau'u 'a Lotofale'ia

Na'e toe fakahisitolia foki ki he kakai Tonga 'o Aotearoa ko e fuofua ha'ele mai 'a e Tama Tu'i 'o e 'Otu Tonga, Tupou VI, mo e ta'ahine Kuini Nanasipau'u hili 'a e 'ena hoko ki he Taloni 'o Tonga. Ko e ha'ele ma'i 'a 'ena Afifio ki he fakaafe 'a e Tu'i Maui, King Tuheitia, ki he katoanga 'a e kau Maui na'e fai ki Ngaruwahia pea na'a na ma'u faingamalie ai kena tootoofa

'i he 'Api ko 'Atalanga 'i ha ngaahi 'aho. Pea ko e toki me'a fakafiefia ia ki he ngaahi Siasi, 'a e mokoi 'a e Tama Tu'i ke lava ange 'a e ngaahi Siasi 'o fai 'a e Lotu family mo 'ena afifio 'i he efiafi kotoa pe kae 'oua ke toki liuaki 'a e ha'ele ki Tonga.

Tatau mo e ha 'a e fiefia 'a e kakai Tonga 'i Aotealofa 'i he ha'ele mai 'a e Tama Tu'i, Tupou VI, uma'a 'a e ta'ahine Kuini

Nanasipau'u 'o ma'u lotu 'i he malanga fakatahataha 'a e Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa 'i he Siasi Lotofale'ia 'i he Sapate 26 'Aokosi.2012. Na'e tatakai pe 'a e malanga 'e he Faifekau Sea 'o e VTOA, Faifekau Setaita Kinahoi Veikune pea na'e kau mai ki ai mo e Faifekau Lopini Filise, Faifekau Pule 'o e SUTT Nu'u Sila.

Na'e kau mai foki mo e ngaahi siasi

kehekehe pe 'i he ma'unga kelesi mahu'inga ni pea na'e hiva foki ai 'a e ngaahi kau hiva 'e 4 mei Lotofale'ia, Moia Mei He 'Eiki, Dominion mo Otahuhu, Ko e fiefia ka ko ha fiefia 'a e loto'i Tonga kotoa pe 'i he mamata atu ki he'ena afifio 'oku na lakoifie lelei pe.



Ko 'ene Afio Tupou VI mo e Kuini Nanasipau'u mo e kau muimui he'ena ha'ele ki he Falelotu Lotofale'ia.



Faifekau Sea, Faifekau Setaita Kinahoi Veikune lolotong fakahoko 'a e malanga.



Ko e Faifekau Pule 'o e SUTT, Faifekau Lopini Filise mo e kau faifekau.

# Kei Lautohi Faka-Sapate pe 'a e matatolu All Black



Ko Salesi mo e Setuata Siasi Napier-Hastings, Fatongia 'Ofa, hili 'a e lotu fakafeta'i 'o e 'aho.

**Kataki pe he fakahoha'a kae atu mu'a 'a e ki'i ongoongo ko eni mei he Siasi Metotisi Napier-Hastings.**

Ko e ki'i ongoongo ko ha kii talavou he lautohi fakasapate 'a e siasi kuo fakateunga ia 'e he 'Eiki 'aki ha taleniti he

mala'e 'o e 'akapulu. Na'e fakahoko hano katoanga'i e hokosia 'e Benjamin Va'inga Charles Tameifuna hono ta'u 21 'i he 'aho Tokonaki ko hono 1 'o Sepitema 2012. Na'e fakafiefia mo fakamafana e katoanga ni, he na'e lava mai e famili 'o e tamasi'i

'aho mei he tapa kehekehe 'o Nu'usila ni 'o a'u ki he faka-Tonga pea na'e fai pe hono lotu'i 'o e 'aho mahu'inga ni 'e he Setuata 'o e Siasi, Fatongia 'Ofa.

Ko e tumutumu 'o e 'akapulu kuo a'u ki ai 'a e talavou ni, na'a ne kau he 'uluaki sikuati 'a e All Blacks na'e ui 'i he ta'u ni, 2012. Pehe 'oku ikai sola e Tonga manako 'akapulu, ki he'ene va'inga mei he timi 'a e Chief ne nau ikuna 'a e fe'auhi Super 15 'o e ta'u ni. Ko e tu'unga 'oku va'inga ai 'a Salesi ko e matatolu, pea ko e tu'unga eni ne 'osi 'i ai pe taha e famili ko eni ne vainga ai mei Tonga. Ko e tokotaha ko ia ko Naka, 'oku nofo 'Aokalani ka na'a ne va'inga mei he timi 'a e Polisi a Tonga, pea na'a ne fakafongia 'i 'a Tonga.

Ko Salesi Tameifuna na'e fa'ele'i ia he 'aho 30 Akosi, 1999. Na'e kau mo 'ene ongo matu'a ki he siasi Metotisi Tonga 'i Mangere oku 'iloa ko Lotofale'ia. Ko e fa'e 'a Salesi ko 'Ana Vaoahi mei Pea, Ha'ateiho, Tofoa, Ofu mo Faleloa, pea ko ene tamai ko Pita Tameifuna mei Fua'amotu mo Fahefa.

Na'a ne kamata lautohi 'i he Sutton Park Primary School. Na'e hiki leva e ki'i famili ko eni ki he vahenga Hawkes Bay,

pea ako ai 'a Salesi 'i he Kimi Ora Primary School 2003-2004. Na'a ne hoko atu mei ai ki he Hastings Boys High School 2005-2009. Na'a ne manako ki he va'inga 'akapulu mei he'ene kei ta'u si'i. Na'e 'asi pe 'ene va'inga mei he'ene kei ako, he na'a ne kau he fakafongia 'i e vahenga Hawkes Bay he Under 16, 'o a'u ki he Under 20. Na'a ne hiki mei ai 'o tau fakavahe ma'a e Hawkes Bay Magpies he 2010, pea na'a nau ikuna ai e ITM Cup 'i he 2011. Ne 'ikai ngata pe ai. ka ne toe kau foki 'a Salesi hono fakafongia 'i 'a Nu'usila ni he fe'auhi ki he ipu 'a Mamani he tau fakaako, 'a ia na'a nau ikuna ia 'i he 2011. 'Oku 'ikai puli 'i he famili ko eni 'a e fu'u koloa kuo fakafongia 'i 'aki e talavou ni, he 'oku 'ikai ko ha tangi ke vikia e fakamatata ni ka ko e fiefia; ke fakafeta'ia e 'Ofa 'a e 'Otua kuo fai 'o tofanga ai e talavou ni pehe ki hono famili, Siasi, mo e Tonga kotoa 'oku manako ki he mamata 'akapulu.

Ko e ta'ena ko Salesi he to'ohema pea ko e Setuata Napier-Hastings he toomata'u ko Fatogia 'Ofa. Tu'a 'Ofa Atu.

**Auka Vaea  
Faiongoongo mei he Bay.**

## F A K A L O T O F A L E ' I A

Fakatapu ki he Tolu Taha'i 'Otua, Tamai, 'Alo mo e Laumalie Ma'oni'oni. Fakatulou 'atu kia Hou'eiki uma'a 'a ha'a tauhi fonua, Faifekau Sea, kau Faifekau, ngaahi tu'unga kotoa 'oku fa'a Fakatapua, pea pehe ki he si'i ngaahi famili kotoa pe 'o e Vahefonua, kae 'ata mu'a kiate au ke fakahoko atu 'etau Fakalotofale'ia 'o e mahina ko 'Okatopa. Ko e tuhulu pe 'o e kaveinga 'o 'etau fononga he mahina ko 'Okatopa 'oku pehe hono fakalea. **"Ko Sisu 'a e Fakamo'ui ki he Siasi"**. Ko hono potu folofola, Matiu: 16: 18-19. Pea ko e potu folofola ke fai ai hotau Fakalotofale'ia 'o e mahina fo'ou ni 'oku ha ia 'i he Kosipeli 'a Sione 14:16-17. Ko hono kaveinga 'oku pehe ni. **"Ko koe 'a e Taukapo ia taupotu 'i he mahu'inga."** Talateu 'I he ngaahi fakamaau'anga 'oku mahino mo faingofua ange ai 'a e fakataataa totonu pe fatongia totonu pe ko hai ia 'a e tokotaha **Taukapo**. 'I he fakamaau'anga ko e tokotaha ma'u mafai lahi ko e Fakamaau; ko ia 'oku nofo 'o fakama'opo'opo fakalao 'a e ngaahi me'a 'o e fakamaau'anga, 'a e tau'aki fakafekiki fakalao 'a e talatalaaki mo e Taukapo. **Ko e tokotaha talatalaaki**, ko hono fatongia ko 'ene feinga ke fakamo'oni'i 'aki 'ene 'omai 'ene kau fakamo'oni ke fakamo'oni'i ke tui ta'e toe veiveiua 'a e fakamaau ko e faka'iloa ko ia na'ane fai e hia kuo tukuaki'i ai ia. **Ko e Taukapo**, ko hono fatongia, ko 'ene 'i he tafa'aki 'o e faka'iloa 'o taukave'i mo fakaha ki he fakamaau 'oku 'i ai 'a e totonu 'a e faka'iloa. Mole ke mama'o ha feinga 'a e Taukapo ke liliu 'a e loi ke tu'unga'a pe 'ene mo'oni. Ka ko e fatongia 'o e Taukapo ko 'ene tala ki he fakamaau 'oku 'i ai 'a e totonu 'a e tokotaha faka'iloa. Ko e fakakaukau pehee na'e sio ki ai 'a e 'apositolo ko Sione. 'E 'omi 'e he Tamai 'i hono tala ki ai 'e he 'Alo ha Taukapo, ke nofo mo e tangata, ke feinga ke 'a'au ki tu'a 'a e mo'oni 'a e tangata, pe 'ikai haa atu ko e angahala, kae haa atu ko e tonuhia. Ko ia 'a e fakakaukau mo e tuhulu 'o e mahina ni. **"Ko Sisu 'a e Fakamo'ui ki he Siasi."** Ke 'omi 'e he Tamai ha Taukapo ke nofo mo e ngaahi famili 'o e Vahefonua. Ke fai ai 'a e lotu, mo e fakafeangai ma'oni'oni, 'i he ngaahi potu siasi 'oku tau 'i ai, he kuo hoko

mai 'a e Taukapo ko e fakamo'ui ma'a kitautolu kotoa mo e siasi. **1) Ko hai 'a e Taukapo?** 'Oku fakamahino 'e he punake ko koe 'a e Taukapo ia. 'Oku fakamahino 'e he lesoni ko e Taukapo ko e Laumalie 'oku ma'a fakamo'omo'oni. 'I he paaki motu'a 'oku fakalea 'e he tokotaha liliu, ko e Fakafiemalie, 'e hoko mai 'a e Fakafiemalie, ko e Laumalie 'o e Mo'oni. **Ko hai 'a e laumalie?** Ko e laumalie, 'i he'ene faka'uhinga 'i he motua'i lea Faka-Hepelu 'a e 'oku 'uhinga fakatonga ko e laumalie, **Ko e fu'u ivi**, 'oku 'ikai ko ha ivi fakatevolo, pe ivi faka'atomi, pe ko ha toe fa'ahinga ivi fakamamani. Ko e laumalie ko e ivi mo'ui (ko ia 'a e 'uhinga 'oku tau pehee ai kia hou'eiki, malo e laumalie) ko e malo e mo'ui. Ko ia ko e Laumalie 'o e Mo'oni ko hono fakalea ke mahino ange, **ko e ivi mo'ui ma'a mo'oni**. Ko ia 'a e Taukapo na'e tala 'e he 'Alo ki he Tamai ke 'ohifo ke nofo mo e tangata. Ko e Taukapo ko e ivi mo'ui ma'a mo'oni. 'Oku lea ki ai 'a e punake, **'E Laumalie hifo mai ki ho'omau fale ni, ha'ele mo ho mafimafi 'a e ivi 'o ho kelesi**. Ko e taha ia he ivi mo'ui 'o e Taukapo pe Laumalie. Ko 'ene 'omi kelesi, ke kelesi'ia e mo'ui 'a e tangata. Ko e kelesi ko e 'ofa. Ka fonu kelesi 'a e mo'ui ko e koto 'ofa mo'oni. Ka 'oku toki hoko mai 'a e kelesi 'oka hoko mai 'a e Taukapo mo hono fu'u ivi. Taha 'a e ivi mo'ui 'o e Taukapo ko e fakama'a. **Hoko mai ko e ahi fakama'a ki homau lotu ni, 'o keina kotoa 'a e ngaoha'a 'o 'emau ngaahi kovi**. Oku 'ikai pe mo ha toe me'a fufulu lotu ma'a ange ka ko e Laumalie 'o e Mo'oni. Ko 'ene ma'a he 'oku 'ikai toe 'i ai ha me'i uli he Laumalie. 'Oku tala ki he lotu 'a e me'a mo'oni kotoa pe, pea ke ngaue he me'a mo'oni kotoa pe. Taha he ivi mo'ui 'oku 'i he Taukapo ko e fakamo'ui pea fakataui'i 'e mo'ui. **"To hifo hange ha hahau ki homau 'atamai 'o ngaohi ke kelekele taau 'a e funga maka ni."** Pea 'oku fakamo'oni ki ai 'a e veesi huluhulu 'o e kaveinga 'o e mahina ko 'Okatopa, Matiu 16:18; **"Ko 'eni 'eku lea foki kiate koe, ko Pita (pea maka) koe, pea ko e funga maka ni teu langa ai hoku siasi, pea 'e 'ikai malohi ki ai 'a e ngaahi matapa 'o Hetesi"**. Kapau ko ia ko e kaveinga folau e ketau fononga mo ia, 'oku ou fokotu'u

atu si'oku famili pea mo e lotofale 'o e Vahefonua, ke tau tali 'a e Taukapo ke ne hoko mai, ko e hahau ki hotau ngaahi lotu 'oku fefeka, ke ne hanga o fakamolou, pea ne holoki 'a e ngaahi 'aa vahevahe 'i he Faifekau mo e Setuata, pea pehee foki ki he Faifekau mo e Faifekau, pea 'i he 'ene pehee, 'e uestia leva 'a hotau kaunga fononga pea mo e kaveinga faka'ofa'ofa mo fisifisi mu'a 'o e mahina fo'ou ni (Ko Sisu 'ae fakamo'ui ki he siasi). Taha e ngaue 'a e hahau ko 'ene fakaviviku 'a e potu 'oku pakuka. 'Ilonga ha feitu'u 'oku pakuka, pea ka a'u ki ai ha hahau pea 'oku ma'ui'ui pe 'a e potu koia. 'Oku pehe pe 'ae ngaue 'ae Taukapo he ngaahi lotu 'oku ta'e taau. 'Oku ne hoko hange ha hahau 'o fakaviviku mo fakama'ui'ui 'a e potu ko ia pea hoko 'a e koto mate ko e koto mo'ui, 'a e koto musa'a ko e koto faka'ofa'ofa: ko ia 'a e fa'ahinga fakakaukau 'a e Taukapo - ko 'ene hoko mai mo e ivi, 'o fakamo'ui mo fakafiemalie'i 'a e tangata.

**2.1) Ko e mahu'inga 'o e Taukapo.** Ko koe 'a e Taukapo ia, taupotu 'i he mahu'inga. 'I he mala'e 'o e Taukapo ko e lea mahino ange ko e loea. Pea 'oku 'iloa 'a e kau mataotao 'i mamani he mala'e 'o e lao 'i he me'a 'e ua.i) 'Iloa he'enua poto fakalao, kuo nau ako pea kuo fuhi 'e lou'ulu ke fakamo'oni 'enua poto he lao.ii) 'Iloa 'a e ni'ihii 'ikai ngata he'enua poto, ka 'oku nau faiva lea 'i hono fakahoko 'o e lao. Ko hono maumau ne'ongo 'enua poto fakalao pea ngutu poto hono malanga'i ka 'oku tefito pe 'a e hao 'a e faka'iloa 'i he faka'uhinga 'e he Fakamaau. Ko hono mahu'inga 'o e Taukapo ko 'eni, he na'e 'omai hangatonu mei 'Itaniti pea mo e fakamafai'i 'e he ma'u mafai 'o e 'univeesi. Pea ka Taukapo'i he'e Laumalie 'o e Mo'oni ha hia 'o hao ko 'ene hao ia, he 'oku ne poto he me'a kotoa, pea toe ngutu malie 'i ha toe taha, pea ko ia pe 'oku 'i ai 'e mafai.

**Mo'oni pe 'ae punake:**

**Si'i pani fakalangi e he lolo fakalaumalie.**

**Lofitu pe ho'o fu'u mafai 'i hono ivi fakalangi.**

**2.2) Me'a 'oku mahu'inga ai 'a e Taukapo ni he 'oku sio ki he 'ofa 'ata'ataa pe 'o 'ikai ki he totongi. Kuo 'i ai si'i kau faka'iloa tokolahi 'i**

mamani kuo nau iku 'o halaiia, pea tautea ko e 'ikai lava tala 'enua mo'oni, ko e 'ikai lava ke totongi 'enua loea. Ko ia ai 'oku kau 'a e **Legal Aid** ko e pa'anga mole lahi 'a e pule'anga ni. Ko e mahino ki he pule'anga 'oku mahu'inga ke fakae'a 'a e mo'oni 'a e kau masiva. **Ko e Taukapo mei 'itaniti** 'oku mahu'inga taha pe ke fai ha 'ofa, 'oku 'ikai sio 'a e Taukapo ki ha totongi he na'e 'osi fai hotau huhu'i 'i Kalevale. Ko e me'a 'oku sio ki ai 'a e Taukapo mei 'Itaniti ko e 'ofa mo e fakamolemole.

**2.3) Taha 'a e mahu'inga 'o e Taukapo.**

Ko 'ene 'i he tangata ma'u ai pe 'o 'ikai toe mavahe; ko ia 'ene palomesi - **teu iate kimoutolu ma'u aipe 'o ta'engata**. 'ikai toe hela holo hono kumi, ko e Taukapo ko 'eni 'oku tuha mo e faka'iloa kotoa, masiva pe ma'u koloa, Hou'eiki pea tu'a, 'io, ha taha pe 'oku 'ataa. Pea tala ki he Tonga mo e tokelau ko e popoaki 'ofa 'eni 'a e Tamai, teu foaki kiate kimoutolu ha Taukapo 'e tokotaha koe'uhi kene iate kimoutolu 'o ta'engata.

Ko e kaveinga folau e 'o e mahina ko 'Okatopa: **Ko Sisu 'a e fakamo'ui ki he Siasi**. Ko hotau pole 'i he mahina ko 'Okatopa si'i fanga tokoua mo e tuafafine, Faifekau, kau Setuata, pea pehe ki he ngaahi famili kotoa 'o e Vahefonua, ko 'eku kole ke tau fe'ofa'aki pe tau fefakamolemole'aki pea tau hufia 'a e ngaahi potu siasi 'oku tau fakakaunga tamaki ai pea mo hono kakai ke tau fakafeangai ma'oni'oni ki he 'Ene ngaue kuo ui kitautolu ki ai. Pea tau tali 'a e Taukapo mei 'Itaniti he ko ia 'a e fakamo'ui 'o e siasi pea kau fakataha ai pea mo kitautolu si'i ngaahi famili 'o e Vahefonua.

'Oku 'oatu 'eku talamonu ki he kau taki 'apitanga, **Tapu ma'u kava malohi**, pea pehe foki ki he **'Uike lotu 'o e melino**, ke hoko mai 'a e Taukapo ko e fakamo'ui ma'a e siasi pea tau ma'u Laumalie Ma'oni'oni ai 'i he Huafa 'o e Tamai mo e 'Alo mo e Laumalie Ma'oni'oni.

"E laumalie mafimafi, ha'u 'o 'a'ahi ho kakai, Ko Koe pe na'e tupu ai 'a homau ngaahi 'atamai, Ha'u mo ha ivi mei he langi 'o tufa ke mau fonu ai".

**'Ofa lahi 'atu moe lotu hufia. Inoke Pule Mosa'ati Siulangapo (Oamaru Union Parish)**