


Touchstone

Published monthly by The Methodist Church of New Zealand • Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa


Nau mai rā, Talofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Bula Vinaka and Welcome!

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Wesley Day Celebrations



In God we Trust?



Kidz Korna



Little Church with a Big Mission



St John's Community Church, Great Barrier Island.

St John's Community Church has arguably undergone more change than most church buildings in Aotearoa. Built in 1903, the quaint wooden building was gifted by the Anglican Parish of Awanui and relocated in 1986 from its original site at Awanui, Northland to Great Barrier Island, 100 kilometres north east of Auckland. Work is now underway to extend and renovate the church annex so as to provide a place for worship, gathering and activity for all who live on or visit the island. Project leader Teresa Manion-Wood talks about progress unfolding in God's own timeframe.

As the only church on the island, St John's has fulfilled a role as a true community church, operating under a joint use agreement between Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist churches. Preachers, presbyters and priests from each denomination operate on a shared schedule, flying in to lead their assigned Sunday service. Over recent years, many church communities - on the island and off - have rallied around to support the ambitious extension and renovation project.

Teresa has been a member of the St John's Community Church since she moved to the Island, colloquially known as The Barrier, in 1993. Home to approximately 1,200 permanent residents, the Island population swells in the summer months, attracting tens of thousands of visitors drawn to the remote location, secluded beaches and picturesque scenery.



Offloading the Church from a barge on Medlands Beach, 1986.

In addition to gathering for worship, the church community runs a successful opportunity shop, a food bank and an accommodation venue known as Medland Haven. Hiring out the large, modern lodge next to the church provides income for outreach programmes and operating expenses. Over the past two years, in addition to the obvious health risks posed by Covid, the pandemic has had major repercussions for island residents. Tourism has effectively been stymied, severely impacting business operators and depriving many of their livelihoods. The Church renovation project has also been affected.

A Space for Community to Congregate

It was prior to the Covid crisis that the parish council identified a need for additional space to provide a fit-for-purpose, comfortable area for community and congregational groups to gather. Unlike a city or rural community on the mainland, Great Barrier Island lacks venues suitable for public gatherings. The church offered a possible venue to cater for pastoral, educational, social and outreach activities and meetings. Teresa says, "There are many people living on the Island in straitened circumstances and lots of the homes are small and bach-like. People do not always choose to meet in homes. It will be good to have a place for all to gather and meet."

To maximize the potential for the church to provide a suitable community meeting space, changes were needed. Following

a process of prayer and consultation, the decision was made to extend and upgrade the existing church. The scope of works included a 2.4 metre extension to the northern end of the annex, new window and door joinery and glazing, an expansive wooden deck area and an upgrade to the kitchen and interior furnishings.

When plans were approved by St John's Council in February 2020, Teresa was invited to lead the Annex Alterations project sub-committee tasked with overseeing the renovation project. Within the month, the team had an ambitious plan for raising funds to cover the anticipated \$125,000 budget.

A Spirit of Giving

A generous \$50,000 donation, made some years earlier by benevolent parishioner Ray Simpkin, provided the initial seeding money, however the committee required a substantial top-up to meet the financial target. An appeal was made to each of the partner churches for support in prayer and/or finance. The Methodist Church of New Zealand, along with the other denominational parent bodies, responded generously to the request.

"They all recognised the value of the active outreach programme we were proposing. They trusted us and gave generously," Teresa says. The local congregation contributed to the fundraising efforts with creative endeavours that included selling Devonshire teas and barbecued sausages at market days.

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Little Church with a Big Mission

From Page 1

Local builder, Andy Kilgallon, was contracted early to tackle the construction. The six building companies on the island are all in big demand, therefore securing a contractor and booking in a window for construction was a high priority. Teresa and her committee worked with a local architect, Cuan Forsyth-King to finalise plans and manage compliance and consent details.

Teresa agrees that the geographical distance from the Auckland Council compliance officers did compound some of the project management difficulties, favouring email or phone communications over face-to-face meetings, thereby saving time and money. Getting from The Barrier to Auckland city is time-consuming by ferry and costly by air. A car and passenger ferry makes the 5-hour crossing every Friday and Sunday. Daily flights to and from Auckland take just 40 minutes and cost approximately \$320 return.

However, Covid was ultimately responsible for the delays and cost increases that have hampered the



St John's Community Church and Medland Haven.

renovation. "Covid-19 lockdown restrictions caused delays in every area. Time and cost over-runs, supply chain disruptions, the shortage of materials like GIB board, increased material costs and lack of bookings for Medland Haven have impacted the project and our church income streams," Teresa says.

Timeline Disrupted by Covid

Building started in late 2021 and Andy Kilgallon and his team have skillfully managed setbacks and delays caused by

lockdowns and the constraints of Covid in the interim. The project that was originally estimated to take six months has now been in the pipeline for two years, with no immediate end in sight. The original budget has been spent and although the building is water-proof and lockable, much of the interior work is unfinished.

A generous grant recently received from the Auckland community board has covered some of the shortfall. Teresa has compartmentalised the work outstanding

- plastering, plumbing and gas, electrical works, painting and flooring - into segments that will be completed as money allows. She estimates by the time the entire project is complete it will have cost almost twice the original estimate of \$125,000. Teresa and her team are optimistic that extra funds will be found.

In November 2011, at a joint service to celebrate 25 years of interdenominational worship at the church, Methodist presbyter Rev Peter Stead said, "Here the Gospel has faithfully been proclaimed and Jesus Christ - God's living word - joyfully encountered." More than a decade on, that positive and faith-filled attitude influences and inspires those involved in the project.

"The Methodist Church and our other partner churches were very generous almost two years ago and we thought we were well on track. Everyone has shown great patience and trust in the Lord and we rejoice that work has started. However, God has His own timeline and has always come to our rescue so we stay positive," Teresa says.

The Vocation of an Artist

Recently David Bell and Terry Wall visited Jay Venables, long-time member of St Paul's Methodist Church, Remuera and widow of Mark who died in 2003. The purpose of the visit was to gain an insight into the life of Jay's late husband, a respected graphic art teacher, printer and artist. David and Terry report on the highly anticipated and immensely rewarding visit.

Jay welcomes us warmly and talks about helping to organise the centenary of the St Paul's Church building, planned for November 2022. On the walls, numerous works by Mark include oils and many watercolours, mostly of New Zealand scenes. Some of the paintings date from the year when Mark had a sabbatical and travelled to Europe. Jay offers us gifts of books that Mark had written, set in type by hand, illustrated, printed and bound himself. Their daughter Rachel drops in during our visit. "I helped with the binding of some of those volumes," she says.

Reading the autobiographical writing, we discover that Mark had a formation in Christian faith growing up in Napier and in other places. Both his father and grandfather were printers and Mark became familiar with the craft of printing, typography and presses. His father moved the family around regional centres printing daily newspapers. For a time, Mark's father ran *The Tuakau Advocate* having bought it from Sir Edmund Hillary's father, who had become a beekeeper.

Mark was active in bible class leadership and became aware of the dispute about pacifism as war

approached. He felt the power of the arguments and yet had 'an urge to serve'. Influenced by prominent Methodist leaders including the Rev Dr JJ Lewis, he finally decided this 'awkward question' by opting to serve in the medical corps. In his book *My Quiet War*, he described his experience of the Pacific as 'a touch of heaven'.

In another book Mark writes about his experience joining the worship of Solomon Islanders. He comments, "I guess I was proud to be a Wesleyan: it was the first time I had experienced our Wesleyan mission stations in action. I was also to do a water colour of the native preacher's wife and her baby. Rachel Nivi Piani made a good change from the military." Upon discharge, Mark opted to enrol at the Canterbury College School of Art.

In Christchurch he attended Durham Street Methodist Church, leading junior bible class. He attended Naylor Hillary's leaders' meetings on Friday evenings and found that, "Naylor, an ardent leader under Dr Ray Dudley, knew how to bring out the best in people." Leading bible class helped Mark to develop a teaching style when he became graphics art teacher at Seddon Memorial Technical College for 30 years.

His books, works of art in their own right, include amusing anecdotes and observations about family and friends, as well as indications of his spirituality. Mark records that during a painting trip, "On one night I was awakened by a most spectacular storm with lightning and thunder at their best - something I always enjoyed - as a touch of the divine." Mark was a committed Methodist. On visiting a friend who was unwell he reports, "It was one of those times when I considered prayer was needed ..."

As a craft bookbinder and letterpress printer, Mark made a unique contribution to publishing within Methodism. It was a labour of love. Among other works, there is the early life story of the Rev James Wesley Parker, *It Happened in Eketahuna, Four Years in the Life of a Boy*. Wes Parker (1907-2003) was one of the remarkable ministers of the 20th century, but putting together the story of his young years was a work completed very close to the end of his long life. Mark helped him to achieve it: a high mountain to climb - text and typesetting, binding and publishing - and both men well beyond their prime. Both the autobiography and how it came to be published are worlds vanished yet the *spiritus mundi* very close in what has been achieved here.

Mark was a competent artist who was grateful for the gift he had received. He pondered his vocation: "The artist is an unusual being - caught under the spell of something that is quite out of this world - a peaceful surrender to his craft, which often means incredible subservience or dedication. Like a violinist lost in the glory of music: or a composer lost in a passage of a new theme, altogether self-hypnotic."

Before leaving, we visited the garage to view a printing press and type. We marvelled at the fine work Mark

produced on such ancient equipment. Jay opened up for us the life of a Methodist for whom the creative arts of painting and printing were a way of expressing his response to the mystery of life. We treasure his work and legacy. Writing of the vocation of the artist he commented: "Their reward can be great - whether it is financial or self-satisfaction: a heavenly matter concerning the soul."



Chartres Cathedral, France, by Mark Venables.



Flight into Egypt, a linocut by Mark Venables.



Waitakere Parish Celebrates Wesley Day

The five congregations of Waitakere Parish came together recently to celebrate Wesley Day. More than 200 people attended the event, ensuring the hymns were sung with good Methodist fervour. Each congregation was given responsibility for different parts of the service. Sue McKinnon reports on the event.



Sunday School children entertaining the congregation in song.

Rev Norman Brookes provided the children and young people's talk, and the reflection. His talk focussed on the busy Leigh household. Samuel and Susannah had 19 children (although not all survived) and raised them without any of the benefits of modern timesaving conveniences. Susannah still found a way to take time out to spend time with God in quietness and prayer.

The future of our parish was demonstrated with 30 of the Ekalesia Sunday School providing a musical interlude of songs and hymns they had learnt during the year.

Later, Rev John Wesley (aka Rev Norman Brookes) arrived to address the gathering. He reflected on the disaster

his time in Georgia had been and like Jacob, how he had wrestled with God. After Aldersgate he wrestled less with his state of being and more about the state of the Church. At that time many who attended church did it out of duty or because they believed that doing all the right things made them Christians. Wesley proclaimed that one had to have personally experienced God's love to become a true Christian.

John Wesley outlined the five hallmarks of Methodists for the congregation:

1. People who knew the love of God shed abroad and who had experienced God's forgiveness.

2. People with a knowledge of the Bible who read and re-read it but didn't take verses out of context. An instruction to be wary of any preacher who considered their own views important. To have a love of the Bible and be wise in how you understand and interpret it.

3. To have a love of all people, different races and creeds, including our enemies.

4. To be ecumenical in spirit but to love and pray for all fellow Christians, without letting disagreements become a barrier to co-operation.

5. The world is our parish, not our parish

is our world. The expectation that Methodists would engage with the real world and challenge injustice.

Calm, ordered and well organised, John Wesley challenged the parish to consider whether we follow his five hallmarks of Methodism over the coming months and what the parish might need to change in order to live up to being a Methodist.

As we celebrate 200 years of Methodist presence in New Zealand it is fitting to consider whether we are "kindled with a living faith or are we dead set on having a form of religion without power, unless we hold fast with the spirit and discipline with which we first set out"?

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Future of Touchstone Publishing Board Welcomes Feedback

In 1789, Benjamin Franklin immortalised the phrase "... in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes". I think if he was alive today, he may have added 'change' to the list of certainties facing us.



Ady Shannon.

Publishing Board met recently to determine options for the future of *Touchstone*. Rising production and distribution costs mean it is no longer sustainable to print and post papers to parishes and individuals, free-of-charge.

Over recent months we have encouraged parishes to reduce the number of *Touchstone* copies they receive, and to direct their readers towards the online options available. Despite the reduction in the monthly print run, printing and distribution costs cannot be covered by reserves indefinitely.

It is proposed that from July 2023, parishes will be charged \$1.50 per printed copy of *Touchstone*.

We invite parishes and individuals to respond to an online survey seeking feedback on five options proposed:

1. Discontinue publication of *Touchstone*
2. Offer *Touchstone* online only - no printed copies
3. Reduce number of issues to 6 per annum
4. Status quo - 11 issues per annum @ \$1.50 per copy for printed papers
5. Hybrid of 5 electronic and 6 printed issues (\$1.50 per printed copy)

A link to the survey can be found on our website: www.methodist.org.nz/whakapapa/news/touchstone/

We welcome responses by the end of this month. The Publishing Board will base their decision on the survey results and announce a decision by the end of August 2022.

Honours for Our People

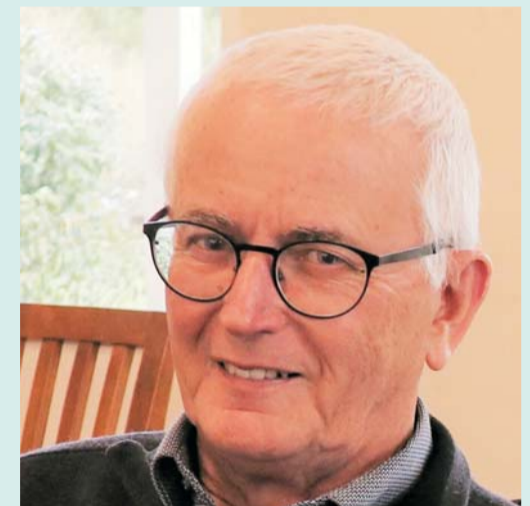
The Queen's Birthday Honours List saw two members of the Connexion recognised for their outstanding works for community and Church.



Rev Hiueni Nuku, Parish Superintendent for Lower Hutt Tongan Parish (Ututa'u) and Tawa Union Church since 2009, received a Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for services to Tongan and Pacific communities.

Rev Nuku has been Chair of the Wellington Tonga Leaders' Council since 2015 and was Treasurer from 2012. The Council has been the driving force behind the revitalisation of the Tongan language in Wellington. He has long been involved in health, housing and employment projects with the Tongan community in the Wellington region as well as youth education initiatives and Tongan Youth Awards across academia, sports and leadership.

Rev Nuku has strong connections to the Pacific community nationwide through his involvement across many organisations and boards, including ministerial appointments, the Methodist New Zealand Council of Conference, Wesley Wellington Mission and Tu Ora Compass Health.



David Ayers, Rangiora parish council chair and steward, was made a Member of the NZ Order of Merit (MNZM) in recognition of his service to local government and the community, including more than 40 years commitment to his community and local government in the wider Canterbury region.

During a long association with the Methodist Church of New Zealand, David has contributed his leadership and management skills to his local parish and to national boards including the Methodist Connexional Property Committee and the Board of Administration.

David's long career in local government included 21 years as a councillor. He was Chair of the Rangiora Ward Advisory Board for six years, and Mayor of the Waimakariri District Council from 2010 to 2019. During this time he led the region's recovery operations and planning following the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes.



President Rev Andrew Doubleday

On the Cusp . . .

Those who know me are aware that I'm addicted to American politics. I follow it more closely than I follow what's happening in our own country. I find it hard to drag my eyes away - we are potentially watching the end of an empire - the dying days of Pax Americana. And it is being destroyed from within. I've been keeping an eye on the January 6 hearings being run by the Democrat led House of Representatives.

On January 6, 2021 there was a violent riot at the time and place where the 2020 presidential election results were to be confirmed. The worst that we thought we knew about former President Trump and the lengths he would go to hold on to power, is being confirmed. On that day the future of America's democracy rested on the shoulders of one man, Vice President Pence. Those hunting him down came within 40 feet (12 metres) of catching him.

Why does this matter? We are just coming out the other side of a world-changing event - the Covid-19 pandemic. Whether we realise it or not, the world has forever changed. In my view no less significant is what is happening within the USA. This is also potentially world-changing. The USA, with all its self-serving faults, has yet been the primary bulwark against totalitarianism and the guarantor of world peace since the end of WW2. We now see the rise of fascism, in the guise of Christian Nationalism, where a narcissistic bully, championing the causes of people he personally despises, uses them for personal power. The most dangerous bit is that he does it by continually repeating lies, convincing his followers that what is false is true, and what is true is false.

The long-term consequence is that faith in the democratic institutions is irreparably damaged. Elections are no longer trusted as valid. If the result is not the one desired, it's because it has been rigged. Evidence to the contrary is irrelevant. The future for the American experiment looks bleak.

The difficulty is how does one pull back from the precipice? The advent of social

media, a ready tool for conspiracy theories and disinformation, and how we are all so connected into it, makes the task appear close to impossible.

And it's not just the USA. I've just heard that the French elections have seen huge gains for the polarities - both the 'Left' and 'Ultra-Right' extremes in French politics have ramped up their representation significantly, leaving Macron's centrist party well short of a ruling majority. It's also here in Aotearoa. The same divisive polarising forces are at work. One needs simply to follow Facebook threads on pages of 'friends' to see the effects. And it's dividing families. There is no longer any shared understanding of what's true, or even how we discern truth. It comes down to the way in which the social media algorithms drive us to our echo chambers where we hear the voices we agree with of people singing from our song sheets. Whether we like it or not, we're all caught up in it. We're all saying the same thing; "If only they would step out of darkness into the light, then they



Andrew Doubleday.

would see the truth."

Unfortunately it's the churches, both in the USA and here, where this is most evident. We no longer recognise those we might once (albeit reluctantly) have regarded as our errant brothers and sisters. They're now demonised.

Let's not kid ourselves. It is going to get a lot worse before it gets better.

Where does this leave us, as the Methodist Church in Aotearoa New Zealand? These divisions exist within us as well. While they may not be so obvious or pronounced, they're present.

The mind of Christ would surely encourage us to treat one another with dignity and respect, with unconditional love. With, as I've opined before, a generous assumption that they are doing the best they can. And with a large dollop of curiosity and a willingness to listen. The fact that this is easier said than done indicates that I continue to be part of the problem. A deeper work of grace needs to happen within my own heart. I may not be alone in this.

MISSION RESOURCING

Contextualising Resources

Rev Siosifa Pole, Director Mission Resourcing

Theologians and Biblical scholars claim that reader's context is vital in the task of interpretation. (J. S. Croatto, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 3; F. S. Fiorenza "Theory and Practice: Theological Education as Reconstruction, Hermeneutics, And Practical Task" in *Theological Education*, 83-86; S. A. Havea, "Christianity in the Pacific Context", in *South Pacific Theology*, 11). I believe homilists would have the same response when it comes to the preacher's task of conveying a message to their congregations in a local church. The local context is crucial in the application. If the message has no connection with the congregation it is neither meaningful nor likely to have any influence at all.

When I was still in Tonga, preachers who preached about the lost sheep in Luke 15 seemed to portray that they knew the context of the text. The way they interpreted that text prompted the congregation to think that they had experienced shepherding in a country that has no shepherds or sheep

wandering about, like in the wilderness of Palestine. It definitely requires a special skill and expertise to interpret the text in a way that relates to the context of the audience. This also applies to the task of creating resources for church communities. The role of Mission Resourcing as stated in the *Law Book* is to resource Synods, parishes, and congregations for **contemporary** mission and ministry. What does that mean to us as a Connexional church with our bi-cultural structure? How can we apply this notion of 'contemporary' in the Tauwiwi part of our church with its diversity?

The issue of diversity is not new to our church and applies to society at large. We are different culturally, theologically, geographically, ethnically, psychologically and spiritually. This is the reality of our contemporary context. However, our differences sometimes become a barrier rather than a bridge that can connect and enrich us. The questions that I'm wrestling with are, How can we embrace our diversity? And, Have we got the passion to work together in creating resources in the midst of our differences?

We might have different answers to these questions but one of the answers I would expect is that each one of us has unique gifts. Our church has been enriched by the diverse gifts of our people in the past and surely at present and it will be in the future. These gifted people have become valuable resources in the life of our church. They come from unique backgrounds and contexts, which are reflected in the resources that they have produced. I have attended training sessions in some of our synods and I observe the diversity of resources that have been developed by our people. These resources are produced for the particular needs of the local parishes of these synods. However, I believe these resources can be reshaped and utilized in other parts of our church.

I am mindful of the Presidential theme, "What is in your hand?" which in my view is appropriate in addressing the issue of resourcing our people. It is a question that relates to considering what we have already. If we can explore around the wider connexion we can identify and locate people who already have the

resources to assist local parishes and congregations in their ministries. These resourceful people are familiar with the needs of their local communities and capable of creating resources that are relevant for them.

I was fortunate to attend the Auckland Synod School of Theology thought-provoking and inspiring event, 'Making Theology'. Participants were encouraged to find ways of creating theology pertinent to their own contexts. Facilitators David Bell and Terry Wall, encouraged everyone to share their own story by presenting an item or artefact as a way of making theology their own. I believe that in order for our church to create resources that cater for the needs of parishes and congregations, we must consider their contexts and needs as paramount. It would certainly benefit our church if the resourceful people around the Connexion share resources from their own contexts for the purpose of equipping our people to be confident in their ministry.



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New Editor for *Word & Worship*

To the Editor

The Methodist Church has acknowledged the shared service that John and Jillian Meredith have given to the editorship of *Word & Worship*, the quarterly journal of the New Zealand Lay Preachers

supporting the organisation. This will increase the number of writers on theological topics and worship resources. New names for reviewers would be welcomed.

Second, the editorial policy of retaining the English language for all contributions should be continued. While opportunity has been

given for second language articles to be inserted when the journal is mailed, this has not been acted upon.

The continuation of the journal, perhaps under a wider editorial group, is vital.

Word & Worship is the only journal in Aotearoa New Zealand to support the work of lay preachers, as well as offer stimulating reading for all church people who think about their faith; though I should also acknowledge the splendid work done by the Catholic journal, *Tui Motu InterIslands*.

Now that *W&W* has reached its lively teen age, with 15 years under John and Jill's tutelage, let's find new parents to guide it in its mid-life years!

John Thornley

Wesley Broadway, Palmerston North



Association (NZLPA).

Finding a new editor after the death of John will be a challenge to/for the National Executive.

I have two points: first, that the membership of NZLPA reflect its ecumenical makeup. It would be good to see a much wider group of churches

St Paul's Celebrate 100 years of Ministry

St Paul's Methodist Church, Remuera, is preparing to celebrate 100 years of ministry in Remuera, Auckland on 26 and 27 November, 2022. Former members and friends are encouraged to note this date and further details of celebrations will be advised nearer the time. A celebratory booklet is in progress

including a section for reminiscences and anecdotes. Contributions are invited by 31 July.

The weekend will be a time for remembering and celebrating the past and looking forward to the future.

Jay Venables, Auckland

Touchstone welcomes letters from all readers. Letters should be a maximum of 500 words and include the full name and postal address of the writer.

Contributions can be emailed to adys@methodist.org.nz or posted to:

The Editor Touchstone,

PO Box 931, Christchurch 8140.



HONEST TO GOD

Losing Faith

Ian Harris

What happens when people abandon the Christianity of their forebears in droves? If you want the answer, look around you. In western societies over the past century there are those who have turned to other ancient faiths, others to newly-minted faiths, most to no faith at all.



Ian Harris.

There are also those who have put in the hard yards trying to rethink the faith that has shaped the West, attuning it to modern understandings of the world and humanity's place within it. The churches generate such people, then often disown them. Fortunately, they keep bobbing up and asking awkward questions.

Broadly, however, several clear alternatives to Christianity have appeared. At one end of that spectrum sit those who have found a substitute for Christian faith either by embracing another world religion, or by immersing themselves in one of the many varieties of 'New Age' spirituality.

At the other end are those concerned only with things they can touch and see. They usually end up in atheism, whose devotees are certain there is no God - the way they conceive of God, they are probably correct - or in scientism, the belief that science alone can provide truth about the world and reality. The latter have challenged, rightly in my view, the supernatural worldview which is the setting for traditional Christian faith. They see no point in trying to reshape for a post-supernatural era the rituals of spiritual experience which grow out of that worldview: rather they would like to strip them out of our evolving cultural life.

Meanwhile, somewhere in the middle of the spectrum are the agnostics, who hold that nothing can be finally known about God, so why bother? They have no faith in anything in any traditional sense, and by and large don't miss it. This group represents a strikingly modern development. English religious scholar, Karen Armstrong, notes that in former days when religious ideas lost their validity, they usually faded away painlessly. Therefore, "If the human idea of God no longer works for us in the empirical age, it will be discarded." In the past, however, she says people would usually create or adopt new symbols and faiths to cultivate their sense of wonder at life and its significance. Letting that

faculty wither has its consequences. Armstrong says: "The aimlessness, alienation, anomie (breakdown of social and moral standards) and violence that characterise so much of modern life seem to indicate that now that

they are not deliberately creating a faith in 'God' or anything else, many people are falling into despair."

Some are vaguely aware they have lost something valuable, even though they find the church's rituals unhelpful. London Sunday Times columnist, Minette Marrin, who holds no religious allegiance, experienced this two-way pull during a carol service one Christmas. She describes "a curious kind of pain in trying to make sense of one of the most inspiring parts of our inheritance," which yet seemed to her more meaningless than ever. "But," she adds, "with the loss of specifically religious conviction we have also lost so much of the wider conviction that matters in a society, including a proper respect for our own culture as a whole, for our traditions in general. At the same time, by some strange perversity, we respect people who do respect their own traditions."

For example, High Wycombe public library refused to display a church poster advertising Christmas carol services in case it should offend non-Christians - yet happily held a party to celebrate the Muslim festival of Id-ul-Fitr. "What's striking is not the silliness or the injustice," Marrin says, "it is the cultural cowardice and loss of self-respect that has allowed it."

The phenomenon, also evident in New Zealand, results from a loss of religious faith, which then silently corrodes faith in the core values and traditions that have shaped our culture. Just as a faith-full outlook on life colours everything it focuses on, so a faith-less outlook undermines those values and traditions, and so contributes to moral and spiritual muddle. Australian columnist, Angela Shanahan, draws a similar conclusion: "We have confused the worthy liberal ideal of tolerance with adopting an aggressively secular libertarianism that has demanded that we ditch the Judaeo-Christian basis of our laws, ethics and education, leaving us not simply pluralistic but rootless and religiously illiterate."

Every day politicians, teachers, lawyers, bureaucrats, media people, economists, parents either add their two penn'orth to that saga of spiritual dereliction or look for ways to counter it. Either way, every contribution counts.



Te Kāhui Whetu

Preface: Keita Hotere

The national Matariki celebration signals a significant shift in the way we identify with tangata whenua in Aotearoa, recognising Matauranga Māori culture and identity as offering a valued unique perspective in this part of the world. In her reflection on Te Kāhui whetu (The constellation), Marama Hotere from Taitokerau Rohe captures the hope invested in following different seasonal traditions and how the recognition of the new Te Kāhui o Matariki Public Holiday Act 2022 impacts upon her life.

The Matariki celebration is old knowledge, reintroduced and reharnessed to help shape our understandings of living in Aotearoa today. Dawn vigils were held throughout the country and were marked by the sharing of rich kōrero, karakia, karanga, waiata and kai. Festivals gathered people together to stargaze, share memory and aspirations for a future together as a distinct nation of different peoples with varied traditions.

Mānawatia a Matariki: Marama Hotere

At our recent Taitokerau Rohe karakia in Kaikohe I was reminded that we have entered the phase of the star Puanga along with the Christian season of Pentecost. Puanga the bright star of Rigel in the Orion constellation signals the coming of Matariki Pleiades. Puanga for those of us from Hokianga heralds the Māori New Year. A time to wānanga, to deliberate and reflect upon the nature of our relationships in community. A time to deepen those relationships and connections with the land, the sea and each other. On Friday 24 June we as a nation

will have celebrated our first ever national Matariki public holiday.

We ended our Rohe karakia with a rendition of the benediction, all members in full chorus. To me, the benediction symbolises the final blessing, an act motivating us to move into the world with a renewed sense of purpose. In recent weeks I have heard eloquent Matariki Te Reo Māori prayers sharing that same sense of purpose. These blessings recall the lore of our ancestors who celebrated the appearance of these stars every year. Our ancestors tracked the movements of the stars across the night sky and this along with other signs of nature helped to regulate community life. The signs indicated the appropriate times for various food production activities and leisure periods.

'Mānawatia a Matariki' (Celebrate Matariki) is a form of greeting that is used at this time of year, I hope that everyone has used that phrase and indeed celebrated Matariki. What were the Matariki events that took place in your local community? What events might you, your parish, congregation, or Rohe be able to support next year?

In our lectionary Matariki is recorded as an event, however there is no biblical reading assigned to this day. Engaging in theological reflection as a collective activity helps to lift these matters out of the pages of the Bible and into our Aotearoa context making them live. What more could you do to celebrate this time of



Image supplied by Marama Hotere shows a depiction of the kumara vine done by a student in her class.

the year and throughout the season of Pentecost?

In the week leading up to Matariki Day my Kura Kaupapa Māori school here in Whangarei held two days of parent interviews. It is important to reflect with parents the Te Reo Māori journey their child has undertaken and celebrate their children's successes and places where improvements can be made. We are thrilled that we are the first Northland school to attend the screening of The Lion King in Te Reo Māori.

As we go about our daily activities this Pentecost, I encourage you to take the time to refresh yourself in community activities and shed those things that don't serve your higher purpose. Most importantly in this Puanga and Matariki season look after your personal health and wellbeing.

God of creation and of transitions,

May our lives be filled with thanksgiving and praise for your countless blessings during this time of Matariki.

These lights brighten the New Year and offer us guidance.

Help us to read your signs and follow you wherever you are leading us to be.

Matariki who has many admirers, Matariki who brings us together.

'Matariki hunga, Matariki ahunga nui'

May the signs of nature and the season be blessed.

Mānawatia a Matariki

N Z M E T H O D I S T W O M E N S F E L L O W S H I P

Celebrating 60 years of Independence for Samoa

Tui Salevao, NZMWF President

From the 1930s the people of Samoa were slowly given back more governance of their country. Following WWII, pressure grew for Samoa to be granted independence. On 24 November 1961 the Western Samoa Act was passed by New Zealand Parliament.

Samoa's Independence came into effect from 1 January 1962, Western Samoa became a fully independent sovereign State under the name of the Independent State of Western Samoa having a constitution which has been adopted by the people of Western Samoa.

The story goes that our forefathers fought an uphill battle and blood spilt along the way, but the goal was to make Samoa independent.

The "Mau" was a non-violent resistance movement that spearheaded the Independence of Samoa, and whose members were subjected to violent suppression. Many of our ancestors were killed during this time and we commemorate them.

As a first-generation New Zealand-born Samoan, I am very proud of my Samoan heritage. I have witnessed changes over the years that are very promising for such a small Pacific nation.

The proudest moment was last year's elections, seeing the democratic process in action allowing the people to have their say. This saw the fall of a man who had dominated the political arena in Samoa for over 40 years, finally replaced by Samoa's first-female Prime Minister and a change in government. Slowly but surely we can see the changes becoming more transparent under a woman's leadership.

Although the Samoan Independence took effect on 1 January, we celebrate it every year on 1 June. This year's celebration was no different; our people came out to celebrate a significant milestone for our country and having Samoa's Prime Minister attend the celebrations made the day even more special. We also celebrate our Independence with Samoan Language Week. It is important to embrace our culture and our language.

We have a lost generation who were brought up not speaking the language, encouraged instead to concentrate on education and speak English. Now it is a key skill to be able to speak another language on top of English and I am fortunate to be able to converse in both languages. Samoa will continue to thrive if we continue to ensure our children never forget their identity. They are Samoan and proud to use their skills in whatever they do in life.

This month we profile Sharlene Malaeimi

Correspondence Secretary and UCANZ link



Sharlene and her family at her father's 65th birthday. Left to right: Sharlene, Kapeneta (her mother), Tainau Fetu (her father), Semisi (fiancé at the back), Pesu (brother), Barney (brother-in-law), Summer (niece in-front holding the balloon), Wairere (niece next in-front of her mum) Lise (sister behind Wairere) and Meritian (sister-in-law).

I am the daughter of Tainau Fetu Malaeimi and Kapeneta Malaeimi and sister to Lise Wikitera, Savali Malaeimi and Pesu Malaeimi. I am a granddaughter of the late. Akaka Paga Pauta Faavae, who left this world last year on 23 December to join the Lord. My fiancée is Semisi Tyrell.

I am a proud South Aucklander from humble beginnings. I always carry my brown pride with me. I have attended Manurewa Methodist since birth. My family continue to strengthen and ground me in everything I do.

I am currently teaching at Manurewa High School and have held this position for nine

years. I teach Gagana Samoa, tourism, social sciences and added drama in 2021. My favourite bible verse is Philippians 4: 13, I love to laugh and I love every shade of red. I am passionate about Pacific dance and I am currently doing online study with the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey.

With God's love, guidance and grace, I shall do his work to the best of my ability. This NZMWF role will bring new challenges (the good, the bad and the ugly), however, I believe and trust in my team, and I have faith because God's got my back 100 percent.

Facemask or No Facemask?



Trudy Downes recommends mask-wearing as part of a Covid-19 response for the safety and benefit of everyone.

Trudy Downes

I recently read an article written by a journalist who holidayed in Australia. Exciting news during these Covid times! The writer compared differences in facemask wearing and Covid-19 restrictions between Australia and New Zealand.

In Australia, the writer says, they were only wearing facemasks if they were Covid-positive or a household contact. This also indicated that there were no isolation requirements if you had Covid-19.

My first wild thought was, "How wonderful to have that level of freedom. We should have facemask freedom in New Zealand!" And then my second sensible thought kicked in, "Why are we still wearing facemasks in New Zealand? What are the different circumstances between Australia and New Zealand?"

It wasn't only the facemask wearing that the writer commented on. He also commented on the societal attitude that "Omicron has changed things: infection is inevitable. So why delay the inevitable?" I agree that infection is inevitable and I am okay with that. But my response to why delay the inevitable is "because our hospitals and other facilities are having difficulties now and certainly won't cope if more people catch Covid-19 at the same time".

The infection rates in schools prove the theory that multiple people gathering in a relatively confined space for extended periods increases infection levels. Strains on our facilities with so many people infected simultaneously are grinding down the people we rely so heavily upon.

The writer commented that the NZ Covid restrictions are "so sweeping, for a disease that is so individual. My risk is very different to someone in their 80s who has emphysema. Sure, that person should continue precautions - but should

they be imposed on all of us?"

I think those points are the very crux of our current restrictions. We should no longer think about wearing facemasks to protect ourselves (although they will if we do it properly) but that we should wear them to protect others. Covid-19 affects all of our communities and we should be combatting it with a full community response. While we, as individuals, react the most to the Covid-19 impact on

ourselves, our actual responses should be for the sake of everyone.

Covid-responding for others is important in New Zealand when we can be asymptomatic or have symptoms that don't trigger a positive RAT. New Zealand doesn't fit the same Covid-19 profile as other countries because our vaccination rates were different when Covid-19 finally established itself on our shores. Furthermore, we don't fully know what will happen with reinfection rates or subvariant infections. However, we do know how to wear facemasks!

The writer of the original article referred to New Zealand as a hermit kingdom for its Covid-19 response and I can understand why. However, I would remind everyone that New Zealand is tailing the rest of the Covid-world by at least two to three months. Remember the joyous days of the America's Cup regatta where we had greater freedoms than any of the competing nations? No country is on the exact same timeline as any other when it comes to Covid-19 and if NZ is in a hermit kingdom phase, then so be it.

It pays to look back on our journey to reflect not only on bad decisions but also the good. Therefore I will remind you of our key message when we started our Covid-journey: practise faith not fear.

It is hard to navigate the unknown but as we continue to better understand how to slow the spread of Covid-19, we need to do all we can to keep our churches, families, friends and local communities safe.

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Keep wearing your facemasks. Just like the vaccine passes, it won't be forever.

www.stuff.co.nz/travel/news/300609792/i-just-flew-to-sydney-and-yes-new-zealand-is-still-a-hermit-kingdom

New GM at PNMSS

Rikki TeTau, Ngati Kahunganunu, has recently taken on the role as General Manager, Palmerston North Methodist Social Services. We invited Rik to share a little about himself and his vision for the future.

Your background?

I have a background in Alcohol and Drug (AOD) and Mental Health services, managing for Crisis Prevention Richmond NZ and AOD respite. Prior to taking on the role here, I worked five years for the Salvation Army as Community Ministries Manager. Before that I was working in the health sector with Access Community Health. I am a Registered Social Worker.



Incoming PNMSS General Manager Rik TeTau with outgoing GM, Kim Penny.

What drew you to this role?

The Methodist Church has always been the heart of the community working within the area. I was looking for a challenge in an environment that truly cared and supported community and each other. PNMSS offered me the ideal role in the ideal environment. This is a warm, friendly environment where we all are here for the community. This has created a workplace that feels like home to the team and the community. The service delivery within PNMSS is a balance of support, education and wrap-around services that are truly client-centred and focused. It is an environment I have found to be welcoming and culturally sensitive.

Is there a typical week in the workplace?

A week's work can include anything from supervision, managing financials, attending meetings and community engagements, supporting the team in the food bank and even making coffee on occasion, accompanied by a shared lunch. Budget time has come around quickly and a lot of

my focus had been on this. Each day brings exciting new challenges. We are continuing to look at the evaluation of services and community needs.

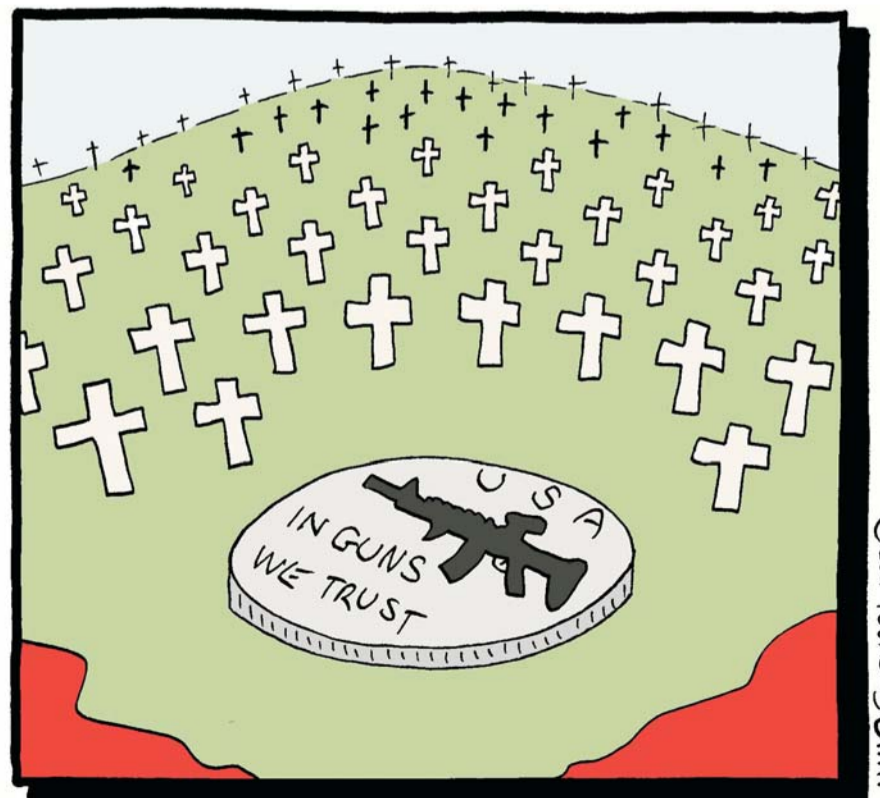
Balancing the multitude of expectations day-to-day can be hard and at times overwhelming, but always worth it.

Plans and priorities for the future?

We have exciting plans to redevelop our outdoor space to be better utilised by our young people and counsellors. There is also an upskilling project on the horizon that will lead to job opportunities for disabled people.

We have a vision for a new look to the food bank, wrapping support around community members and users to respectfully meet their needs, whilst encouraging independence and future food security.

I want to continue to develop the firm foundations of PNMSS and find optimum means to serve our community in ways that best meet their needs.



Paying the price...



Constant In Prayer



Adrian Skelton

When politicians respond to journalists about a disaster, they invariably say their “thoughts and prayers” are with the families. It has become a stock phrase. Perhaps some forensic philologist might trace its first occurrence. I wonder if its originator was intending to cover two bases or implying that a distinction between sacred and secular is superfluous.

Bishop Jack Spong, *bête noir* of conservative Christians, wrote his first book on the subject of prayer: *Honest Prayer* (1973). Even then, he was skeptical that prayer was a means of communication separate from ordinary dialogue. He recalled having a deep and worthwhile conversation with a parishioner around “that of God”, at the end of which there was the conventional expectation that he, the priest, should do his professional thing - and pray! It was his feeling then that a formal prayer would devalue the recent conversation rather than enhance it.

Some would speak up for the value of

prayer in affecting the pray-er - whether or not it affects an 'Effector'. Can a request to a theistic deity be thought to change human history? Others would prefer that prayer is silent. Words can cloud and confuse an issue. Although music can help - even songs without words - to set emotional tones and lift us to another plane.

A supreme example of the power of music in prayer occurs in Humperdinck's opera *Hänsel and Gretel*. The two children are lost in the fairytale forest and must bed down in the approaching darkness. This is their prayer:

When at night I go to sleep

Fourteen angels watch do keep

Two my head are guarding

Two my feet are guiding

Two are on my right hand

Two are on my left hand

Two who warmly cover

Two who o'er me hover

Two to whom 'tis given

To guide my steps to heaven.



Uniting Congregations
OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

It has much in common with Celtic guarding prayers. These were prayers based around the home and especially its focus, the hearth; such as this one quoted by John O'Donohue, in *Anam Cara*:

My Fortress

The Sacred Three

My fortress be

Encircling me

Come and be round

My hearth and my home.

These are affirmations of faith or invocations rather than instructions to the Divine. And in Celtic Prayer there is no distinction between the sacred and the secular. All things are connected. In that sense we may agree with St Paul that we should “be constant in prayer”.

Finding Reason in Every Season

Rev Susan Thompson

At this time of year I always look forward to the shortest day, Te Pō Tūtanga nui o Pipiri, also called the winter solstice. I know we still have lots of cold, wet days to come but for me the solstice is a sign of promise, a sign that winter won't last for ever. The days will gradually get longer, lighter and warmer, and spring will come again.

The journey of our lives is also made up of seasons: times of birth and growth, activity and achievement, struggle and maturing, rest and recreation, aging and death. We're all at different stages of our journey but one of the things we share is that none of us knows what the future will hold. To me that means we need to make the most of every moment, living as fully and joyfully as we can.

To help us do this, one of the most fruitful questions I think we can ask ourselves at any stage in our lives is, what is this season in my life for?

Is it a time for building a career, for making a family, for exploring the world, for discovering who we are or who we might be? Or is it a time for slowing the pace of our lives, for

connecting with family and friends, for remembering and giving thanks, for trying to be more present in every moment? If we think about what our days are for, then maybe we can live in them more fully.

I know that I've reached a time in my life when I'm trying to slow the pace of things. My last job was very busy. I had a lot of responsibility and although I was part of a team, I often worked alone. I enjoyed it, however it was stressful and I got to the point where I realised that if I didn't make a change, I'd be there for the rest of my life.

Now I'm at Tamahere I'm still busy, but it's a different kind of busy. It feels like there's more time for people: more time to stop and talk, more time for listening and building relationships, more time for sharing at depth, a whole lot more time for being present. And that's the point of my job as chaplain, to be present and available like salt and light, bringing the taste and flavour and goodness of God wherever and whenever it's needed.

As we mark the turning of time this winter, may we all seek to live more intentionally, aware of the seasons of the year and our own lives, making the most of every moment and responding to the call of God on our hearts. Amen.

What is Church for?

Rev Peter Taylor

Here are some answers to this question. The church: is for worshipping God; is a sign of the unity of God's people; is about mission to the world. After Pentecost, the lectionary readings invite us to consider the question in our own context, in particular Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa. In July the focus this year for the gospel readings is on mission.

On 3 July we hear how the 72 are sent out for mission, to proclaim the nearness of God's Kingdom, and what happened when they did. As preachers and congregations, we claim that heritage but, rather than slavishly copying what they did, we need to discover what mission means for us. The rest of the month shares some challenges which are still relevant today.

10 July confronts us with the challenge of racism and prejudice. The Good Samaritan story questions presumptions about who is acceptable, worthy and to be applauded, and who is not. Society around us often supplies easy answers which are not founded in God's love. As Christians we need to challenge those answers which prevent us from seeing the good in some and encourage us to ignore the bad in others.

On 17 July we are faced with the 'work ethic' - the idea that working hard and long is always good, that the Gross National Product must increase and rising house

prices are automatically good things. Mary is praised for her more relaxed lifestyle, over Martha whose goal is productivity. This does not mean work is bad or that Martha was wrong but Jesus did praise Mary and what do we make of this?

24 July has a focus on prayer, including the Lord's Prayer. As people of faith, prayer is important to us but much of our culture presumes that prayer is either about badgering God for things we want or is totally useless (there being no god to pray to). We are to challenge the presumption that God is removed from life, uninterested, unable to act or be involved in any meaningful way.

Finally, on 31 July the challenge is materialism as life's goal, with the farmer who built a bigger barn to store a greater crop, without storing up any spiritual harvest. Our culture's obsession with getting more and/or bigger stuff, excessive travel, fashion, and 'healthier' bank balances, simply enables the richest to get richer at the expense of the poorest. Our gospel, our mission, has to call this obsession to account.

This is a hard month to be a preacher, and even harder to listen to such challenging messages. Being true to the gospel can mean opposing our society, looking out of place, and even plain wrong in the eyes of our world. Are we up for a challenge? Or are we too enraptured by society's norms to hear these challenges? Can Te Hāhi proclaim God's values over and above those of our cultures? That is our task this month.



Barriers to Travel Removed

Ruby Manukia-Schaumkel,
Legal Advisor.

The Government confirmed pre-departure tests would be scrapped from 20 June. This change will be well received given the ease and cost of getting a test had increasingly become a barrier to people travelling to New Zealand.

The removal of pre-departure tests will mean a lot more people travelling to New Zealand and increased capacity. Increased tourism will help lift the New Zealand economy based on consumer supply and demand.

Prior to this announcement, most travellers (New Zealand citizens and

residents) entering New Zealand had to provide evidence of a negative Covid-19 test result before they travelled. The pre-departure test requirement applied to those vaccinated for, or recovered from Covid-19, and travellers were responsible for the costs associated with the pre-departure test requirements.

From 21 June travellers entering New Zealand from anywhere in the world will no longer need to take a pre-departure test. However most travellers still need to be vaccinated and take two rapid antigen tests (RATs) after arriving in New Zealand. If you transit through New Zealand, you no longer need to be vaccinated or complete the New Zealand Traveller Declaration.

The following people can enter New

Zealand now from anywhere in the world and self-test on arrival:

- Vaccinated and unvaccinated New Zealand citizens or residents
- Vaccinated Australian citizens and permanent residents
- Unvaccinated Australian citizens who live in New Zealand
- Current temporary work and student visa holders with a valid visa who can still meet their visa requirements. This includes both visa holders currently offshore and those in New Zealand



who choose to travel overseas and wish to return

- Up to 5,000 international students, for semester 2
- Vaccinated travellers with a border exemption
- Vaccinated travellers on a working holiday scheme
- Vaccinated travellers from countries who do not need a visa (visa waiver visitors)
- Vaccinated travellers from other countries who already hold a valid visitor visa
- Other vaccinated eligible travellers under current border settings.

M E T H O D I S T A L L I A N C E

An Uncomfortable Truth

Aotearoa New Zealand is often referred to as the land of milk and honey - I even have a t-shirt that says this. However, the uncomfortable truth is:

- One child died every five weeks as a result of alleged abuse in 2021.¹
- The number of children who were victims of abuse rose in 2021 to 13,478 - 1.2% of all children.²
- The number of confirmed cases of sexual abuse of children increased 20% and is the highest number since 2015.
- Aotearoa New Zealand ranks 35th in child wellbeing outcomes - out of 41 EU and OECD countries.³
- The number of households registered on the social housing register is currently 26,868⁴ - this is an increase of 657% over the seven years since March 2015.
- At least 2% of Aotearoa New Zealand's population is living in severe housing deprivation.⁵ This is equivalent to the population of Lower Hutt or the combined populations of Palmerston North and Blenheim.
- Māori life expectancy is considerably lower than non-Māori.⁶
- Māori health status remains

unequal with non-Māori across almost all chronic and infectious diseases as well as injuries, including suicide.⁷

- Māori are disproportionately represented in the most deprived neighbourhood areas⁸ and are less likely to own their own home than other ethnic groups.⁹
- Māori are less advantaged than non-Māori across many socioeconomic indicators.¹⁰
- Māori offenders are more likely to have Police contact, be charged, lack legal representation, not be granted bail, plead guilty, be convicted, be sentenced to non-monetary penalties and be denied release to home detention.¹¹
- Māori men are 3.5 times more likely to be sentenced to imprisonment.¹²
- Māori constitute 52.7% of our prison population¹³ and 17% of our national population.¹⁴
- the Māori imprisonment rate is 700 per 100,000 while Aotearoa New Zealand's overall imprisonment rate is 180 per 100,000.¹⁵
- Suicide is a leading cause of death among 15-19 year olds in Aotearoa New Zealand and we have the second highest rate of

adolescent suicide in rich countries with a rate of 14.9 deaths by suicide per 100,000.¹⁶

• And, it costs more to live in this land of milk and honey with the cost of living 5.2% higher in December 2021 than it was a year ago.¹⁷ This is the highest it has been since 2008.¹⁸

These statistics make us uncomfortable, and rightly so. They are shameful in the 21st century. But sit there, pause and reflect on these uncomfortable truths for a moment.

It is our discomfort, our anger, our tears and our foolish belief that we can make a difference in the world that is the catalyst for change in our communities. This is what underpins the work of Methodist Alliance members - the belief that we can make a change.

We share the responsibility for each other in our community. We share the belief that we can make a difference in the world. We share the belief that people can change and in the transforming love of God. We share the belief that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the covenant

A Franciscan Blessing
*May God bless you with discomfort,
 at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships
 so that you may live deep within your heart.
 May God bless you with anger
 at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,
 so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.
 May God bless you with tears,
 to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
 so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn
 their pain to joy.
 And may God bless you with enough foolishness
 to believe that you can make a difference in the world,
 so that you can do what others claim cannot be done,
 to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.*

Carol Barron, National Coordinator.

establishing our nation on the basis of a power-sharing relationship, and that it guides how we undertake mission.

This "we" is not just Methodist Alliance members, it includes everyone in the Methodist family. We all have a responsibility to bring justice

and kindness to children and to the poor. Join us in our work for a just and inclusive society in which all people flourish. Contact your local mission or me to see what you can do to make a difference.

03 375 0512 | 027 561 9164 |
 Carol@MethodistAlliance.org.nz

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 14 NZ Statistics <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/maori-population-estimates-at-30-june-2021>
 15 <https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/research/over-representation-of-maori-in-the-criminal-justice-system/2.0-criminal-justice-system-bias-and-amplification/2.0-criminal-justice-system-bias-and-amplification>
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 18 Ibid

METHODIST ALLIANCE
 NGA PURAPURA WETERIANA

If your parish is engaged in community or social service work, you should join the Methodist Alliance.

The Alliance supports the work of its members by leveraging collective skills and experience, providing resources and information, and raising the profile of the work you do.

If you would like to join the Alliance please contact the National Coordinator Carol Barron:

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 Carol@MethodistAlliance.org.nz
 PO Box 5416, Papanui, Christchurch 8542
methodist.org.nz/methodist_alliance



Covid from a Youth Perspective

In a reflection on the Ascension published in *Word & Worship*, Rev David Poultney referred to the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost as a time of anticipation, waiting, preparing for what will be. He drew a comparison between that period and our response to Covid. "In recent times we have been called upon to wait, to put much of life on hold. We did so in order to defeat Covid-19, to flatten the curve and then to eliminate it from this country. We barely left our homes for a month or more, venturing out a little for exercise and to meet our most basic needs. Plans were put on hold. Weddings postponed, sports leagues suspended, holiday plans came crashing down, study plans were put on hold ..." We invited students from Wesley College to comment on their experiences during lockdown and how their lives were impacted by the sense of waiting and facing the unknown.



Kaitlyn Rachel Sikulu, Year 9

I am Tongan and I was born and raised in Mangere, New Zealand.

In 2019, when Covid started and spread throughout the world, our country never thought it was that serious until the Prime Minister announced 'lockdown' in 2020. When we heard the news, the posts and shared stories about Auckland hitting Level 4 lockdown, that's when we felt like the world was changing and was never going back to normal.

The roads were busy as everyone rushed to get all their essential things before the shops closed. There were queues outside supermarkets, as they limited the number of people in the store. Essential things in the supermarket were slowly running out. Families couldn't even get a pack of toilet paper, or water. Schools were shutting, making it hard for those who had NCEA exams as well as the Intermediate students who were studying to prepare for their upcoming college full mark levels.

The experience was really new and staying home almost every day wasn't really my thing. I loved being outside, training with my friends, jamming rippa tag with my cousins. Once the lockdown started, we couldn't greet our family members as usual because Covid-19 was highly contagious. Living in bubbles and not seeing your 'everyday family' was hard.

Lockdown was kind of sad for those who lost jobs, losing loved ones and also fighting Covid themselves. Things changed around school policy, if teachers didn't get vaccinated, they would lose their jobs. Children couldn't return to school for the same reason. Doing classes and school work at home was hard. We had to be on time for Zoom classes. I needed to put my all into it, because our lockdown studies reflected where we were for our college next year.

The highlight of lockdown last year was being with my family all day, every day. Playing cards, going out and kicking the ball. At night we all changed into our PJs and baked muffins, cupcakes and cakes. It was a Battle of the Baking I fought with my family. Lockdown taught me so much. Always use your time wisely because you never know what will happen, and how the future might look.



Finau Samson-Makoni, Year 10

Lockdown wasn't a favourite time for me. It was fine at the start. I enjoyed being at home, doing my work in my own time, spending time with my family and sleeping in. After a few weeks I wanted to go back to school and enjoy time with my friends. I wanted to go back to playing sports again instead of training for nothing to happen on Saturday.

Lockdown really sucked after being stuck in the house for one month. It really tested my mental strength. To help everyone in my family, we would go out to a park for dinner and eat while the kids would run and play around the playground. Normally on Friday or Saturday we would go on a big mountain walk or run up One Tree Hill.

I didn't like doing online classwork because it was hard to understand and finding a quiet room in a Pacific household with a dog was tough going. I didn't like asking questions of the teacher so I would ask my classmates for help.

I was always getting up to have noodles and I gained 10 kilograms. I learnt that it's not always fun to stay home or to stay in one spot for a long time and that it takes a lot of mental strength to do anything.



Kalisi-Pakiamala Fisiiahi, Year 12

For me, and I'm sure for many going through adolescence, lockdown was a roller-coaster. There were definitely times where I did not want to get up in the morning and times where I felt proactive. I could not have survived by myself. I've learnt to value the time with my family, and oddly the time I have with my friends, who live in far different places than I do.

As a student attending boarding school, I am always engaging, I have routines and the constant of being surrounded by friends 24/7. Lockdown forced me to adapt. Some of my friends and I were fortunate to own devices that could help us connect with each other. We were more focused on keeping in contact than completing individual online tasks. We made 24/7 hour online meet calls. The link of the call would be sent to our friend group chats, and we would all join, coming and going. Some would sleep, do fitness, read, clean and do many different things during the call. Sometimes we wouldn't even say anything to each other. Other times, you could hear our parents nagging us to stop talking. It felt like we never really left our boarding school.

Despite distance apart, we were always just a 'click' away. It helped us understand that we weren't alone under the pressure. There were people who did not have the technology and devices that we did, and were most likely struggling with connection to school, teachers, family and friends. I could only imagine the frustration, loneliness and lack of motivation for them. It was a humbling experience and I've learnt to value what I have, which is time and connection.

Past lockdowns (2020-early 2021) I would often waste time by myself scrolling on tiktok and doing other unnecessary tasks. However, I valued keeping close connection with people through shared experiences. I learnt how to crochet, knit, play the guitar, do crunches, get up early for 'Mum and Me' walks, and most importantly, learn more about Jesus. Connection helped me to manage the state of being content no matter the circumstances.



Pauliasi Hanging out at home with family.



Sio Lo Tam, Year 13

Reflecting on lockdown and the changes Covid-19 brought into our lives, I've realised that it strengthened my relationship with God in a way I hadn't thought of. The limited number of class times during lockdown, compared to a normal day at school, gave me so much time for myself.

During this time I began listening to passages of the bible on YouTube. I felt more connected than I had ever been. These podcasts, recordings and bible readings prompted me to take into consideration and rebuild my relationship with God, and to be aware of my health and wellbeing both physically and mentally.

It became a ritual for me every morning to listen to the wisdom from the bible and this became a big motivation throughout the day. My performance during lockdown regarding classes and schoolwork was good to start with as this was something we as students were not accustomed to from the lockdown of the previous year. However, as lockdown dragged into the month of October it took a huge toll on my preparation for end of year exams.

This was a time where I felt I was tested as I was under a lot of pressure and constant stress, I had been listening to passages from the Bible but forgotten to pray. Praying was what got me through those times I talked to God about what was on my mind, which I found helped with my preparation for exams. I have come to realise, that in times when we are pushed to the extreme, we can find shelter in praying to God. This helped improve my performance in the exams and my outlook on life.



Reon Bidmead, Year 13

I never thought I would get the privilege of spending my senior years of school at home. The Covid-19 pandemic has been beneficial but also caused me to develop some lousy habits.

I was in Year 10 when the first pandemic hit. I was in an accelerant class doing NCEA level 1. Several weeks into the year, we had to spend four to five weeks at home, completing schoolwork in isolation. The experience was conflicting.

I had an extremely successful time completing schoolwork; being able to work in my own time frame, have something to eat, go for a walk, do some chores and come back to it with a fresh mind was a blessing. As a result I had the most successful year during the pandemic gaining 100 percent Excellence marks in all submitted work. However, getting back into a school routine was difficult. The habits picked up while in isolation meant that when we got back to school, I struggled to keep motivated. I lost the motivation to succeed to the level I was at before.

With last year's lockdown and half the school year spent at home, flipping between these routines really disengaged me from school life. There was a constant voice in my head, saying 'get out of school, get a job and don't waste your time with the environment you're in'. This voice has been constantly demanding this of me, but I have stayed in school to finish my final year. I have found that the pandemic has changed the career avenue I was once striving for. I've had to keep my mind open welcoming these possible changes in a career.



Pauliasi Bauleka, Year 13

Covid-19 lockdown restrictions have caused a lot of disruptions within our lives. Time has flown by so fast since 2020. I remember the day I got off the plane at Auckland International airport to begin my senior school journey at Wesley College. I remember the feelings I felt, the thoughts going through my head that day as if it were yesterday. As a 15-year-old Fijian boy, I was excited to experience this vibrant society I had heard so much about. Alas, God had other plans. As the saying goes, "Where there is a will, there is a way".

A few weeks into what seemed like the best start to a new adventure, Covid hit, and we went into lockdown. It was a struggle, balancing school work, mental health, and constantly being around family; not that it's a bad thing. The support I received from family and friends was empowering, and I saw the same with my peers when we were navigating the first year of NCEA. I was blessed to have my grandad come over before lockdown and be with me during my first two years here. Although we were with family, he was my strength and 'stay' through it all. A God-fearing man who reminded me that the Big Boss above does not give us anything we can't handle. He was never wrong about anything my entire life; so why doubt him now.

I am grateful for these three years, and I don't see it as a struggle anymore but a blessing. I saw relationships strengthen amid uncertainty, dreams bloom amidst doubt, and youth persevere with courage. Although the past three years have been daunting to confront, I take joy in the struggle because the time has instilled so much in this generation. I see a future where today's youth are more resilient than ever and are ready to tackle each battle head-on. My prayer as a student, a leader, a son, and a brother is that kindness, sincerity, and love will always remain at the centre of whatever we do. As we say here at Wesley, "to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God."



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Although this is a part time position, there is every likelihood of a shared ministry with another parish, thus enabling the appointee to have a full stipend.

For more information, please refer to the St Anselm's website www.stanselms.org.nz. For a Position Description and other information, please email Keith Ryan at k.mryan@outlook.co.nz or phone 021 434 500



Why Gun Crime Matters

Bill Peddie

Just a short while ago, in the middle of the night, a house a mere 150 metres from where Shirley and I live, was apparently the recipient of forty-four gunshots fired through its windows. Since nothing like that had occurred in our area, at least in our memory, we had assumed we were in a safe corner of suburbia. True no one was killed, but I imagine since several more Auckland houses were hit within a few days by similar strikes, the rest of us are entitled to wonder what may seem to be going wrong. Is it just that those Christian principles, which many would hope might represent the New Zealand way of life, no longer count?

Yet here is the puzzle. If we take the US as an example of a nation where belief in God is more frequently invoked than we have come to expect in Aotearoa, including I should add the beliefs amongst the criminals, there is little sign that Church attenders' beliefs help the death rate. "In God we trust"? Well the trust isn't working out too well at least according to recent news items.

While the US is quite correct in pointing out America is not the worst in the world for gun deaths (rated 20th), in terms of the frequency of mass killings at schools in developed nations, it is a clear leader. The CNN figures indicate the US has had 288 multiple school shootings since 2009. Compare that with Canada and France, which have each had two cases, Germany has had one and Japan, Italy and the UK have had no cases.

In the US the Almighty might be entreated for protection, but if so He has other ideas. Don't forget the gradually increasing average of about 41 thousand gun-deaths per year in the US, not to mention the expected new record for this year. For those genuinely concerned that US weapons are killing civilians, forty-one thousand deaths are very minor when we think for example of the weapons the US sell to unstable regions. These are guns which then wind up killing multiple thousands of civilians.

In the US there is also the fact that the reality of "one nation under God" is remarkably racist with a disproportionate number of black, 'first nation' and Hispanic people among the gun victims. There is also a disturbing rejection of Asians. While we might claim the New Zealand figures are less worrying, our own statistics for violence suggest the same directions.

Think for example of what has happened in Yemen or for that matter



the regions of any of the civil wars currently underway. By May 25, 145 days into 2022, the United States was clearly worse when it comes to gun safety than all other developed nations and had already scored 213 mass shootings, with 27 of those shootings having taken place at schools. In 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, gun-related deaths were also the leading cause of death for children in the United States. There have been no substantial changes to federal firearm legislation in 10 years despite remembering the 26 children and adults murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012.

Those agitating for reform in the US are fond of pointing out that the National Rifle Association is in effect buying support of a good percentage of the politicians by giving eye-watering amounts to their political campaigns.

This may in fact be part of the reason why efforts to tighten up the gun laws seems to lag behind the views of an increasing number of the concerned public.

We note that ex-President Trump has recently restated his answer which is to arm the teachers. Perhaps he is just reflecting the view of many Republicans that young people will be much safer if there are guns to protect them? Yet since some of the perpetrators have been previously assessed as mentally unstable, I would have thought that a rather better case could be made for restricting access to the weapons in the first place. The Second Amendment, born in the American War of Independence, was to ensure the right of all citizens to own and carry guns in the event of attack by foreign forces. That was then. But surely now since the US has one of the best equipped military forces in the world, that Second Amendment, making it possible for all but trained professionals to have access to dangerous weapons, seems daft and almost certainly is out of touch with reality.

And finally I want to risk the fury of some of my own country's church going population to state as bluntly as possible that, just as in the US, praying won't be enough. Asking God to sort out our issues as we begin to follow the lead of the self-appointed "leaders of the free world" just because they claim they are trusting in God, is ignoring what should be clear to all of us. Jesus' injunction to love our neighbours as ourselves and using a good dose of common sense to check out the facts might be a better starting point.

The Human Spirit Will Always Prevail

Teresa Manion-Wood joins a Polish-Ukrainian Zoom Meditation group on Monday 6am NZ time as often as she is able. She says, "It is early evening on Sunday over in Ukraine. I feel it is the least I can do, to set my alarm and wake up early once a week to spiritually support these courageous people in the midst of this horrendous war". She recently wrote this reflection for a group newsletter and shares the piece with Touchstone.

Their first reading from John 14:27 is translated with raw pathos into English with a Ukrainian accent:

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.

Not as the world gives, I give to you.

Let not your heart be troubled;

Do not be afraid."

This morning I sit at my kitchen table writing this epistle hoping to share with you my personal thoughts and

experience. Outside on the horizon glimpses of the rising winter morning sun burn as shafts of pure gold through the heavy layers of steel grey clouds. This dramatic vision lifts my heart as if God is showing me that the human spirit will always prevail in the darkest of trials as we are one with our Divine Creator. Light will always reign over darkness.

The tenacity of the human spirit throughout the ages shone through a story told by a young Ukrainian woman. "I must tell you about a lady I met at the Kyiv train station yesterday," she said.

The lady was 67 years-old and needed directions to her village train platform. She was fleeing for safety as a refugee across the Ukraine border during the heavy strikes of March and April.

She was very excited: "I'm going home!" she said. "I've come from France! I will be able to plant my raspberries, I love raspberries!"

Apparently this refugee's grandmother had lived during the Russian occupation of Stalin's era and been captured and imprisoned for many years. She said, "Then Stalin died so my grandmother was free!" This life experience had prepared her to face Ukraine's challenges ahead and know that the human spirit could not be stamped out.

Often for several hours after our meditation time I feel quite flat, almost stunned and helpless to assist these courageous people living "life" in a brutal war. These are some of the answers given by our fellow Ukrainian meditators to queries from other international attendees who voice the same sentiment.

"You are helping us by sharing this space with us."

"You help us to stay calm and not be afraid."

"The alarm has sounded. I should turn the lights and the gas off and go down to the basement but I want to stay here with you."

"You help us to know the world cares about us."

And so this morning as I watch the burning gold break through the dark grey clouds, my spirit soars with God's

promise that His Light will prevail. This signifies to me the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian people in the face of the heaviness of the stark grey cloud, the brutal Russian carnage of the Ukrainian people and the devastation of their country.

And now as I look out again to the horizon the sun has risen above the cloud layer, a golden globe shining unimpeded in full splendour.

After a time of questions, discussion and supportive messages via chat messages we finish with the incredibly poignant prayer of Thomas Merton from Thoughts in Solitude. Read with such feelings of anguish in this tragic situation in Ukrainian, Polish and English translations:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

Nor do I really know myself.

And the fact that I think I am following your will

Does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you

Does in fact please you.

And I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this,

You will lead me by the right road

Though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore I will trust you always

Though I may seem to be lost and in the

Shadow of death

I will not fear for you are ever with me.

And you will never leave me to face my struggles alone. Amen...

C O N C E R N I N G F A I T H

A bi-monthly column exploring questions concerning faith issues.



Ask Auntie

Auntie welcomes your queries. No concern is too small, whether it is an opinion, advice or information that you are seeking. Please email the editor with your questions. We respect your privacy. You are welcome to choose a pen name for anonymity.

Dear Auntie,
Why doesn't God stop bad things from happening?
River

Dear River,
People have always wondered why God lets bad things happen. It is a difficult question and we don't know the answer. Wise people who study the Bible think the most likely answer is because God gifted us free will. When God made people, God didn't want people to be like robots who only did what they were programmed to do. God wanted people to think and make the right choices for themselves. Letting people make their own choices means they don't always make the best choices. Making wrong choices leads to bad things happening. God does not cause bad things to happen. The important thing to remember is God is always with us. Praying can help us do what is best and help us feel better.

Keep on praying, Auntie.

Dear Auntie,
Do dogs go to heaven?
Wiremu.

Dear Wiremu,
The only thing we know about heaven is that it's beyond human imagination and people keep imagining it. Jesus explained heaven as a place where people love each other. Think of heaven as eternal kindness, love, and happiness. If you love your dog and your dog loves you, your dog will be in your heaven forever. We experience heaven on earth when we are truly happy.

Be happy, Auntie.

Dear Auntie,
Are there any stories about girls in the Bible?
Lois.

Dear Lois,
There are far more stories about men and boys in the Bible. This always happened in history and it needs changing. Good on you for noticing! However, there are over 150 females mentioned in the Bible and some of these are girls. Did you know your own name is in the Bible? 'Lois' is the name of Timothy's grandmother. Timothy was a young man who helped Paul tell the good news about Jesus to people in faraway countries. The good influence of his mother and grandmother had helped him become worthy of this job. The most famous girl story is Miriam who watched over her baby brother while he floated in a basket in the Nile River (Exodus 2:1-10). There is another girl who did something very helpful. She isn't named so gets called 'the Little Hebrew Maid' (2 Kings 5:2). She was a servant. When her master got the dreaded skin disease called leprosy, she told him where to find a prophet of God who could heal him. A story I particularly like is about five sisters. If they had brothers they would have inherited their father's land when he died, but because they didn't have brothers they would have nowhere to live. They very bravely went to Moses and said they thought this was wrong and the law should be changed. Moses prayed about it and decided they were right, and the law was changed. The story about Mahlah and her sisters is in Numbers 27:1-11 & 36:11-13.

Blessings, Auntie.

K I D Z K O R N A

We hear a lot today about climate change, greenhouse gases, plastic waste and pollution in general; how we as humans are slowly destroying the wonderful world God has entrusted to us.

Around 50 years ago Dr Seuss wrote a book that many of you will have read: *The Lorax*. The message in it is as important today as it ever was. Respect for the environment, caring for the planet for ourselves and future generations. If you want to know more, there is a movie of *The Lorax* and parts of it are on YouTube.

What are you doing? Last month we heard how the people at Christchurch West Methodist have a garden where they grow their own vegetables. The people at St John's Hamilton East have a Climate Justice group. A while ago they planted some fruit trees and this year there is fruit on the lemon trees.

What else can we do to recycle, reuse and reduce? Stop using plastic, have a compost bin and take shorter showers, for example. Let us all do our best to save our earth and the people, animals and plants that live on it.



Joy celebrates the first lemons on a tree planted by the Hamilton East climate justice group.



For your bookshelf

The Green Planet



Author: Leisa Stewart-Sharpe
Illustrator: Kim Smith
Publisher: Puffin
Genre: Non-Fiction

Our planet has a hidden world. A world where plants care for each other. This world is under your feet without you knowing. This book lets you into this wonderful world.

Did you know that plants can smell, taste, touch, hear and even 'speak'?

This is a well-illustrated and informative book with an exciting story to tell. Great for sharing with your family.

Word Search - Climate Change

Can you find these words in the puzzle?

CARING	CLIMATE	EARTH	FLOODS	FUEL	PLANET				
PLASTIC	RECYCLE	SURVIVAL	WARMING	WATER	WIND				
D	V	E	A	R	T	H	C	X	S
W	N	G	L	B	E	M	P	U	S
P	C	I	X	C	E	C	R	K	W
L	L	A	W	R	Y	V	Y	A	T
E	I	A	E	P	I	C	R	E	E
U	M	T	S	V	W	M	E	V	N
F	A	N	A	T	I	A	E	R	A
W	T	L	G	N	I	R	A	C	L
A	E	A	G	P	C	C	X	K	P
S	D	O	O	L	F	E	K	L	F

What are the kids in your church up to?

Kidz Korna wants to hear from you so we can share your stories. Send stories and photos of your activities to Doreen Lennox at dlennox02@gmail.com



Matching Grant for Ukraine Refugees



A mother from Ukraine completes the final step to receive cash assistance at the Centre run by the Lutheran World Federation and the local church in Wroclaw, Poland. Image Credit ACT Alliance/LWF

Pray, Walk, Eat.

Join Operation Refugee
Raise funds for refugees
June 20 – August 20
cwsoperationrefugee.nz



Photo: ACT Alliance/NCA/Håvard Bjelland.



**Christian
World Service**
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cws.org.nz • 0800 74 73 72

Christian World Service is grateful to the many generous people who have donated to the Ukraine Emergency Appeal. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is matching donations to this appeal through its aid vote. These funds will be used to help some of the 3.5 million refugees in urgent need of assistance in Poland.

“We are very grateful to the government for this grant as it will double the impact of your donations. The conflict in Ukraine seems likely to continue for longer so this assistance will be vital to families who have escaped the violence.

CWS Support Muslim Community Wellbeing

Last month Christian World Service met with the Muslim wellbeing team, who are part of the Purapura Whetu Trust, a community-based Kaupapa Maori health and social services provider in Otautahi Christchurch. CWS has been looking for the best way to use the remaining money donated after the 15 March attack at Christchurch mosques and are grateful to Purapura Whetu for their assistance.

“When CWS launched the appeal for those affected by the attacks, we committed to find a way to help that was in keeping with our development approach. This proved more challenging than we thought for the remaining donations. This grant will enable a community-based group to assist people carrying the pain of the brutal attacks,” says Murray Overton, National Director.

After the mosque attacks a team from Kaupapa Māori in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland came to assist the Muslim community in Christchurch. Members found their approach very helpful and the District Health Board recommended establishing a local service within Purapura Whetu to support them. After much discussion, the Trust set up the special team, now lead by

Please continue to pray for all those affected and for an end to this conflict,” says Murray Overton, CWS National Director.

As part of the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance, CWS is partnering with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) which has been active across the region for many years. The grant from CWS will support 60 households with cash transfers for three months, pay for 100 comfort kits for babies and very young children, and 50 kits for the differently abled.

LWF is training volunteers and staff to help provide mental and emotional support to refugee families as well as to recognise when to refer them for more specialised care. Six churches have set up child-friendly spaces with opportunities for play and education for children and young people. In addition, the churches are providing spaces for young girls and women travelling alone, and advice on where they can get the support they need.

CWS will help fund local churches in Bytom-Miechowice, Ostroda, Gdansk, Zgierz, Wroclaw and Biesko-Biala which are already providing services to refugees.

Conflict is the major driver of dislocation. The United Nations reports that there are now more than 100 million displaced people in the world.

Funds raised in this year's Operation Refugee will support this work in Poland as well as respond to refugees in Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon and other situations. CWS encourages churches to organise a special fundraising activity, hold a retiring offering or sign up for Operation Refugee. Worship and study materials are available at cws.org.nz. CWS thank you for your continued support.



Murray Overton, CWS, with Aamina Ali, leader of the Muslim Wellbeing team and Dean Te Hae, Business Manager at Purapura Whetu Trust.

psychologist Aamina Ali.

“Everyone was affected by what happened on March 15. Our services are available to all Muslims. It is a privilege and a blessing to be under a Kaupapa Maori service,” says Aamina.

The team works with individuals and families of all ages. Staff include social workers, psychologists, health coaches, spiritual advisers, a youth worker and community workers who are based at health centres and work in the city. The service is free and has the resources and networks to seek additional support or refer people to other services. Together the staff speak seven languages.

CWS looks forward to a continued relationship with Purapura Whetu and wishes them well as they take on many responsibilities including the new task of resettling refugees in the city.



CINEMA

Time and tide wait for no man. Not even a fighter pilot catapulted off a naval aircraft carrier can outfly time's inevitable creep. *Top Gun Maverick* offers a stunt-fuelled ode to the inevitability of time and tide.

Top Gun, starring Tom Cruise as Lieutenant Pete "Maverick" Mitchell, was the highest-grossing film of 1986. Songs written for *Top Gun*, like Berlin's *Take My Breath Away* and Kenny Loggins' *Danger Zone*, launched the movie's soundtrack to No.1 on the *Billboard 200* albums.

Top Gun Maverick opens with the melodramatic sounds of the 1980s. *Danger Zone* blasts as the elite of the US Navy power off aircraft carriers and into action.

But we live in the 2020s, not the 1980s. Pete "Maverick" Mitchell - still a Lieutenant, still played by Tom Cruise, still a lone ranger - is facing extinction. Funding for Mitchell's hypersonic "Darkstar" programme is being redirected to drone programmes. Drones, as Rear Admiral Chester "Hammer" Cain (Ed Harris) informs "Maverick," do not need sleep or toilet stops.

Recalled to North Island, the largest aerospace-industrial complex in the US



Navy, Maverick's age awaits him. The presence of a new generation of Top Guns, quick with nicknames like "Pops", suggest a disturbing ageism.

Amid the action scenes, *Top Gun Maverick* draws on the past to provide emotional depth. One of the Top Guns that Mitchell must train is Bradley "Rooster" Bradshaw (Miles Teller), the son of Mitchell's best friend, killed in action during *Top Gun*. Former girlfriend Penny Benjamin (Jennifer Connelly), now a single mother, is a North Island bar owner. Former rival, now mentor, Admiral Tom "Iceman" Kazansky (Val Kilmer), has been rendered speechless

with throat cancer. No matter how many stunts we pull, mortality confronts us all.

While *Top Gun Maverick* works harder at emotions and character development than *Top Gun*, both movies sound an anthem in support of the American military machine. America's Department of Defence has an Entertainment Media Office, which assists filmmakers in crafting military stories. Alongside props like fighter jets and aircraft carriers come script suggestions.

Critics call this the Military-Entertainment Complex. Following the release of *Top Gun*, Navy recruiters set

up stands outside cinemas. Applications reportedly jumped 500 per cent as *Top Gun* recruited a new generation of wannabe Top Guns.

In 1990 Tom Cruise announced that *Top Gun* glorified war. A sequel, said Cruise, would be irresponsible. Yet time, tide and the persuasive pitch of Director Joseph Kosinski mean the wait for a sequel is no more.

Reportedly, the lure for Cruise was Kosinski's suggestion of a reconciliation movie. Push aside the glorification of war, wade through the machismo, ignore the ageism, and *Top Gun Maverick* offers a reminder of the human need to face together our times and tides. As Admiral Tom "Iceman" Kazansky whispers to Mitchell, the pilots "need you". In time, every maverick needs to fly in formation.

Rev Dr Steve Taylor is the author of "First Expressions" (2019) and writes widely in theology and popular culture, including regularly at www.emergentkiwi.org.nz.

ON PAPER

The Code Breaker:

Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing and the Future of the Human Race

Author: Walter Isaacson

Publisher: Simon and Schuster, 2021.

535 pages

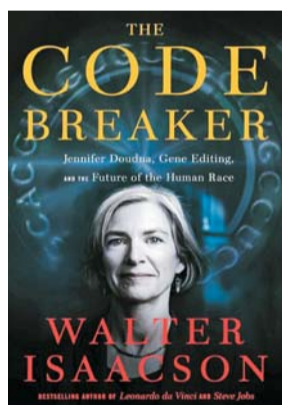
Reviewer: David Bush

Who knew that bacteria are attacked by viruses and have developed sophisticated defence mechanisms which chop up the viral DNA and then store snippets which help them recognise the same invader in the future?

Walter Isaacson, a former editor of *Time magazine*, unveils the process of this critical discovery and its implications in a very readable and compelling narrative. There are twists and turns, fierce competition, rivalry and the excitement of discovery. It is as readable and yet better than any work of fiction.

Jennifer Doudna's interest in bio-chemistry is kindled when as a 12 year old her father gives her *The Double Helix*, the story of unpacking the structure of DNA. This ignites a passion to understand how nature works and eventually with collaborator Emmanuelle Charpentier in 2012 she finds herself at the place where unexplained repeated segments in bacterial DNA lead to the possibility to harness that bacterial defence mechanism. Designated CRISPR it turns out to be an easy-to-use tool to edit DNA. Doudna and Charpentier would be awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2020 for this discovery.

While Jennifer Doudna is central to the unfolding discoveries, she is by no means the only contributor. Isaacson gives significant space to the very many scientists working in the field. At times credit for a discovery or advance is a matter of days as to who gets published first, or if an additional payment was made for priority peer review. In fact every discovery or improved process is reliant on the success and sometimes the failure of others.



CRISPR launched the world into a life science revolution where it will become common place to study and possibly alter the code of life. Genetic diseases such as Huntington's and Sickle Cell Anaemia, both due to a single easily corrected DNA error, could be eliminated. But it could also be possible to select for eye colour, add extra strength or height.

The chapters on the ethics of gene editing are comprehensive and could be considered on their own without reading the whole book. A common concern is that these discoveries will increase the gap between those who can and cannot afford such treatment. Doudna has the view such gene editing should only be used when 'medically necessary'. She feels that 'enhancements' for children are morally and socially wrong but acknowledges that this line can be blurry. These are the questions that need careful consideration.

The final chapters show how rivalries are put aside between competing scientific teams to work on a vaccine for the new and dangerous virus Covid-19. A key puzzle: how to get the active component of the vaccine into the human cell where it can help prime the immune system. Two vaccine makers, Pfizer and Moderna, use the CRISPR technology.

Gene editing can be seen as a source of hope for the future in rolling back disease or could it be something which endangers and threatens the future of humankind? Isaacson ends with a plea for scientists and humanists to ask the question "What type of world do we want to leave for our children?" and then to feel their way forward preferably hand in hand.

NB: My copy of this book came from the public library.

Tautua:

The Memoirs of a Public Servant

Author: Tugaga

Lesamatauanu'u Misa

Telefoni Retzlaff

Printed in New Zealand by BookPrint Ltd

Reviewer: Rev Ali'itasi

Aoina-Salesa

This book is a heart-rending reflection of Tugaga Lesamatauanu'u Misa

Telefoni Retzlaff's foray into politics, the highlight of which was his time as Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa 2001-2010. The story is a pleasant read and will

resonate with many Samoans who will identify alongside Retzlaff their place within the fabric of this story.

As a King's College Old Boy and a graduate of Auckland University in Law (Honours), 'the world was his oyster' but for this 'Island Boy' family and his homeland would dictate a life he never could have imagined.

Samoa's history over this period, 1988-2011, is also Retzlaff's history. The two are intertwined and set the backdrop and platform for what was to play out in terms

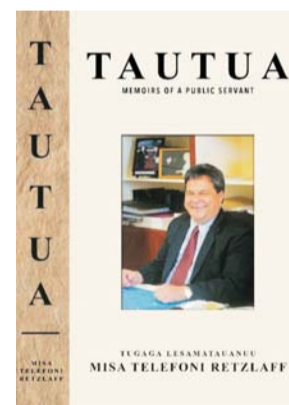
of Samoa as a country on the home front and on the world stage. Retzlaff was in the thick of it at times and sometimes unknowingly.

Retzlaff's story is not without its struggles and he acknowledges throughout his writing all those who in any way and in many ways,

contributed to his time of tautua - service. Retzlaff was his 'father's son' and while this relationship spoke strongly of his deepest regard and love for his father, there was also an unspoken understanding of expectation and

the inherent adherence to that understanding of a son to his father.

Retzlaff's hopes and aspirations for the next generations of his family and of Samoans generally are synonymous with those of his parents and their parents before them - peace and prosperity for all. In Retzlaff's life and times, a time of great learning and coming of age as a Son of Samoa, he remained true to his faith in God's faithfulness in enabling him to have the time of his life as a public servant.





The Russell Street Sunday School

Rachel Hurd, Archivist, Presbyterian Research Centre

Protestant Sunday schools began in Britain in the 18th century as a response to conditions created by the Industrial Revolution. Education was not available to a large portion of the population and many children worked long hours in factories, mills, and other industrial settings. Sunday was the only free time that many children had.

Some English churches began to offer schooling on a Sunday, teaching working children the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, using the medium of the Bible and other religious literature. Sunday schools soon spread throughout the whole of the United Kingdom.

Interest in education was particularly strong in the Scottish church and Scottish settlers brought this tradition with them when they migrated to New Zealand. The shipping inventories of the vessels bringing the first Free Church settlers to Otago in 1848 included lists of exercise books, slates, maps, text books and other materials for setting up a school on arrival.

As the 19th century progressed, a wider range of schools appeared and the Education Act of 1877 provided for free primary education for all New Zealand children. By this time the Sunday



The image shows a group of Russell Street Sunday School pupils and teachers at a Sunday school picnic in Fraser's Gully, Dunedin in 1912. Credit: Presbyterian Research Centre Archives.

schools had mostly moved away from their origins to focus solely on religious education and teaching. They were well attended and it is estimated that by 1900, two-thirds of New Zealand children went to Sunday school, even those whose parents were not regular church attenders. Many Sunday schools also offered additional activities such as picnics and excursions, and scripture examinations with prizes.

The story of the Sunday school in New Zealand is well illustrated by an example from Dunedin. In 1875 Dunedin's First Church began a Sunday

school in Russell Street, a poorer area on a rise above the central city. The lessons here were taken mainly by parishioners from First Church, including Helen Nicol, who later became an important suffragist. She described how her experiences teaching there first made her aware of the effects of poverty within her community. The Session of First Church in 1882 described the work at Russell Street as "for the purpose of reaching those who are not in the habit of attending the ordinary places of worship".

By 1883 there were 245 children on the

roll of the Russell Street Sunday School - 100 boys and 145 girls - taught by 24 teachers. Along with the Sunday school lessons there were prayer meetings, singing classes and a library. Among the most popular activities were the social gatherings and excursions which happened several times a year and could include concerts and train trips. The Sunday School Annual Report of 1882 highlighted their importance, maintaining that they "teach the children that Christians can enjoy themselves with as much pleasure as the worldly appear to and that religion does not wish its members to be gloomy and morose, but happy and joyous ..."

The 1883 Report did state that there had been complaints about the "pell mell way of getting in and out of conveyances" on the way to an excursion that year.

By the early 20th century activities at Russell Street had extended to older age groups, with Bible Class groups for young men and women and the Haere mai Group for girls, which offered a variety of activities, including "physical culture" classes, such as calisthenics and basketball (netball).

From the 1950s onwards, the Sunday school at Russell Street steadily declined, but the refurbished Sunday School Hall (now a private home) still stands as a reminder of this chapter in the lives of the children of one of Dunedin's less privileged communities.

Unsung Methodists

Rev Donald Phillipps

A Loyal Address

One hundred years ago, in the days when the Annual Conference was held in February, the centenary of New Zealand Methodism was celebrated - as will be the case this year - in Tai Tokerau. The Minutes of that Conference even contained a letter of greeting to the Methodist Church of New Zealand from the Whangaroa County Council, signed by its Chairman Joseph Solloway Lane, himself a staunch Methodist.

In the Conference Minutes that letter was preceded by a Loyal Address to King George V, which spoke of 'the many great and exalted privileges we enjoy under your reign'. I was provoked into searching for this record by the recent euphoria of Queen Elizabeth II's 'platinum jubilee,' and to wonder what place such loyalty has in our secular world.

Until relatively recently the concept of royalty was taken for granted. So long as



the Hebrew scriptures were accepted as essential to our upbringing and our understanding of the nature of human society, kingship was part of our language. In western society the slow demise of

monarchy began with the French Revolution. And what we have witnessed on television over the past fortnight is now, in a real sense, limited to just one nation. Our links with the United Kingdom are real enough, but the voice of rejection grows louder. Ultimately, of course, the decisions will be made on this side of the world.

This contribution is in no way a defence of traditional monarchy. But it seems that for many people there is a need for a symbol that captures the spirit of their land and its people. Take our flag for instance - starting with the Union Jack, modified by the addition of the Southern Cross - and we couldn't even agree with our Australian neighbours on this. Flags flying are an obvious sign - and our current continuing discussion shows how important flags are. But are we any nearer a consensus - except that we have narrowed our search to something that is indigenous - from kiwi to koru and beyond. What we call ourselves in easy conversation may not necessarily be enough to capture our spirit and our aspirations on a symbol like a flag.

What sort of symbol captures the spirit

FLAGS AND SYMBOLS

of a people? Quite obviously one answer is the cross. An empty cross is not just two strokes of the pen, but a constant reminder, and challenge, to recall the crucifixion. It was the bitterness of that memory that prevented the cross being commonly used for at least two centuries after the death of Jesus. Methodism doesn't really have a commonly accepted symbol, though the scallop shell was popular for a time. It came from the coat of arms of Wesley's family connection, the Wellesleys, and it carried the memory of the pilgrim.

What sort of symbol might capture the spirit of the people of this land? 'Religion' is not a word I so often use these days - largely because it retains, in its roots, the concept of being 'bound' together, of being bound to do this or that, the idea of bondage, of compulsion. But what is it that binds us, tangata whenua, western European, and pasifika, in particular? Is there something that is different about us - not to glory in, not to make us exclusive - but something to share. What have we to share that others might want, or need? Is there a symbol for whanau, for example, that would make sense on a flag?



Tupulaga Sinoti Samoa, Leadership Training 2022

O le vi'iga ma le fa'afetai I le Atua ona ua taunu'u ma le manuia le fa'amoemoe, sa tu'upoina. I le aso 3-6 o Iuni 2022 sa usuia ai le Leadership Training (LT) Camp a Tupulaga a le tatou Sinoti. O lea faamoemoe sa faia lea i le YMCA Camp Adair Hunua, Aukilani. E tusa ma le 45 o Tupulaga ma Mentors sa auai I le Leadership Training i le Queens Birthday Weekend.

O se taimi muamua fo'i lea ua tatala ai le camp I Tupulaga o loo aoga I high school, aemaise o sui e taito'a 4 mai matagaluega ta'itasi. E le gata I lea o le camp foi lenei sa mafai ona auai tupulaga e aunoa ma se totogi o se registration fee. Ua lagonaina e NYLO le aafiaga o galuega fai a Tupulaga ile itu tau seleni ona ole Koviti.

I le Aso Faraile sa tatala aloaia ai e NYLO le LT i se devotion ma tutu ai le moliga'o aua le amataliaina o le Leadership Training. E pei o upu tomua e sui faiga ae tumau faavae. O le LT Camp lea ua faatino ai le auai o Tupulaga 30+, e fai ma Mentors I le camp, o mentors sa auai o Faiese Brewster (Siona), Juanita Salevao (Panmure), Sharlene Malaemi (Manurewa), Ronald Vatau (Manurewa) ma Pu'a Tafa (Crossway, Masetone). O le galuega a Mentors, o le feasoasoani i polokalame a le LT ma lagolagosua ma fautua I Taitai Tupulaga talavou aua polokamalame ma gaioga faataatitia o lenei faamoemoe. Sa vaevae Tupulaga i vaega e 4 poo lanu eseese e pei ole lanu Mumu, Samasama, lanu Meamata ma le lanu Moana. Sa faia loa taaloga I le po muamua ma sa manumalo ai le lanu Samasama.

I le Aso To'ona'i sa ta'itaia ai e Juanita Salevao le matou devontion. O le faamalosi o lena aso o le Leaders are not born, Leaders are made. O se faamanatu I taitai e mafai lava ona taitai se tasi, pe a iai le loto ma le faatuatua e te mafaia so'o



Group with our Le Va facilitators for Atu Mai and Upstander workshop.

mea. O le aso fo'i lea sa auai tupulaga Ia latou vaega eseese I galuega fai sa tapenaina e YMCA. O activities sa iai o le Trapeeze ma le Leap of Faith, e pe'a I luga le tupulaga I se pou a taunuu I le tumutumuga o le pou ona puga mai lea I lalo ae taofi e le latou team o latou maea ia aua ne'I afaina se tasi ole team. O le auga o lea activity ia latou iloa ona faatuatua le latou team. O le isi activity o le Team Challenges, e tusa ma le ono luitau sa latou uia ona maea ai lea o lea activity. O le vaega lona lua o le aso o le Confidence Course ma le Raft building. Ona o le mamafa o timuga mai le aso Faraile sa le mafai ai ona faataunuu le Raft Building ona e faia lea I le vaitafe o le Hunua. Ae sa maua le avanoa e faaogaina ai le Mud Slide. I le Confidence course e iai fo'i liutau e feagai ma le au e pei lava o lae kolegi I le Army. Sa lagona le fiafia o Tupulaga ona ua maea o latou activities I lea aso o loo tumau pea le alofa ole Atua ma lana tausiga ile camp. Na maea loa le dinner i lea afiafi fai loa la matou Bon Fire. O se avanoa na ese sona faalogona a'o faasoia tupulaga I faigata ma luitau sa fegai ma I latou, e le gata I activities a'o I totonu o latou tupulaga taitasi. Sa salani mea uma ile matou Bon Fire ma le sunusunuina o Marsh Mellowes ma tauvaga pesepesega.

Ole Aso Sa sa ta'ita'ina e Sharlene Malaemi le matou devotion, ae lei faia le ti ole taeao. Na maea le ti ona fai lea ole session a NYLO ile Visions and Goals. O se faamalosi I tatou tupulaga po'o a ni a latou goals mo le lumana'I faapea le lumana'I mo lo latou Tupulaga ale Sinoti. Po'o

a ni resources e manaomia poo le a foi se support e mafai e NYLO ona fesoasoani ai ile faataunuu o latou goals. Sa lagona lava le fiafia ma le loto faagaetia ole NYLO I le naunau o Taitai I le lumanai o le galuega a Tupulaga. Sa faia le matou Sauniga Faamanatuna, sa taitaia lea e le Failauga Tupulaga ia Faiese Brewster ma le Susuga Tausi Matagaluega ia Rev. Sioa Letalu. Sa auai atu foi ma le faletua ia Ruanna I le matou sauniga. Na maea le matou tapuaiga ole aso Sa, ona fai loa lea o taaloga ma aoaoga Tusi Paia sa faia lava ele matou failauga ia Faiese. Sa talanoaina ai Temptations poo faaososoga o le olaga, aemeise mo Tupulaga I olaga o lea ua iai lenei vaitau, o le olaga faa-socialmedia. Sa faasoia foi Tupulaga I le faigata o faaososoga ma luitau o le Social Media ma aafiaga ua afaina ai I latou. Momoli atu le faafetai tele I Tupulaga talavou mo le latou faasoia o lena afiafi. Malo Faafetai I Tupulaga sa faasoia i lea afiafi. Malo Faafetai I Tupulaga sa faasoia I lea afiafi. Thank you for trusting us NYLO and Mentors, we know it was not easy to share, but a load shared is a load halved.

Ona faaiu lea o la matou LT I le wokshop sa tapenaina e Le Va o le Atu Mai, e faamanatu ai le taua o le tatou aganu'u ma values faa-Pasefika. Ma le wokshop I le Upstander, o le faataunuu o lou tagata pea tupu se faalavelave, ma ia e tu malosi e faaititia se faafitauli. Sa tapunia aloaia e NYLO le LT Camp ile tatalo faaiu. Talosia ia ile alofa ole Atua ia maua ni faalumaga taua e tupulaga ole Sinoti ma I matou uma sa auai ile LT Camp.



"Faith over Fear" Silika Isaia 2nd attempt to reach the top.



Javan Aumua, Lilly Vatau Theresa Petelo, Fau Lemoa, Amy-Grace Winterstein, Lei Faalaa, NYLO Cori Ieli, Telefoni Falefitu, Front: Fou Faasipa, Tape Feomaia and Rosita Alisi.



(L-R) Sieni Fa'afuata, Rosita Alisi, Lisa Kaisara, Darnel Tipady, Kelly Peilua and Sarai Tafa, discussing their goals as a group.



Confidence Course Teams going through the confidence course.



Ben Brewster and Suzette Iopo, Siona Tupulaga Leaders.



NA YALOTABU KEI NA NONA LAKO MAI

Lesoni ; CAKACA 1:8,12 – 14, LUKE 24:47 – 49, CAKACA 2:1 - 4

Cakaca 1:8 ia dou na rawata na kaukauwa ni sa lako mai vei kemudou na yalotabu, dou na qai dau tukuni au mai jerusalemi, kei jutia taucoko, kei samaria ka yacova nai yalayala kei vuravura.

Au sa vakabula raraba yani kina loma ni Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma E Niusiladi, ni bula nai Talatala Qase, dou bula talega na veitacini vaka I Talatala, turaga na Qase Levu Vakacegu Ilaitia Tuwere, kemudrau saka nai Talatala Qase Vakacegu, Mikaele Yasa kei Talatala Peni Tikoinaka, kei kemudou nai tokani vaka I Talatala kei na kena I vavakoso lomani.

Au gadreva mei takitaki vakayalo mai nai Lalakai ni Wasewase nai ulutaga levu ni vula vakalotu eda donuya tiko qo, NA PENITIKO, ka dusia na Penitiko se na siga ni Penitiko, **NA NONA LAKO MAI NA YALOTABU** ena siga oya e Jerusalemi me qai vaka tucaketaki ratou na tisaipeli me ratou vunautaka nai tukutuku Vinaka I Jisu Karisito **{the gospel of Jesus christ}** kei na nona Veivakabulai **{his salvation}**. E vica na ka e tukuna nai Volatabu ena nona lako mai na Yalotabu, ia au gadreva meu tekivu ena veika ka dusia ko Jisu ena tikina ka toka I cake oqori, **NA YALOTABU NA VUNI KAUKAUWA**. E tukuna toka ike ko Jisu ni na lako mai na Yalotabu ka na qai solia vei ratou na kaukauwa me ratou qai lako yani ki Vuravura ka vunautaka nai Tukutuku Vinaka I Jisu kei na nona Veivakabulai. E dusia vei keda ni da gadreva, tabu saka yani na tamata na kaukauwa ni Yalotabu me qai rawa nida tucake ka qarava yani na veitalaki levu ka veitalaki kina ko Jisu. **{the great commission – MACIU 28:19 – 20}** Eda na sega ni rawa ni qarava na Veitalaki Levu qo ena kaukauwa ga vakatamata, baleta ni tiko raviti keda talega ena siga kei na bogi, na tevero ko Setani kei na nona mataivalu butobuto. **{1 Pita 5:8}** Ia na lako mai ni kaukauwa ni Yalotabu qo e sega ni tu ga ka lako mai. Ena gadreva na noda laki tiko wawa e Jerusalemi me yacova ni lutu mai na Yalotabu ka soli na kaukauwa ni veiqaravi. Ia na nona lako mai na Yalotabu kei na nona soli kaukauwa, au gadreva meu wasea kina e tolu na kena yavu ni ka e koto ena rarama ni talanoa oqo kei na kena lesoni e tolu oqori mei takitaki vakayalo mai nai Lalakai ni Kalou ena I Wasewase. Nai matai, **NA WAWA ENA CAKACA VAKA LOMAVATA**. Nai karua, **NA LAKO MAI ni yalotabu KEI NA KA E KAUTA**



Meadowland Children's Sunday 2022.

MAI, Na kena I katolu, **NA NONA VEITOKANI NA YALOTABU**.

NA WAWA ENA CAKACA VAKA LOMAVATA **{waiting & working wholeheartedly in togetherness}**

Na vosa nei Jisu ka koto ena lesoni I cake oqori, a vola talega ko Maciu ena Maciu 28:19 - 20, ka qai vakamatataka tale ko Luke ena Luke 24:47 - 49 me ratou laki waraka na Kaukauwa oqori e Jerusalemi ka koto vata na kena cakaca. Eda raica ena Cakaca 2:1 - 4, kei na Cakaca 1:12 – 14, ni koto kina na bula ni wawa oqo ka sega ni toka wale ena nodratou sa lomavata ena masu kei na lolo. Nai matai ni dusidusi ni wawa ena cakaca vaka lomavata, e dusia ni gadreva na kena lutu mai na Yalotabu kina noda bula, meda bula ena bula ni wawa ena cakaca vaka lomavata ena lolo kei na masu. Na lolo kei na masu ka tu kina na vei vakatakatai vakayalo ena bula ni vakatutusa, veivosovosoti, veiqomi, veiwasei ena Vosa ni Kalou kei na kena bulataki me rawa ni savasava tiko kina na bula ka galala na nona curu mai na Yalotabu. Ni cavuti na Lomavata, e kena I balebale me tekivu sara ga vei keda yadudua ena kena vakanauluvata na Lomada, na Yaloda kei na Yagoda ena noda qarava na cakaca ni wawa oqo. Me kakua ni duidui tu na tolu na ka oqo, me tu tani na yalo, ka tu tani yago, ka tu tani lomada, sega me ratou tu vakalomavata ka vakanauluvata ena cakaca ni wawa oqo, me qai sema vata kei ira tale na tisaipeli yalodina ka me qai yaco me taucoko na lomavata ka lutu na Yalotabu. Oqo na ka e dau yaco vua e dua ni sa yavalati ena Yalotabu ka solia na nona bula vei Jisu, e vakanauluvata kece na lomana, na yalona kei na yagona me solia na nona bula, sa qai lutu mai na Yalotabu ka mai toka vua. Ni sa rawati nai matai ni ulutaga oqori, sa na qai rawa me davo mai nai karua ni ulutaga :

Na lako mai ni yalotabu kei na ka e kauta mai **{the coming of the holy spirit & what he brings}**

Ni sa davo vinaka nai matai ni ka e tataunaka ko Jisu vei iratou



Meadowland Church Women's Sunday 2022.

na tisaipeli ka koto ena matai ni ulutaga, sa na qai rawa me lutu mai na Yalotabu ka cakava na nona cakaca. E rua na ka e kauta mai na Yalotabu ena nona lako mai ka mai curu vei ratou na tisaipeli ena siga ni Penitiko, Nai matai, na nona mai solia nai solisoli ni yalotabu ka kena I karua na nona mai vakaramataka na taledi eratou sucu vatakaya mai. **{bringing gifts of the holyspirit and enlightening talents they were born with}** E rua na ka oqo eda raica ena nona lako mai na Yalotabu vei ratou na tisaipeli ka yaco kina me ratou tucake ka Vunau kina ena loma koro ko Jerusalemi. Na kena soli nai solisoli ni dui vosavosa kei na kena vakaramataka talega na taledi e ratou dui sucu vata kaya mai. **{cakaca 2:3 – 4}** E duidui nai solisoli e dui soli vei keda ka tu na kena I naki ni kena soli mai meda mai tiki ni yago ni Lotu I Jisu ena kena qaravi, cakacakataki ka maroroi talega na nona Lotu, ka da mai liga ka yava talega ni tukuna yani nai Tukutuku Vinaka I Jisu ena kena vakalesui na yalo mera lesu vua na Kalou. Nai solisoli oqori e kacivi keda tiko kina na Kalou meda mai vakayagataka ena loma ni nona Lotu savasava, me tubu ka vuavuai vinaka kina. Eso era soli vei ira nai solisoli ni Vunau, se I solisoli ni veivakabulai, se veimasulaki, kei na so tale nai solisoli tale eso, ia e rua nai solisoli e soli kece vei keda na tamata eda solibula ena dela ni veivutuni mai na veisolisoli duidui ka dui soli veikedu. Nai solisoli ka vakatokai vakavavalagi, the Gift to Minister & the Gift of Knowledge. He gives the power to these gifts to

prosper. Nai solisoli meda wasea kina na Vosa ni Kalou **{joni 15:26 – 27, cakaca 1:7 – 8}** kei nai solisoli ni Kilaka meda kila na Vuravura ka kila na tevero kei na nona cakaca butobuto, ka kila na ka meda cakava meda lako tani mai kina, ka vakakina na noda kila talega nai cavacava ni vuravura qo kei na ka ena tarava mai. **{JONI 16:8,13 – 14}** These are the common gifts of the Holy Spirit to every dedicated Christian. Ena dela ni solisoli duidui oqori, sa tu talega na nona vakaramataka na veitalaki duidui ka soli vei keda meda sucu vatakaya mai, ka meda kidava ka raica ka kila, ka vakayagataka talega kina nona Lotu. Na veitalaki lalai se levu e dui solia vei keda mai na gauna ni noda sucu, e solia me yaga kina noda bula, na noda vuvale, na noda cakaca, na noda vuli, ia sa kena I naki levu duadua meda mai vakayagataka kina na nona Lotu savasava na turaga, ka gadreva meda kila ni dodonu meda cakacakataki tiko na noda dui taledi e solia vei keda na Kalou me rawa ni vua, ka vua ga kina na nona lotu e Vuravura. Meda kakua ni buluta se vakamocera, de da na qai biu ki tuba meda curumi batabata ka vakasequruquru bati. **{Parables of the talent - Maciu 25:14 – 30}** Ena I solisoli kei na taledi ka sereki tiko oqori, ena yaga meda vakayagataka vakavinaka ena noda veiqaravi e Vuravura, ia ka vakabibi sara ga na nona Lotu Savasava na Karisito. Ni vua na noda taledi ena noda cakacakataki ka vakabibi ena Lotu I Jisu, ena tawa na ligada kina vua eda na kauta yani vua na turaga, ka na tau mai vei keda

na vosa talei, tamata dina, ko sa dina ena ka e vica ga, curu kina marau ni nomu turaga.

Na nona veitokani na yalotabu – the fellowship of the holyspirit

Nai katolu ni ka bibi ni nona lako mai na Yalotabu, sai koya na nona mai veitokani kei keda. **{Fellowship}** Ena loma ni nona veitokani oqori, e koto kina e rua nai Wasewase ni nona veiqaravi. Nai matai, e lako mai na Yalotabu me mai noda I tokani, **{joni 14:16 – 17, 26, cakaca 1:5}** ena loma ni veitokani oqori, e koto kina na nona veidusimaki, dau ni veituberi, veivakaukauwataki, veivakadodonutaki, veitaqomaki, veiliutaki, vuni ka dina, veipapaitasotaki kina noda I lakolako ni vakabauta kei na qaravi tavi e Vuravura, ka vakabibi na noda qarava ka maroroya na Lotu, kei na noda qarava na veitalaki levu ka koto ena Maciu 28:19 – 20. Na kena I karua, e lako mai me mai vakani keda se susugi keda vakayalo kina Vua ni Yalotabu me yaco me tu kaukauwa ka vuavuai vinaka. He feeds the tree of our spiritual life only with the Fruit of the Spirit so it can grow healthy and bear healthy fruits to make our Faith stronger and stronger. **{kalatia 5:22 – 23}** Sai koya ga oqori na ka e veivakani kina na Yalotabu, na vua ga ni Yalotabu, me rawa ni tubu vinaka ka vuavuai vinaka kina na noda bula vakayalo. Na vua ni Yalotabu, sai koya ga nai tovo ka vaka I tovtotaki koya kina na noda turaga ko Jisu Karisito, ka buli koya kina me Dauniveiqaravi Yalodina ka qarava galugalu kina nai lesilesi mai Lomalagi me yacova sara na mate kei na tucake tale mai na mate ena vuku ni noda lomani na tamata, nai bulubuli vakamareqeti ni Kalou Bula. Ena yaga meda dau vakarautaka ena so na gauna na titobu ni vei vua ni Yalotabu kina noda bula, na Reki, ke se tiko na bula ni dau cudrudrudru kina noda bula, e sebera ni tu vinaka na vua ni Daureki, ke se tiko na yalototolo, e sebera ni vua vinaka na yalomalua, ke se tiko na yalokaukauwa kina noda bula, e sebera ni vua vinaka na yalomalumumu, ke se dau tubu vakalevu na veilecayaki kei na lomalomarua ena veigauna ni dredre eda sotava, e sebera ni vua vinaka na Vakacegu, ke se dau yavavala ka yamekemeke na noda Vakabauta, e sebera ni dei ka kaukauwa na noda Vakabauta. Sa na yaga kina meda lesuva tale nai matai ni kalawa sei ulutaga, na tiko wawa e Jerusalemi kei na kena cakaca, ka dautagica ka guta na Yalotabu me lakovata tiko kei keda ena veigauna, ena qai yaco meda vuavuai vinaka ka tamata qaqa ka kena I cavacava nai sala mai Lomalagi. **ME NODAVATA TIKO NA VAKACEGU NI TURAGA. EMENI.**



Kei uki pe hotau kakai ki he huhu malu'i Koviti-19

Fai 'e Felonitesi Manukia

'Oku kei uki pe 'e he pule'anga Nu'usila mo e Siasi Metotisi 'a hotau kakai ki he huhu malu'i Koviti-19.

'I ha fakamatala 'a Sione Feki ki he 'AtaOngo Tonga 'o Aotearoa, 'a eni ia 'oku ne tokanga'i Pukolea, 'oku mātu"aki kei mahu'inga 'aupito ke kei fakahoko e huhu malu'i 'a e kakai Tonga 'i he tapa kotoa 'o e fonua ni.

Ko Sione ko e 'ofisa ma'olunga ia mei he Waitemata District Health Board.

“Ko e mahaki faka'auha ko e Koviti-19 te tau fe'ao loloa kitautolu mo ia he kei takai pe ia he kominiuti,” ko e lau ia 'a Sione.

“Pea kuo pau ke tau mateuteu kitautolu mo hotau ngaahi fāmili ke tau'i 'a 'ene mafola he 'oku kei fakatu'utāmaki pe.

“Kapau te tau tuku noa'i te tau toe uestia pe mo puke pea 'e kau kovi foki kia nautolu 'oku 'I ai honau fokoutua tauhi.”

'Oku kei lele fakauike pe 'a e ngaahi station huhu malu'i 'i he ngaahi feitu'u kehekehe 'i 'Aokalani - hange ko e tau'anga pasi lahi motu'a 'i Otahuhu, ngaahi pa'ake va'inga 'a e fānau hangē ko e netipolo, pea mo e ngaahi 'apisiasi Tonga - hangē ko Lotofale'ia, Tuingapapai mo Nasaleti.

Ko e ngaahi station ko eni 'i he fekau'aki kau neesi mo e toketā mei he Fono pea mo Langimālie pea mo e ngaahi kulupu mei he kominiuti - hange ko e ngaahi siasi mo e ngaahi kalapu kavatonga, kau ai 'a e To'utupu Toa-Ko-Ma'afu mo e Talasiti Alonga 'Ia Kalaisi.

“Ko e malu'i lelei taha pe ia ma'a 'etau fānau mo hotau ngaahi fāmili ko e huhu malu'i pea toe 'alu mo e booster,” Ko Sione Feki ia.

“Oku kei mahu'inga pe ki he Potungāue Mo'ui ke huhu malu'i e kakai pea ko e 'uhinga ia 'a hono toutou uki mo uki e polokalama ni.

“Oku 'oatu e Fakamālō lahi ki he ngaahi siasi he fakafaingamālie 'enau koloa ke fakahoko ai e polokalama huhu ni. Ka ne ta'e'oua e poupu 'e 'ikai a'u e huhu malu'i ki he kakai tokolahi 'i he kominiuti.”

'Oku kei tufa pe foki 'i he ngaahi station huhu malu'i ni e ngaahi 'ofa faka'ai'ai hangē ko e vausia sopingi mo e ngaahi pale kehekehe. 'I he teu fetaulaki 'a e Kiwis mo e Mate Ma'a Tonga he mala'e 'akapulu liiki, na'e tufa tikite ki Mt Smart Stadium kia kinautolu 'oku huhu ke nau sio tau 'i mala'e.

“Ko e ngaahi me'a pe ke tohoaki mai ai e tokanga hotau kakai ki he huhu malu'i ke tokoni mo malu ki ai honau ngaahi fāmili,” ko e lau ia 'a Sione.

“Neongo 'oku tau sio tokua kuo holo e



Sione Feki, of the Waitemata District Health Board, leading the Covid-19 vaccination pop-up stations around Auckland.

fika e kau puke he Koviti-19 ka 'oku te'eki ke holo e mate ia mo e tākoto he ICU he ngaahi falemahaki he ko e kongā lahi ai ko e kakai Pasifiki.

“Oku mahu'inga ke 'oua leva 'e hiki 'etau tokanga mei he huhu malu'i 'o e Koviti-19 koe'uhi kapau te te fokoutua 'e ha'aki ma'ama'a pe 'o 'ikai a'u ki he ICU pe ko falemahaki.”

Na'e fakatokanga foki 'a e pule'anga ke mātu'aki tokanga 'aupito e kominiuti he to'u momoko 'oku tau lolotonga fononga ai he ko e taha ia e ngaahi me'a 'e ala mafola vave ai e Koviti-19 he fekau'aki mo e flu.

Kapau te tau ta'etokanga 'e hanga 'e he flu o toe fakamafola e mahaki faka'auha 'iate kitautolu mo hotau ngaahi fāmili. Pea ko e fale'i e kau toketā ke 'alu fakataha pe huhu malu'i Koviti-19 mo e huhu malu'i flu - 'oku na ta'etotongi loua pe 'i he ngaahi feitu'u maheni 'o hangē ko e toketā fāmili, ngaahi falemahaki mo e ngaahi kiliniki 'a e Potungāue Mo'ui he kominiuti.

'Oku toe 'i ai pe foki mo e ngaahi liuanga fo'ou 'o e Koviti-19. Kuo a'u mai e ni'ihī ki he kominiuti 'o e fonua ni, pea te'eki ke a'u mai e ni'ihī, ka kuo nau 'asi he ngaahi fonua 'i 'Iulope, 'Amelika mo 'Aositelēlia foki.

Ko e fale'i mo e uki 'oku fai 'e he pule'anga Nu'usila, Potungāue Mo'ui, Siasi Metotisi mo e ngaahi kiliniki mo e kau toketā Tonga ke huhu malu'i e kakai mo e ngaahi fāmili kotoa kae lava ketau lava 'o fakafepaki'i ha toe mafola lahi 'a e mahaki faka'auha ni 'i hotau kominiuti.

Ko e ngaahi station huhu malu'i 'e kei lele fakauike pe 'i he ngaahi feitu'u pau kuo fakalau atu 'i 'olunga 'i he to'u momoko 'oku tau lolotonga fononga ai. Pea 'oku kei 'oatu pe 'a e fakalotolahi kiate kimoutolu kau taki mo e 'ulu he fāmili ke huhu malu'i.

Ongoongo mei he ngaahi vāhenga:

'Oku kei tāpuni pe foki e ngaahi falelotu he ngaahi lahi 'i 'Aokalani - Vahenga



Tongan Community leaders supporting the vaccination drive at Otahuhu.



A happy mother and child showing their free tickets to the Kiwis vs Mate Ma'a Tonga rugby league match, after being vaccinated at Otahuhu.



Vaccinated people were offered free food from this sausage sizzle at the Otahuhu Covid-19 pop-up vaccination centre. All images supplied courtesy of Sione Feki.

Ngaue 'Aokalani mo Manukau, Lotofale'ia mo Tokaima'ananga. Toe fononga katoa he halafononga tatau 'i he māhina ko Siulai.

Ko e ngaahi vāhenga kuo nau 'osi foki ki falelotu 'o malanga ai ko e VAāhenga Talafekau 'o e Fuakava Fo'ou Pukekohe, Saione Parish Papatoetoe mo e ngaahi vāhenga ngāue 'i tu'a 'Aokalani.

Ongoongo mei Tonga:

Kuo kamata ngāue'aki 'i Tonga 'a e Mobile App 'oku 'iloa ko e Tonga 'Atautolu ke ne tokoni ki he tau'i e mafola 'a e Koviti-19. Ko e fo'i polokalama ia kuo 'osi fo'u ke ne tokoni 'i 'a e tau'i e mafola 'a e Koviti - 19

'aki 'ene tokangaekina 'a e feohi vāofi 'a kinautolu 'i he komiuniti 'i Tonga.

'Oku natula tatau 'a e App 'i Tonga mo e App 'oku tau ngāue"aki 'i muli ni foki.

'E hanga 'e he fo'i polokalama ni 'o 'oange ha ngaahi fakatokanga vave mo'oni kia tekinautolu kuo na'u 'osi feohi vāofi pea mo ha tokotaha kuo puke 'i he KOVITI-19. 'Oku pehē foki 'e he Potungāue Mo'ui 'a Tonga ko e polokalama ni te ne kei fakahoko pe fatongia ni pea 'i he taimi tatau pe te ne kei malu'i pe 'a e ngaahi fakamatala fakafo'ituitui 'o e taha kotoa pe (privacy & confidentiality).



Uēsia e kominiuti Pasifiki ke fetāaki e kau kengi 'ailani 'i 'Aokalani



MP 'Anahila Kanongata'a-Suisuiki and Tongan community leaders working with the police to keep the peace in the lead-up to the Kiwis vs Mate Ma'a Tonga rugby league match on 25 June. Photo courtesy Felonitesi Manukia.

Fai 'e Felonitesi Manukia

'I he fakautuutu e fetā'aki e ngaahi kau kengi, na'e fakahoko ha fakataha 'a e kau taki 'o e kominiuti Tonga 'o 'Aokalani ke talanoa ki he 'isiu ni, 'i he teu fetaulaki 'a e Kiwis mo e Mate Ma'a Tonga.

Na'e fakahoko e fakataha 'i Mangere, he 'aho 17 'O Siune, ke tālanga'i e ngaahi ma'alali e kāinga Tonga he teu fetaulaki e Kiwis mo e Mate Ma'a Tonga 'i Mt Smart Stadium he 'aho 25 'O Siune, na'a faifai kuo kau mai e ngaahi fetā'aki faka-kau-kengi 'i he fiefia hotau kāinga Tonga.

Ne kau ki he fakataha 'a e List MP 'a e Labour, ka ko e mēmipa 'a e Siasi Metotisi 'o Nu'usila, ko 'Anahila Kanongata'a-Suisuiki, pea mo e kau taki lotu, kau ngāue social workers mo e kau mēmipa kengi tutuku.

Na'e fakahā he fakataha e tokanga e kominiuti Tonga ki he fakautuutu 'e 'asi e kau kengi mēmipa kakato 'i he ngaahi lotu Pasifiki mo e putu foki.

Na'e 'i he fakataha foki 'a Faifekau Tevita Finau ma'ae 'AtaOngo Tonga Aotearoa, 'a eni ia 'oku ne tauhi e Pukolea mo e peesi Tonga he Touchstone 'o ne fakaiikiiki mai 'a e fakataha mahu'inga ni.

“Oku fai e tokanga lahi ki he kau kengi mo 'enau 'asi fakataha holo mo 'etau fānau 'i he 'etau ngaahi me'a faka-kominiuti 'oku fai, hangē ko e putu mo e ngaahi fakataha fakalotu,” ko Faifekau Tevita Finau ia.

“Oku 'i ai foki e ngaahi fāmili he ngaahi siasi Pasifiki 'e ni'ihi na'e lipooti he fakataha, 'oku nau tali e pa'anga fou mei he kau kengi 'o foaki ma'a honau ngaahi

siasi takitaha.

“Ko 'enau tu'utu'uni fakafo'ituitui pe ia 'a nautolu ki honau fāmili.

“Oku 'ikai ke u tui 'oku kau hotau siasi Tonga ai.”

'I he lea 'a Manase Lua, ko e sekelitali 'a e Aotearoa Tongan Health Workers Association, 'oku ne kau ki he Siasi 'Ahofitu, na'a ne tokanga ki he lahi 'a e foaki pa'anga 'a e kau kengi ki he ngaahi siasi 'e ni'ihi he kominiuti Pasifiki.

“Oku 'ikai ko ha 'ata ia 'oku sai ki he 'etau fānau he 'e pehē 'e he fānau ko e me'a lelei e kau he kengi 'oku ma'u ai 'enau pa'anga lelei mo vave,” ko Manase Lua ia.

“Io, 'oku tau nounou faka silini pea 'oku fiema'u e tokoni ka 'oku hala ke fakalongolongo pe ngaahi siasi 'oku nau tali e pa'anga mei he kau kengi.

“Oku ne 'ave 'a e fekau hala ki he fānau.

“Kuo 'osi ma'u e fakamatala falala'anga 'oku 'ofa pa'anga e kau kengi ki he ngaahi fanga ki'i siasi iiki, ko e tokoni tokua koe'uhi 'oku nau kau he kominiuti.

“E kei fakalongolongo ai pe ngaahi siasi pehē?”

Na'e 'ikai tui e fakataha ni 'e uesia e ngaahi ma'alali fakafiefia e kakai Tonga ki he teu e fetaulaki 'a e Kiwis mo e Mate Ma'a Tonga, 'i ha kau mai ha fetā'aki e kau kengi.

Na'e 'i ai foki 'i he fakataha ha kau kengi tutuku na'a nau pehē 'oku 'i ai pe ngaahi 'uhinga kehekehe mo lalahi 'oku OO ai e fānau 'o ului he ngaahu kulupu kengi - kau ai e ta'etokanga e mātu'a tauhi fānau, masiva mo e 'ikai fehokotaki mo e ngaahi kulupu tokoni social support 'a e kominiuti Pasifiki.

Ko e tangata kengi tutuku 'e taha na'e 'i

he fakataha na'a ne pehē na'e tupu 'a 'ene 'alu 'o kau he kau kengi koe'uhi he na'e li'eli'aki ia he'ene ongo matu'a pea 'ikai ohi lelei hake he'ene kei tupu hake.

Na'e ne iku ai o ngāue popula he ta'u 'e hongofulu-tupu 'i he hia ko e fakapOO 'i hono ta'u tahaono pe ia.

Ko 'ene fale'i ki he mātu'a tauhi fānau ke tauhi, tokanga'i mo ohi lelei hake 'enau fānau pea 'oua e tukunoa'i.

“Ko e ongo'i pe he fānau 'oku nau li'ekina mo ta'etokanga'i kinautolu te nau 'alu nautolu ' ului mo kau he kau kengi,” ko e lea ia 'a e tangata.

“Pea ko 'enau ului ko ia 'oku ta'emahino 'a hono fuoloa - pe ko e fakataimi pe ko e taimi nounou pe ko e mātu'aki nofo 'aupito pe nautolu he kau kengi 'o nau mole mei honau ngaahi fāmili pea mole ai mei he siasi 'oku kau ki ai.

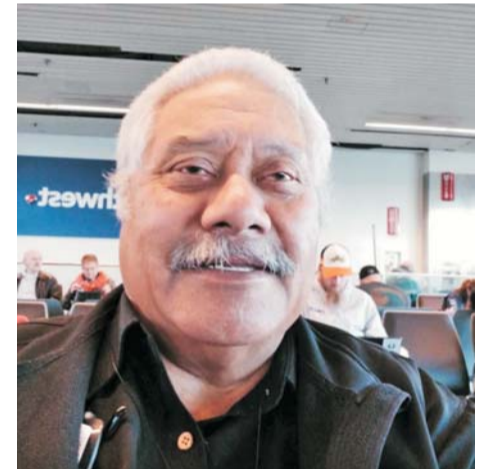
“Oku 'ikai toe fai ha me'a kehe he kau kengi ko e maumaulao pe mo e fakamoveuveu he kominiuti 'oku tau 'ofa ai.

“Ko e kaiha'a pe mo e fakamamahi ki he kakai 'o e kominiuti.

'Oku tui foki a Manase Lua kuo kau e fānau iiki he ngaahi ngaue maumaulao ke nau ma'u mo'ui mei ai. 'E 'ikai 'alu ha leka o maumaulao pehē ko ha'ane manako ki he fa'ahinga me'a ko ia.

Ko e fokotu'utu'u 'a e kau taki kominiuti he taimi ni ko e fai ha ngāue ke ta'ofi e fetā'aki e kau kengi he kuo lahi 'aupito e mole e ngaahimo'ui mo e lavelavea he kē 'a e kau kengi.

'I he fakamatala setisitika 'a e kau polisi kuo a'u taufana me'afana ki he 'ova he tu'o tahaua he mAāhina ko Mē mo Siune. 'Oku 'i ai e manavasi'i na'a 'ikai ngata pe he mate mo e lavea 'a e tamaiki kengi ka



Rev Tevita Finau, one of the Pacific Island community leaders at meeting to discuss concerns about Island gang activity. Image courtesy Tevita Finau.

'e toe lavea noa mo mate noa ai ha tamaiki mo ha kakai kehe, 'oku 'ikai ke 'i ai ha'anau felāve'i mo e kau kengi.

'Oku fa'a 'i ai pe keisi ko e mate noa ha taha tonuhia 'i ha kē ha kau kengi. Ko e malu taha pe 'a e fānau ko e nofo pe 'i 'api, ko e fale'i ia 'a e fakataha.

Na'e pehē 'e kau mēmipa e fakataha 'oku 'ikai ko e faka'osi eni e fakataha, 'e toe ui pe ha ngaahi fakataha 'a mui kae 'oleva kuo solova e palopalema ko e fetā'aki e kau kengi kae uesia ai e kominiuti.

'Oku hā he fakamatala 'a e kau polisi ko e lahi taha e keisi taufana ko e heka pe he me'alele pea lele pe 'i hala-pule'anga 'o fana ki he ngaahi 'api (drive-by shootings) 'oku nau pehē 'oku nofo ai e kau kengi fili.

Ko e taimi eni 'oku fakatu'utāmaki ai ki he kominiuti, he 'e lavea noa ai ha taha 'oku 'ikai kengi pea iku 'o mole ai ha mo'ui.