



## The Response to the Report; What Now?

*Former Human Rights Commissioner Rosslyn Noonan.*

It's difficult to know where to start or even what to cover when writing a short article about *Whanaketia: Through Pain and Trauma, From Darkness to Light*, the report of the Abuse in Care Royal Commission.

The experiences of survivors of State and faith-based care were shocking to hear as they gave evidence at the Royal Commission. Their testimonies and those of many others who spoke privately to the Commission are equally distressing to read in the report. This happened in my lifetime, when my own children were young – how did I not know? How could we have let it happen and go on happening?

*Whanaketia* is unequivocal:

Instead of receiving care and support, children, young people and adults in care were exposed to unimaginable physical, emotional, mental and sexual abuse, severe exploitation and neglect. Abuse and neglect were widespread throughout the inquiry period in State and faith-based institutions.

The inquiry period was 1950-1999. Is this all just past history? That's what State and faith-based officials want us to believe. Thus absolving themselves from any possible responsibility, any accountability.

Restricting the inquiry period highlights one of the most disturbing aspects of the experiences of those abused. State agencies and faith-based organisations have over decades gone to inordinate lengths to deny the reality of the abuse. Throughout the 2000s senior government officials denigrated survivors, treated them as if they were criminals, organised for some to be under surveillance to undermine their evidence in Court, claimed they, and one very courageous lawyer, were simply out to make money, denied them information that was rightly theirs and strategised across the public sector to prevent any claims being successful. As New Zealand's Chief Human Rights Commissioner at the time, I witnessed some of that first-hand and experienced heavy pressure from the Ministries of Social Development and Health and by Crown Law to ignore it.

The abuse and neglect so many had suffered as children and vulnerable adults caused life-long trauma. It undermined their physical and mental health, their education, their capacity for loving and being loved, the ability to develop healthy family relationships, to earn and support themselves. That trauma impacted across the generations. *Whanaketia* documents mistreatment so severe that at least some of it has now been acknowledged as torture. Torture occurred in faith-based services as well as those that were State run.

Māori children were disproportionately taken into state care. They were often denied contact with or knowledge of whānau, hapū and iwi. Once in care, the Royal Commission found that Māori "experienced harsher treatment across many care settings, being degraded because of their ethnicity and skin colour". Pacific children, young people and adults in care also experienced racial abuse and cultural neglect. Disabled survivors, including those who experienced mental distress, amongst other terrible abuse "were denied personhood and were often stripped of their dignity and autonomy".

Despite all this, many survivors managed to build a decent life for themselves, their tamariki and future generations. And they found the courage to confront what had been done to them and those who had done it because they wanted to be sure that what had happened to them could never happen to another child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Yet when giving evidence at the Royal Commission many spoke of being severely re-traumatised by the actions of the government agencies and faith-based institutions when they courageously sought acknowledgement of their abuse.

*Whanaketia* records:

For decades, survivors repeatedly called for justice but were unheard, disbelieved, ignored and silenced ... Political and public service leaders spent time, energy and taxpayer resources to hide, cover up and then legally fight survivors to protect the potential perceived costs to the Crown, and their own reputations.

Faith leaders similarly fought to cover up abuse by moving abusers to other locations and denying culpability.

Regrettably the Courts showed they were equally incapable of dispensing justice for survivors, demonstrating in a compelling test case an eagerness to affirm the Crown's denigration of the claimants.

With the evidence now documented in the Royal Commission's report, can survivors and their whānau, expect at last recognition, justice and fair compensation?

The Prime Minister has announced an apology will be given in Parliament on 12 November. It is being developed in consultation with some survivors. Hon Erica Stanford, the Lead Coordination Minister for the Government's Response to the Royal Commission, has been meeting regularly with survivors. She has called for senior public service officials to be held accountable for mistreatment of abuse claimants. She authorised urgent payments to Lake Alice survivors with less than six months to live. These are positive signs.

Yet the public service officials' old behaviours are still in play. There is limited space for survivors to attend the apology in Parliament or at one of the events being held at the time in the main cities. The urgent payments covered ten people and the process for applying is laborious. Worst of all they amount to a paltry \$20,000. The senior public servants who orchestrated the strategy to deny abuse survivors justice remain in high office or are allowed to retire without any accountability.

In 2021, in its first report, *He Purapura Ora*, the Royal Commission recommended urgent action to establish an independent compensation process. In three years it is still not beyond the design stage. It is unclear whether it will include survivors of faith-based institutions as recommended.

Other coalition government initiatives effectively repudiate findings of the Royal Commission, specifically the removal from Oranga Tamariki legislation of Section 7AA's commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the re-establishment of bootcamps or the Military-Style Academy Pilot as it's officially known.

We all have a responsibility to the wellbeing of all the children, young people and vulnerable adults of Aotearoa. We cannot look away, we can no longer be ignorant of what is done in our name.

I urge all people to read the full report or at least the summary of survivors' stories. The report makes for grim reading and a compelling case for restitution for survivors.

Visit: <https://www.abuseincare.org.nz/reports/>



### 2024 World Methodist Council Meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden

The Methodist Church of New Zealand was well-represented at the World Methodist Council (WMC) in Gothenburg, Sweden in August. General Secretary Rev. Tara Tautari reports on the historic event that brought together faith leaders from 87 countries in a spirit of prayer, worship, and deep reflection on God's call to the Church in today's world.

The gathering provided a platform for faith leaders from Methodist, Wesleyan, United, and Uniting Churches to listen, respond, and unite in their shared mission to be agents of transformation in a world marked by pressing global challenges.

#### A Strong New Zealand Delegation

The New Zealand delegation included me, President-Elect Te Aroha Rountree, Rev. Tony Franklin-Ross, and Marama Hotere. We will now serve on the World Methodist Council for the next five years, contributing to global Methodist discussions and decision-making on behalf of Aotearoa. We were joined by other New Zealand Methodists who travelled to participate, including Rev. Mark Gibson, Rev. Alisa Lasi, Rev. Tevita Finau, and Felonitesi and Lavoni Manukia.

#### Resolutions on Global Issues

At the heart of the Council's work were urgent global concerns, and resolutions were passed on several critical issues, including the conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and Korea. These resolutions reflect the ecumenical Methodist Church's commitment to justice, peace, and solidarity with all those affected by violence, war, and oppression. The Council's engagement with these issues underscored the urgent need for the Church to advocate for peace and reconciliation in regions facing immense suffering. These resolutions serve as a rallying call for Methodists around the world to act as peacemakers, rooted in faith and guided by the teachings of Christ.

#### Honouring Distinguished Service

One of the most touching moments of the gathering was the presentation of the Honourable Order of Jerusalem to outgoing Steering Group member, Rev. David Bush. This prestigious award, one of the highest distinctions within global Methodism, recognises individuals whose service to the global Methodist/Wesleyan family has been marked by honour, dedication, and distinction. Rev. Bush's long-standing commitment to the Methodist Church, both in Aotearoa New Zealand and globally, was celebrated by all in attendance, with many expressing gratitude for his leadership and faithful service.

#### Looking Forward

As the World Methodist Council moves forward from Gothenburg, the Aotearoa New Zealand council members, alongside their global whānau, will carry the energy, insights, and resolutions from the gathering into their work at home and abroad.

The Council's work is not done; it is just beginning. As Methodists, we are reminded of our calling to seek justice, love, mercy, and walk humbly with God, responding faithfully to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. In the words of one of the speakers, we are all urged "to be the change we wish to see". As the World Methodist Council looks to the future, that call has never been more urgent.

May we, as part of the global Methodist family, continue to answer that call with courage, conviction, and compassion.



### Celebrating Milestones and Unity

*TeRito Peyroux-Semu reflects on a month of remarkable events.*

#### **Diamond Jubilee Anniversary and Conference of The Methodist Church in Fiji and Rotuma**

Along with Talatala Qase (Synod Superintendent) Alipate Livani of Wasewase Ko Viti kei Rotuma and inaugural Wasewase Talatala Qase Peni Tikoinaka, I attended the 60th Jubilee Anniversary and Conference of The Methodist

Church in Fiji and Rotuma. The Conference attracted over one thousand delegates and participants engaged in the business part of the Conference and enjoyed choral singing each evening, featuring various church district, circuit, and ecumenical choirs.

The Diamond Jubilee Anniversary Celebrations included tributes to past Presidents, presbyters, deaconesses, and lay leaders whose contributions have shaped the church's aspirations and journey over the last six decades. This was a timely opportunity to reflect on the significant contributions of many of the same people, who served and made a significant impact in both the Fiji and New Zealand Methodist Churches.

As representatives, who also serve as church leaders in Fijian and Rotuman congregations in the Tauivi part of our Hāhi, attending this Conference "back home" was a true blessing. It served as a reminder of the opportunities to be nurtured, to learn, to grow, to serve, and to lead at various levels of our Hāhi. Most importantly, it was a reminder of our responsibility to respect and uphold the place of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Tangata Whenua in our Hāhi and in this land.

#### **Re-opening Service and Celebrations at Wesley Broadway Methodist Church**

In mid-September it was a sheer delight to attend the Re-opening Service and Celebrations at Wesley Broadway Methodist Church in Palmerston North. This momentous occasion marked the coming together of the English speaking and Tongan language congregations, which are part of our Lower North Island and Vahefonua o Aotearoa Synods respectively, on a beautifully renewed and well-constructed site. The privilege of leading the service, themed "Renewal of the building, renewal of the people," the success of this event and the four-and-a-half-year rebuild project is a testament to the continued dedication, hard work, and leadership of Reverends Ian Boddy and Sesipā Mausia, Building Committee Leader Eileen Longley, and the members of both congregations and respective parishes. Their collective efforts ensured that both the celebrations on the day and the extensive rebuild project were highly prosperous.

#### **Sinoti Samoa Mission Choir's Continued Success**

Following a successful first place in the Open Gospel Category at the World Choir Games 2024, held in Auckland in July, our very own Sinoti Samoa Mission Choir has continued to touch hearts, soothe souls, and delight ears. Their recent participation in the Musika Moana Choir Competition, definitely stirred emotions and inspired many. Beyond their musical achievements, the Mission Choir is deeply committed to community outreach and service. They spread the 'Word of God' and share a beautiful testimony of healing and hope through music.

I acknowledge the leadership, organisation, and stewardship of Reverends Fatu Tufuga and Jeremiah Amituana'i, Suvania Tufuga, Corinthian Ieli, Matila Amituana'i, Lise Oloi-Shriyan, and Fau Lemoa. Their dedication, along with that of each choir member, has been a source of strength and comfort, especially in recent months.

#### **Looking Ahead**

As President Peter and I prepare to "hand over the reins" to our incoming Presidential Team, we still have numerous services, celebrations, engagements, and duties to attend to. These events continue to immerse us in the vast and vibrant tapestry of our beautiful Hāhi. Serving as Vice President over the last two years has been a phenomenal experience, and I am deeply grateful to everyone I have had the blessing to meet along the way.



### Finding Fulfillment Representing Women

*Iunisi Vaitohi*

As a representative of National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) and member of the South Auckland NCW committee, I welcome the opportunity to share what this role entails.

The executive team embodies a spirit of unity and strength that is truly inspiring. We seek to encourage each other and explore the critical roles that women play in leadership, both within our church and in our wider communities. Women's Council identifies, supports and promotes the development of strong business leaders in the

industry, and the broader community. NCW National is looking to grow membership to become members, and we encourage Methodist women to join.

### Pacific National Councils of Women Forum 2024

On 18 May, we hosted our first Pacific forum meeting, with three guest speakers Noelene Nabulivou (Executive Director of DIVA for Equality), Stephanie Copus Campbell (Australian Ambassador for gender equality) and Tara D'Sousa (Senior Adviser Inclusive Development Gender for the Manatū Aorere, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This event provided an occasion to talk about the strength in Pacific women's organisations to face the region's work to achieve gender equality. Our guest speakers shared the range of initiatives they found the most impactful.

This event was a great success, and we will continue the conversations we started on women's health, economic independence, climate justice, and violence against women. Hopefully this event will provide the impetus for more dialogue and joint initiatives among us. With God's grace, I believe we have the power to shape the future where the voices and leadership of women are heard, celebrated and embraced.



### Celebrating Lay Preachers

A combined multicultural service for the parish of the Hutt City Uniting Congregations (HCUC) held at Waiwhetu Uniting Church on Lay Preachers Sunday attracted a congregation of more than 100 people of all ages.

Fa'afetai Fa'aloga spoke with the children about knowledge and wisdom and Robyn Bridge reflected on 'Where shall wisdom be found'. An additional 10 lay preachers led the call to worship, prayers, and blessing. A total of 18 certificates were presented on behalf of the HCUC for contributions to worship in the parish and wider church. Presentations included:

- Three certificates to recognise completion of Stage 1 of the national 'Lead Worship' course.
- A New Zealand Lay Preachers certificate to Lute Taufalele-Vute.
- 14 Long Service as lay preachers (more than 10 years) certificates) including to Mele Katoa and George Ball for more than 40 years.
- A colourful bouquet of flowers to Lyn Price, in recognition of her work as HCUC Lay Preachers' convenor.

There are 24 active Lay Preachers within the HCUC and services are taken in Samoan, Tongan and English languages. As well as congregational worship, services are also led in Retirement Homes, a residential facility for people with Huntington's Disease, and an adult corrections facility.



### Seven Decades of Faithful Service

On the same Sunday, Christchurch North Methodist Parish and guests came together to celebrated Heather Walls' final service as a lay preacher, concluding almost 70 years since she began her journey as a lay preacher.

Heather and her late husband, Bob, began their journey together at Linwood where they used to have bible class with Rev Howard Harkness on a Sunday afternoon. They later married and lived in many different places in New Zealand over the years with their teaching careers. In those early years it was mostly Bob who preached and Heather accompanied him, often playing the organ for the services. Heather began preaching regularly when she returned to Christchurch after Bob died in 1978.

Christchurch North parishioners thanked Heather for the amazing contribution she has made both as a lay preacher, and as a person of faith who has made such a difference in people's lives wherever she has served. Her gifts extend to much more than her preaching. She was involved in starting up a parish puzzle library in 2000 that offers more than 1000 puzzles, to people from all over the city. She has been involved with - and now runs - Handiscope which started more than 50 years ago. Church role have included Synod Secretary, Vice President (2002-2003 with Norman West) a member of the council of elders for a number of years, and joint chair of Synod.

When asked if she had any message for future lay preachers, Heather said, "If you know it is God's call then you answer it".



### Methodist Alliance Celebrate Opening of Housing Complex

Following on from Conference decisions encouraging parishes to find new and innovative ways to use resources to provide affordable healthy homes for New Zealanders in need, Christchurch Methodist Mission recently celebrated the opening of a new social housing complex.

In order to provide affordable housing for vulnerable people, some parishes have negotiated long-term leases for building social housing with Methodist Community Housing Providers (MCHPs) under a

scheme where the houses are built and owned by the MCHP and an agreed land lease is paid to the parish. In Christchurch, the Christchurch Methodist Mission (CMM) has been in conversation with several parishes since then and recently opened a new social housing complex in Somerfield.

"MCHPs like CMM draw on our own financial resources and government subsidies to develop social houses on church land. We also manage the building project and provide wrap-around social support to the tenants after they move in," says CMM Executive Director Jill Hawkey.

"We were very fortunate to receive a \$750,000 grant from the Methodist Social Housing Fund plus a large anonymous donation from an individual. Together with a loan from the Methodist Trust Association, these funds enabled us to develop five housing units in partnership with the Christchurch South Methodist Parish."

For Christchurch South Methodist Parish minister and CMM Board member, Rev. Andrew Donaldson, this partnership is business as usual for his church and its role in community and society. Simply put, it is at the heart of what being Christian is supposed to be about, he says.



## AROUND THE CONNEXION

Responding with compassion to emergencies and community need is nothing new for a Church with a strong social conscience and a focus on justice. St Marks hosted several interfaith meetings following the 2019 mass shootings in the two Christchurch mosques, providing a safe space for the community to process the horror of the event and for connection and healing to take place.

The Somerfield Street complex is an example of how parishes can work with housing providers like CMM to develop surplus land into affordable and secure homes for people who can't afford to buy a house of their own or to rent at market rates.

Andrew and Jill are concerned about the state's decades-long failure to build enough social houses and the consequences of the current wave of austerity economics that is causing job losses, heightened levels of anxiety among adults and children, and homelessness.

Amidst the growing challenges across society, the Somerfield Street complex highlights the benefit of parishes and community housing providers working together to provide small-scale developments in local communities. However, as noted by Jill, the change in Government policy means that CMM's current pipeline of projects is on hold.

"With over 2,000 households on the social housing register in Christchurch, it is a real concern that Government has not committed to supporting more of these partnerships. But our tradition encourages us to maintain hope and to work even harder to support whānau to thrive and to turn their dreams of a better future into reality."



### St Andrew's on The Terrace Parish serious about sustainability

Since April this year, every Tuesday parishioners from St Andrew's on The Terrace join representatives from other religious groups for a peaceful lunchtime protest on Parliament grounds. Holding placards that draw attention to the damning impact of fossil fuels, the weekly vigil is just one of several sustainable and environmentally sensitive initiatives being undertaken by the parish.

Congregation members Anna Smith and Sonia Groes-Petrie represent St Andrew's on The Terrace on Eco Church and provide the lead on environmental matters within the parish, reporting to the monthly congregation meeting. The parish supports climate justice campaigns initiated by other organisations, such as faith group [Common Grace Aotearoa](#), and regularly write submissions to Parliament on proposed environmental legislation and strategies. The parish is committed to reducing waste within the church and the adjoining conference centre. There are systems in place for reducing and recycling waste, and surplus food and goods are donated to the wider community.

Age is no barrier to participating in the climate justice initiatives. Frank Hanson aged 90 - a former MCNZ President and principal at Trinity College - participates regularly in the protest at Parliament. His motivation for leaving the world a better place extends beyond aspirations for his children and grandchildren. "A basic reason for being there is my concern for the world for my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, but it is selfish to leave it there. We need to consider the whole world. We left the 20<sup>th</sup> century feeling a lot of hope for the 21<sup>st</sup> century but that has not materialised in the way we thought it might."

**Footnote: A letter that Frank Hanson wrote to the Stuff newsroom sparked the interest of their reporting team and on Thursday 26 September, Frank was the subject of a feature article in The Press, The Post and The Waikato Times celebrating his optimism and outlook.**



### Ordinands Assessment Weekend 2024

The Friary provided a calm and serene setting for a team of ordinands and Methodist church leaders gathered for a weekend of discernment as ordinands were assessed for their suitability for ministry. Co-convenors Rev. Keita Hotere and Rev. Philomeno Kinera report on this important – and sometimes challenging – event.

The Ordinands Assessment is an important event in the life of the church and this year took place in early September. This immersive, weekend live-in experience was held at the serene St Francis Retreat Centre in Auckland, commonly known to us as The Friary. With its tranquil atmosphere and comfortable conference spaces, The Friary provides the perfect setting for the final assessment of ordinands before this year's MCNZ Conference in Wellington.

A recent change to the Mission Resourcing programme has been the appointment of two Co-convenors modelling the bi-cultural partnership between Te Taha Māori and Tauīwi in our church. Mission Resourcing on behalf of the church also appoints an assessment team, and chaplain. Our team is proudly inclusive of lay and ordained membership from within the rich tapestry of our connexional church. The assessment team's task is to assess ordinands based on MCNZ's criteria for ordination whether as Presbyters or Deacons, and their overall suitability for ordination.

This year's assessment team included us as co-convenors, joined by Rev. Sui Teo, Mataiva Robertson, Marion Hines, Rev. Tevita Finau, Rev. Joeli Ducivaki, Mafua Lolohea and chaplain Rev. Motekiai Fakatou. We are thankful to the members who have offered their time and expertise as chaplain or assessment team members as their service has often been overlooked in reports before Conference.

Mission Resourcing Director Rev. Setaita Veikune joined us for the Friday night dinner and during the opening Mihimihi session brought greetings from the wider church whānau. She reports that, "This is a culmination of the work of the church in preparation for presbyterial and diaconate ministry. It is an honour and a blessing for Mission Resourcing to be a part of that preparation."

Keita added, "As assessors, we embrace the profound responsibility of this sacred task. It's an important discernment process that we engage with as we hear peoples' faith stories, and hopes for the future. We expect each ordinand to arrive fully prepared for the weekend, having completed all necessary training and ministry formation and endorsement for ordination. The weekend is an opportunity for ordinands to share their ministry journeys and understandings of what ordination means for them and their whānau. Our task should be a simple one, but at times this has not always been the case. The assessment teams' work is tested during these times of tension. I conclude my term enriched by these experiences, yet happy to pass the baton on to another".

Philomeno shared, "At the conclusion of the weekend each ordinand is informed of the decision as to whether they proceed to ordination. An ordinand has the right to appeal to Mission Resourcing if the assessment team decision is unfavourable. We understand this can be a challenging experience for some ordinands, but with a strong support system in place throughout the assessment weekend we aim to reduce any unnecessary stress. It has never been an easy task, as we have to wrestle through differing opinions, however with mutual respect and honesty we do achieve the desired result".

Motekiai reflected, "It's the prayers, it's the mahi, the preparation. We are looking forward to the fruits borne of the commitment that these ordinands will bring through serving in our church. I trust that the church is in good hands."



### **Mānuia le folau: Kiingi Tuheitia and Kuini Nga wai**

*Rev Dr Jione Havea*

Mānuia le folau is a Samoan phrase, but it is meaningful to other Pasifika people, that bids “fare well” to someone who embarks on a journey. It is about “saying goodbye” as well as offering a blessing of “mānuia / best wishes” to someone who sets off on a journey.

Mānuia le folau applies to the journey of Kiingi Tuheitia Potatu Te Wherowhero VII, who was laid to rest on 5 September. His journey was to the world of the ancestors, and to the arms of Te atua, through an unmarked grave on Taupiri Mountain.

To my Tongan ears, the name of this maunga is significant. There must be a ‘sea of talanoa’ about the name, and I leave that for tangata whenua to tell. But the name Taupiri captures my imagination and my Pasifika heart – it is a place of clinging closely, of being cherished, of intimacy.

At Taupiri, Kiingi Tuheitia’s journey is toward intimacy. At his burial, his whānau did not send him off to be alone, on his own, but to be cherished, by and among his ancestors. For Kiingi Tuheitia, therefore, mānuia le folau.

Mānuia le folau also applies to Kuini Nga wai hono i te po. Shortly after her coronation she, alongside her mother and two older brothers, and a crowd of aroha, farewelled her father.

Then her journey as Te Arikinui and Kuini of the Kīngitanga began, and we also bid her well – mānuia le folau.

In Tongan circles, it is impolite to attribute meanings to matters relating to Te Arikinui. And as a native of Te Moananui a Kiwa, I locate myself among the manuhiri and offer this prayer for Kuini Nga wai’s journey:

Mānuia le folau, Taupou o Aotearoa  
may everywhere you journey be tauranga  
for your people, for our people  
for our future, and our dreamings

in the taupiri of our ancestors  
in the wisdoms of our rangatahi  
may restlessness be your kai  
and may mana form in your eyes

may tapu follow you  
along your paths  
and through your ihu  
ake ake ...



### Climate Justice Calendar 2025

*Marion Hines*

The Climate Justice Working Group is committed to producing a calendar for each of the five key focus areas in the Climate Justice Decade – Rekindle the Va of Papatūānuku. The focus area for 2025/26 is Climate Migration/Displacement.

Climate change is an existential threat to the movement of life on earth. It is also a justice issue as it aggravates disproportionately the vulnerability of historically marginalised communities. Oceania is at the forefront of

climate injustice and people with almost zero carbon footprint are facing relocation due to the capitalist colonisation of the atmosphere, moana and whenua

#### **Our Vision as Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa**

We are a planetary community - created by God - to be relational beings. Climate change has disrupted this relationality. Climate justice is therefore a work of healing all our relationships. The Decade is envisioned to enable us to engage in the work of rekindling the relationality and wellbeing of creation.

#### **Climate Migration/Displacement**

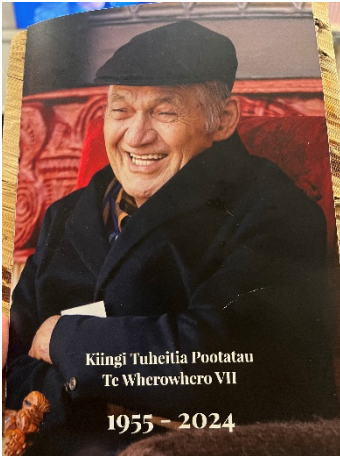
Over the next two years, we are invited to reflect on the painful experiences and consequences of the forceful displacement of the Indigenous and vulnerable communities in Oceania due to climate injustice. Our commitment to practice works of mercy in the context of climate displacement entails compassionate solidarity with the displaced and transforming Aotearoa into a sanctuary for the climate exiled.

Our calendar leads the Connexion month by month in reflections on this theme. It includes practical suggestions for action and a prayer. Contributors to the reflections are George Zachariah and Elisapesi Havea. Actions and prayers have been added by Marion Hines. Translators have provided language versions of the calendar in Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian.

In love and respect for our late chair, Rev Siosifa Pole, the calendar for 2025 is dedicated to him in recognition of his passion for our work over the past five years.

#### **Orders can be taken now**

Calendars cost \$18 each or \$15 each for 10 or more. Collect your copy at Conference or order by email [cjwg.calendar@methodist.org.nz](mailto:cjwg.calendar@methodist.org.nz)



### He Whakaaroaro

*He Maimai Aroha*

*Tangi mooteatea nei te motu i te rironga o too maatou Kiingi Maaori.*

*Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII.*

*E kiiia nei te Motu, Kiingi o te Kootahitanga.*

*Moe mai, moe mai, moe maarire mai.*

With deep sorrow, we honour the passing of Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero Te Tuawhitu. During his 18-year reign, he faced many challenges and guided the Kiingitanga through these times of great change with fortitude and resilience.

Kiingi Tuheitia was a unifying force for the Motu and as we mourn his loss, we celebrate his remarkable legacy, which will inspire generations to come. He was a king who prioritised the wellbeing and unity of te iwi Māori. His international travels, especially to King Charles' Coronation, to the New Zealand contingent in the Olympic Village, Paris followed by visits to acknowledge our war dead in France drew the eyes of the world.

His recent signing of He Whakaputanga Moana Treaty – Declaration for the Ocean is widely acclaimed in Te Moana Nui A Kiwa. This document recognises whales as legal persons with inherent rights and emphasises our interconnectedness with the whole of creation. He will leave an indelible mark upon our nation and the world. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Whare Ariki, the royal family, during this time of grief. A cherished grandfather, father, and husband, may he rest in eternal peace, forever remembered.

With great respect, we draw together as a people of faith to pray and offer this humble prayer for his daughter our new Māori Queen, Kuiini Ngaa Wai Hono I Te Poo. Lord, may she be wise, compassionate, and strong. May she always seek to do what is right. We ask your divine guidance and protection so she can lead with grace and justice, bringing peace and prosperity to everyone.

### He Inoi Mō Te Arikinui Houu

Whakatata mai koe e Ihowaa ki too maatou inoi, moo Te Arikinui houu, Kuiini Ngaa Wai Hono I Te Poo.

Ka noho ia i runga i te toorona tapu o oona maatua tuupuna. Teenei maatou te hunga whakapono i a ia, e inoi kaha ana ki a koe, e Ihowaa kia tukua mai too aroha, too wairua atawhai, hei aawhina i Te Arikinui houu me te Whare Ariki. Manaakita mai raatou katoa.

Ko koe te Kaipuupuri i te Rongomau, ko koe te Kaimanaaki i te iwi.  
Whakarongo mai ki aa maatou inoi, me ngaa tuumanako moo te iwi Maaori.

Rire rire hau, Pai Maarire!



### Trinity College Study Tour of Asia-Minor

*Rev. Dr. Nasili Vaka'uta, Principal, Trinity College*

A group from Trinity College recently embarked on a 12-day pilgrimage to Turkey, exploring the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, Cappadocia, and significant early Christian sites. The journey provided participants with opportunities for theological reflection, spiritual growth, and a deeper understanding of the Christian faith.

The pilgrimage began in Istanbul with a visit to the Blue Mosque, followed by the ancient Hippodrome,

once the heart of Byzantine public life. A peaceful cruise on the Bosphorus Strait capped off the day. The group then traveled to Bursa, an important city in both Christian and Ottoman history. Participants visited the Mausoleum of Sultan Orhan and Orhan Camii, reflecting on the city's historical significance as a crossroads of religious traditions. The journey continued to Nicea (modern-day Iznik), where the First Ecumenical Council was held in 325 AD.

The tour included Gallipoli, a poignant site for New Zealanders, and to Pergamum, one of the Seven Churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Another key stop was Izmir (ancient Smyrna), another of the Seven Churches, followed by a visit to Ephesus, one of the most significant early Christian cities. Walking through its well-preserved streets, including the Library of Celsus and the Grand Theatre, participants connected with St. Paul's ministry and his letters to the Ephesians. The visit to the Basilica of St. John and the House of Mother Mary, where Mary is believed to have spent her last years, added further spiritual depth to the journey.

Cappadocia, known for its surreal landscapes and Christian heritage, was another highlight of the pilgrimage. The tour also included a visit to Laodicea, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation. St. John's letter to the Laodiceans, in which he warned them not to be "lukewarm" in their faith, resonated deeply with the group. A stop at Pamukkale, with its stunning limestone terraces, provided a moment of reflection amid Turkey's natural beauty.

The pilgrimage concluded with visits to Istanbul's most iconic landmarks: Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace, and the Grand Bazaar. Hagia Sophia, once the world's largest cathedral, symbolized the blending of Christian and Islamic histories. The group marveled at the grandeur of the mosaics and architecture, which brought the pilgrimage full circle.

Throughout the trip, participants engaged in theological discussions and personal reflections, deepening their understanding of early Christian history.

This pilgrimage was made possible through the generosity of synods and parishes, especially Vahefonua Tonga, Te Taha Māori, Auckland and Lower North Island synods. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Trinity Council for their support that enabled this transformative experience. Special thanks also go to The Innovative Travel Company and Ancient Kingdoms Holidays, whose meticulous planning ensured the trip was smooth and enriching.

The Trinity group's pilgrimage to Turkey was not just a historical journey but a spiritual and theological odyssey that left a lasting impact on all participants. The group returned with a renewed sense of faith and a deeper connection to the biblical texts. We look forward to future opportunities to offer similar transformative experiences for our community.



## The South Pacific Area Seminar

*Ofa Matakaiongo, Liaison District Lead*

**Theme: "Go and bear fruit, fruit that will last."**

I had the privilege of attending the South Pacific Area Seminar in Apia, Samoa, this year. I represented the New Zealand Methodist Women's Fellowship alongside 74 dedicated delegates and our executive

committee. This enriching experience focused on fostering growth and creating a lasting impact within our church communities.

### Wednesday 4 September: Opening Service

The seminar commenced with a heartfelt official opening service, led by the President of the Methodist Church of Samoa and Overseas, Rev. FaulaloLeti Pa'aga. The service included Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa delivering the Samoa Prime Minister address and Rev. Tara Tautari, General Secretary for the Methodist Church of New Zealand, as our esteemed guest speaker. Her inspiring message set a tone of hope and purpose, inviting us to reflect on how we can bear fruit that endures in our mission and ministry. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with others, including the South Pacific Area President Olive Tanielu and her team.

### Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 September: Workshops and Activities

Days included a variety of workshops, worship services, Bible studies, and reflection sessions. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions, fostering fellowship and collaboration among delegates from Samoa, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Social activities provided further opportunities to connect and strengthen bonds across the South Pacific region. We were honoured to be joined by World Officers, including our current World President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and past Presidents from Africa, Europe, South America, and Hong Kong. A highlight was attending alongside HRH Nanasipau'u Tukuaho, the Queen of Tonga and President of the Tonga Women's Fellowship.

### Sunday 8 September: Closing Service

The seminar concluded on Sunday with a beautiful closing service, led by World President, Sipiwe Chisvo, celebrating the journey we had undertaken together. This moment of gratitude, reflection, and commitment prepared us to carry the lessons learned back to our respective communities. Overall, the South Pacific Area Seminar was a powerful gathering that inspired us to bear lasting fruit in our ministries and reinforced the vital connections among us as sisters in Christ.

We thank God for our safe travels and the deep connections made during this inspiring time. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in organising the seminar and look forward to the fruits of our labour in the months and years ahead.



## Celebrating our Digital Transformation

*Katherine Doig, National Archivist MCNZ*

We look forward to formally launching our new Recollect website, Kei Muri Māpara, at Conference 2024 in November, and celebrate the milestones of the Methodist Archives' rapid digital transformation over the past year.

After an intensive six months working through the website's design, build, and UAT (user acceptance testing) phase, we took over formal ownership of the website in February this year.

In April we advertised for the appointment of a Digital Archivist to assist with the Recollect project, we were delighted to appoint Emanuella de Ruiter to the new role in June. Emanuella brings with her extensive experience in handling and digitising cultural heritage collections, having spent the past five years working on a variety of projects with New Zealand Micrographics Services. Her expertise includes the careful digitisation of diverse materials, from large format historical maps to delicate glass plate negatives, ensuring even the most fragile items are digitally preserved to the highest standards. She is excited to engage with the rich collections at Kei Muri Māpara and help increase public access to this important taonga by sharing them online with Recollect.

Since her arrival, Emanuella has provided invaluable assistance in transforming our storeroom into a state-of-the-art archival digitisation suite, equipped with cutting-edge photographic and scanning technology that is enabling us to safely (and economically) digitise most of the record formats that we hold, in-house, to a very high standard. While cameras, lenses, scanners, and lighting set-ups don't come cheaply, we've tried our best to borrow, economise, and improvise wherever we can.

We have been able to commence our enhanced digitisation programme, starting with the digitisation of some of our most heavily used, historically significant, and fragile items – including our photographic collections, our Church Histories collection, and our typescripts of early Wesleyan missionary reports and correspondence from missionaries stationed in New Zealand to the Wesleyan Missionary Society in England (1817-1859) [MCNZ Archives Reference: MS-39].

The digitisation and upload of this latter series of records to Recollect is a particularly good example of what having the new website and digitisation capability can enable us to do for our researchers.

With just over a month left until its launch, the website already hosts almost 3000 digitised records of significance from our holdings, with a wide variety of items recording over 200 years of NZ Methodist history. We are very excited at what has been achieved in such a short period - an attractive and user-friendly website, optimised to meet the diverse needs of our researchers, and to showcase and celebrate the precious taonga that we hold in our collections. We can't wait to share it with you!



## LOOKING BACK



### Peace; Or War By Proxy The Unending Struggle

*Rev Donald Phillipps*

There was a period at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the demand for new ministers within the Methodist Church of New Zealand was beyond the 'supply' available from local sources. Before that time the Conference had from time to time, through its contacts with the British Conference, been able to fill the gaps.

Now they turned to their Australian neighbours and a large number braved the journey across the ditch and served this Methodist Conference very well.

Two of these were William Beckett and Samuel Prior. It so happened that each was stationed at Masterton. When Beckett went there in 1924 he received significant support from Dr Prior, the son of the other immigrant, who was now himself a significant part of Masterton society as a local general practitioner. Samuel Prior had not long returned to Aotearoa and was to spend his days, as did his son, serving the people of that Wairarapa town.

In 1924 the New Zealand Methodist Times in October reported on a public meeting that had been recently held at Masterton, whose focus had been on the urgent need for the establishment of a committed and lasting peace. William Beckett moved, "That this meeting of citizens of Masterton New Zealand send fraternal greetings to similar gatherings now being held throughout the world to express abhorrence of war and militarism and join with them in declaring it to be the duty of all people and governments to strive for universal disarmament, and calls upon the New Zealand Government to pursue a policy of international cooperation; to support the strengthening and enlargement of the League of Nations; to urge the settlement of International disputes by consultation and judicial arbitration; and to support the convocation of an international conference to achieve these purposes; and that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to the Prime Ministers of New Zealand and Great Britain." Dr Prior, a member of the committee of the Masterton branch of the League of Nations seconded the resolution which was carried.'

That the Church's newspaper should give space to this local meeting is no surprise. The editor, Percy Partis, was an ardent supporter throughout his life of peace initiatives, and his career, like that of Ormond Burton, has been the subject of earlier contributions within this series. But neither Paris nor Burton could have imagined in the 1920s that the development of armaments would be so massive and far-reaching that all traditional ideas of war would be changed. The idea that national boundaries afforded some measure of internal security disappeared with the emergence of long-range missiles.

There is no safe place in the modern world. The quest for peace, therefore, takes on a totally different meaning. President Putin warns that the use by Ukraine of 'munitions' supplied to it by NATO represents an international threat – while all the while Russia accepts similar assistance from countries within its orbit.

This is not the place to argue such issues. But we face as never before the challenge to search for a genuine peace based on mutual respect. To advocate such a thing is **not** playing politics. The Christian churches, despite their differences, and (it should now be said) because of their awareness of being just one expression of the way in which people express their faith, must follow their Master. It is that aspect of the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth that must be our chief focus in these threatening times Ours is a small voice but it should be heard.