

Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

SPRING 2014, ISSUE 59



**Celebrating
Presbyterian
Women**

www.presbyterian.org.nz

When Wealth Means Poverty

In 2012, 830 New Zealanders declared more than \$1 million in income. Does this have anything to do with child poverty? And should it be part of this year's election campaign? These two questions have just one answer: yes, very much.

Child poverty is a growing scandal. Opinion polling show it will be one of the issues that help New Zealanders decide how to vote on September 20. The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS), which along with others has been raising concerns about our appalling rate of child poverty, welcomes this focus.

But as the election approaches, we will be talking most about an issue that draws child poverty together with a whole host of other concerns. That issue is income inequality.

Inequality is a New Testament headline. Mary, the mother of Jesus, spoke of filling the hungry with good things and sending the rich empty away (Luke 1:46ff). Jesus himself challenged people to sell their possessions and give to the poor (Luke 12:33). He saw inequality as an affront, a disgrace.

The terrible scale of child poverty exemplifies why. More than a quarter of our 1 million children live below the poverty line in families that have less than 60 per cent of the average household's income. Many of these children go to school hungry, or without decent shoes or a raincoat, because their parents simply do not have enough money left at the end of the week.

But why are so many of these children in poverty? It is in part because wages are so low, in part because benefits are so inadequate. And both those things have a lot to do with our richest few.

Wages are so low because the balance of power in the workplace has been shifted against ordinary staff and in favour of those at the top of the tree. If, since 1990, the average wage had increased in line with workers' greater productivity, it would now be \$38 an hour. Instead, it's \$28 an hour. The extra \$10 an hour has

gone straight into the hands of company investors.

The link between low benefits and the wealthy is less evident, but in fact more powerful. As Mike O'Brien of the Child Poverty Action Group has observed, we live in a curious world in which the way to get the rich to work harder is to increase their income through tax cuts, but the way to get the poor to work harder is to reduce their income through benefit cuts.

Resolving this contradiction is a belief that wealth denotes virtue: the rich deserve everything they have, and the poor must be poor through their own fault. This misguided prosperity gospel flies in the face of the insight of Genesis that because all people are created in the image of God they should all be able to enjoy the fruits of God's creation. Even so, this ideology has allowed benefit rates to be cut by up to a quarter of their value in 1991 and never restored.

The forces creating great hardship are then the same as those that enable great wealth. To seriously reduce the former we must also address the latter. This doesn't mean nobody should ever be highly paid. But it does involve restoring bargaining power at the bottom and arguing for higher taxes to fund more generous benefits.

It also involves making the connections between income gaps and the other things that traditionally concern voters. As ever, health and education will be on people's minds this year. Income gaps, with the distrust, dysfunction and stress they sow, are extremely damaging to health. Likewise in education, the growing divide between the elite private schools and their under-resourced low-decile counterparts undermines our once-great schooling system.

For the biblical writers, the whole point of an economy is to sustain community and protect the most vulnerable. Isaiah, Micah and Zechariah reserve some of their sharpest criticism for would-be rulers who are not committed to ensuring everyone can meet their basic needs. As our economy recovers, more and more



Lisa Woolley

Jesus himself
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New Zealanders will want to see its benefits being shared with those who are struggling the most.

The amount needed to lift all New Zealanders out of poverty was estimated in 2007 to be no more than \$1.8 billion. That's less than a tenth of the wealth of the top ten on New Zealand's rich list.

NZCCSS is committed to ensuring that New Zealanders, when they come to vote this year, are making that connection.

Lisa Woolley is the President of the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and CEO of Vision West Community Trust.

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MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

The Right Rev Ray Coster contributes a regular column to *Spanz*



Healing Inequality

It has been said that there are seven continents on earth – plus Geneva. Geneva is the city where the world gathers. I write this *sPanz* article from Geneva where I am representing the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of New Zealand on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. With about 150 other people from all corners of the world we seek to work in unity on matters of justice and peace.

One justice issue that really concerns me as a follower of Jesus is the growing inequality between the rich and the poor of this world. The opening word Jesus quoted in his mandate means that we cannot be his followers and turn a deaf ear to the poor. "The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor..." Isaiah 61:1 "If a person shuts their ears to the cry of the poor, they too will cry out and not be answered." Proverbs 21:13

The total wealth of the world is about US\$223 trillion. The big concern is how this is distributed and the impact that has on people's lives. Let me share just one or two facts:

- » 2% of the people in the world have more than half the rest of the world
- » The richest 1% have 43% of the world's wealth
- » The poorest 80% of people hold only 6% of the world's wealth
- » The richest 300 people have the same amount as the poorest 3,000,000,000 people. That is, less than the number of people who fly in a modern Boeing 777 aeroplane have more wealth than the equivalent of the combined populations of China, India, USA and Brazil.

Two hundred years ago the richest nations had about three times the wealth of the poorest nations. By 1960 the

figure had risen to about 35 times. Today the richest nations have 80 times more than the poorest nations.

We are all aware that many of the richer nations send aid to the poorer countries. In fact they send about US\$130b each year. That is a lot of money. So why, we may ask, are the poorer nations getting poorer and the richer ones getting richer. Sadly, the greater flow of wealth is not from the richer to the poorer nations, but the reverse. While the richer ones give US\$130b a year, US\$2 trillion flows annually from the poorest to the richest. Something is wrong with the world's economy! "A poor man's field may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away." Proverbs 13:23

Most of us reading *sPanz* in our homes we will feel helpless in the face of these figures.¹ But the Ecumenical Movement of Christians around the world is seeking to do something on our behalf and in our name. The voice of the church is not silent. And let us always remember – and affirm – that God is a direct agent of healing and social transformation. God is not only the inspiration for the human agency we call church, but the reason and power which transforms our world for good.

In this bicentennial year we remember that prayer, faith and church community all played a part in little more than 25 years (1814-1840) in removing the evils of that day – utu, slavery, cannibalism and inter-tribal warfare. "You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them." Psalm 35:10 "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people." Isaiah 10:1-2

We are a resurrection church moving in the power of God's presence and the presence of God's power to transform, renew and heal this world. As individuals we are not without ability to effect change. We, as followers of Christ, have an obligation to purchase ethically ensuring we do not buy products that are the result of exploitation and slavery, even if it costs us more. As congregations, when we spend on ourselves think first of the least and consider that their need may be greater than ours.

¹ If you want to raise awareness in your church you could show a 3:51 clip from YouTube called "Global Wealth Inequality" produced by The Rules

Presbyterian Women:

Fifty years of fundraising, faith & fellowship



Guest speaker, the Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, with Presbyterian Women members celebrating the jubilee at the Church of Christ the King, Porirua.

Presbyterian women across New Zealand are this year celebrating the golden jubilee of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa New Zealand (PWANZ) – fifty years of fundraising, faith, fellowship, and friendship.

“This is a great opportunity to thank the women, look back at the useful work we’ve done and look forward at how we can continue the legacy,” says Lafulafu Vanila Ekenasio, the first Pacific National Convenor of Presbyterian Women.

That legacy is impressive.

It began in November 1963 when four church women’s groups – the Presbyterian Women’s Missionary Union created in 1896 to support overseas missions, the Women’s Fellowship formed in the early 1940s to support those at home, the Girl’s Auxiliary for single women under 35, and the Women’s Guild which supported the local parish church – merged to become the Association of Presbyterian Women (APW), Presbyterian Women’s name until 2012.

This transition took place during a time of social change. The baby boom was just beginning to ease and the 1960s saw the development of many new suburbs. Television was new, there was pressure to end the 6 o’clock swill, many women worked in the home, and the second wave of the feminist movement was getting ready to break.

“Church was at the centre of local communities and a social hub for many women,” says the Rev Shona Bettany,

National Secretary of Presbyterian Women. “Women led Sunday School and Bible class, were the parish visitors and did much of the caring and nurturing associated with the church.”

Although, as now, women dominated the church in terms of numbers, they had few official leadership roles. Deaconesses – yes, elders – a few, ministers – not yet.

“In the 1960s APW was the main place within the church women could exercise leadership and run their own affairs,” says Shona. By 1965 it had 18,500 members.

For the past 50 years, Presbyterian Women has run quiz nights, auctions, church fairs, cake stalls, walkathons and collected stamps, raising substantial funds for mission work across the world and within New Zealand. In recent times this has included an annual special project in partnership with the Methodist Women’s Fellowship.

Members have also provided study grants and support for ministry students, scholarships for Turakina Māori Girls College, catered for church events, helped ensure the smooth running of the parish, met regularly for prayer and fellowship, gathered for national conferences, and forged friendships for life. “If it wasn’t for these churchwomen, the Presbyterian Church’s mission would not have been as successful as it has,” says Shona.

Lafulafu agrees. “I look at how much money Presbyterian Women has raised for mission and how their projects have benefitted the wider church. They have educated, empowered and equipped

many communities of women overseas. The good relations the church has in Jaghadri in the Punjab, Vanuatu and elsewhere have been nurtured because of the paths they have forged. Our work has been very powerful.”

That work has been recognised internationally. In 1995 APW was given observer status at the United Nations. Three years later it was granted Special Consultative Status to the United Nation’s Economic and Social Council. Each year a representative from Presbyterian Women attends the Council’s Commission on the Status of Women in New York to help identify challenges, set global standards and formulate policies to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment worldwide.

Closer to home, APW hosted a gathering of Presbyterian and associated church women in 1996 from across Asia-Pacific to forge bonds and address issues of human rights and welfare in the region. It led to the formation of Bridgebuilders, a regional network that continues to thrive thanks to the input of many Presbyterian women.

Today Presbyterian Women is still active although members are decreasing in number and increasing in age. In 2013 there were 1,963 members – about 7 per cent of women church members – belonging to 123 groups across 104 parishes. Many members are in their 70s and 80s, perhaps not surprising given the greater number of women working, increasing opportunities for leadership

within and beyond the church, and the changing demographics of the church itself.

Lafulafu is keen to build on existing foundations and see younger women get involved.

"We have to be relevant to the issues out there and encompassing of all women," she says. "We want our group to take us somewhere. We can't stand still or we will never get anywhere. We need to shake things up, move forward in faith searching for new and creative ideas, and acknowledge modern technology is key to our work." "At the end of the day, there's nothing like women gathering, working together, having a laugh, talking about the good and bad times, saying a prayer ..."

Snapshot of celebrations

Celebration events have been rolling out across the country and more are to come including luncheons in Auckland in August and Christchurch in September.

In May...

Some 50 members gathered at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church hall in **Ashburton** where Ministry assistant and

Presbyterian Women member Dellwyn Moylan led an updated version of the APW's inaugural service from 50 years ago. The theme was faith, fellowship, and friendship.

Guest speaker was the Hon Jo Goodhew, Minister of Women's Affairs and Member of Parliament for Rangitata. Rose planting and reminiscing rounded out the Jubilee celebrations.

About 60 Presbyterian women from the **Taranaki** regional and guests from the local Methodist Women's Fellowship gathered for a celebratory meal, inspirational speeches, singing and sharing stories at the new Knox Church in Waitara.

In **Porirua**, guest speaker, the Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, was a hit with Presbyterian Women members celebrating at the Church of Christ the King. She spoke of the significance of church for her as well as life in politics and academia. The celebrations included worship led by Rev Hana Popea-Mauigoa, a celebratory lunch, felt-flower and banner making, limbering up with tai

chi, zumba, and Pacific Island dancing, and the chance to sample the jubilee cake. Members of the Methodist Women's Fellowship were special guests.

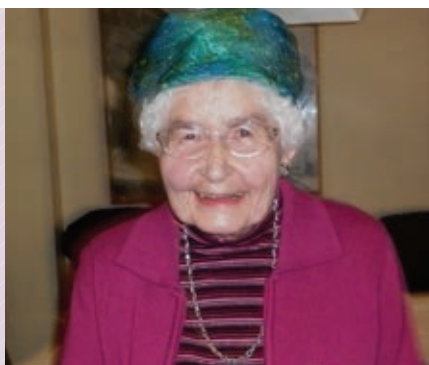
In June...

Members of Mornington Presbyterian Church's Presbyterian Women in **Dunedin** were treated to a parade of striking Victorian and Edwardian dresses. The local group who put on the fashion parade create and maintain the dresses and give fashion parades on request with any funds raised earmarked for the children's ward at Dunedin Hospital.

In July...

Members, special guests and past national executive members donned 60s style gloves and hats to celebrate the PWANZ Manawatu Golden Jubilee at Foxton Beach's marine boating club. A roll call started the day with special mention of those foundation members still active. The Very Reverend Pamela Tankersley gave a blessing before the celebration lunch. Members shared stories, photographs, and other Presbyterian Women memorabilia before cutting the Jubilee cake.

A few words from foundation and current member, Peggy Jourdain



Peggy Jourdain has a special reason for celebrating the Golden Jubilee. Peggy, who was ordained as an elder in 1972 when women elders were relatively rare, is one of a number of foundation members still active in the PWANZ. She joined as a young mother of three, served as president in Lower Hutt and in Wellington and is now the Manawatu/Wanganui Presbytery representative.

"It's been a wonderful organisation to belong to "because it brought me great knowledge of what the church is about, its mission both in New Zealand and overseas, and it also taught me how to conduct devotions and meetings."

She highlights the invaluable work Presbyterian Women have supported in the Solomon Islands, India, Vanuatu and elsewhere, and the priceless opportunity she had to see some of that work in action some years ago.

Peggy is keen to see more young women get involved. "There is so much young women can achieve these days and so many outlets worthy of their talents to help others in mission in New Zealand and through the Global Mission Office."

Joan Begg Spanz

Discussion about the future of Presbyterian Women is not new. In a 1970 *Harvest Field*, APW members questioned the need for a 'petticoat empire'. They suggested men and women share responsibility for the church's mission and upkeep. They also called for an ecumenical approach to mission, and the 'freedom to smoke in meetings'. Of the three, the last proved a no-goer, the second is regular practice, and the first continues to be discussed.

Presbyterian women address serious issues at Bridgebuilders Consultation



The 7th Bridgebuilders Consultation was held in Auckland, April 2014.

Bridgebuilders International is not shy of tackling the big issues.

At its 7th Consultation in Auckland in early April nearly 40 Presbyterian and associated church women from across the Asia-Pacific region and South Africa agreed on a three-year action plan to cut human trafficking, take measures to prevent violence against women and address climate change.

They will take action in their home countries – mostly in partnership with other agencies – and report on progress at the next Consultation to be hosted in three years time in Rarotonga by the Cook Islands Women's Fellowship.

"This Consultation was an outstanding success," says Jane Prichard, Bridgebuilders International President for the last three years. "It represents a landmark for the future activities of Presbyterian women in the global setting."

Over four days experts gave presentations and led interactive workshops on issues including building better bridges across families, communities and national borders.

"Throughout there were many opportunities for participants to discuss the issues and share stories about bridge building in their home countries," Jane says.

Bible studies, worship, dance, meals, laughing, and talking filled the downtime.

Jane stresses the value of having face-to-face meetings every three years. Bridgebuilders is a "communication network with a unique purpose, to bring a sense of solidarity and belonging to women who often feel isolated in terms of distance or acceptance within their churches".

Janice Purdie, a Bridgebuilders' supporter and its newsletter editor agrees. "The opportunity to meet and share the experiences of women from the wider region has been very special." First-hand accounts, such as a childhood friend taken by people traffickers and a traumatic drive home from a church service across a causeway lashed by high seas in Kiribati, were unforgettable.

"Many of those who attended hold leadership roles in their churches and women's groups. Being a leader can be lonely. It was good to give support, encouragement, vision, and new ideas to people in leadership. To me that was the real value behind the consultation," says Janice, who is a member of the Paeroa Cooperating Parish.

From its inception in 1996 Bridgebuilders has focused on human rights, justice, and peace for women and children in particular, on building mutual understanding, goodwill, and friendship across borders, on exchanging ideas and advancing the Christian faith through sharing and outreach.

"These aims are still very relevant," Jane says.

"In some ways things have improved for women. There are fewer cultural barriers and greater opportunities in many areas. But in the area of violence against women and girls things have not got any better despite a huge amount of work."

As President of the Association of Presbyterian Women from 1994 to 1997, Jane helped organise the inaugural gathering of regional churchwomen prompted by concern about renewed French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Thanks to global pressure the testing was short lived. This is the first triennial consultation to be hosted in New Zealand since then.

The New Zealand branch – the Bridgebuilders Trust – is led by a core group of up to 10, but "has lots of supporters from a range of faiths who are happy to help with events but don't want to come to the monthly meetings," Jane says.

The trust has published resources on peace for secondary schools and on Better Brains for Babies and Post-natal Depression for Parents. A booklet on Children and the Internet is in the pipeline. It has campaigned for the extension of restorative justice across the court system and continues to provide practical support for women refugees and migrants in Auckland. It has also worked to overcome cultural barriers for women taking up or attempting to take up church leadership roles. "Belonging to Bridgebuilders has brought a sense of empowerment to women when, for example, ordination into ministry is denied to them," Jane says.

Janice sums up the appeal of the network. "I find the Bridgebuilders' vision and their reason for being exciting. To me it is a real way of 'doing' mission in the 21st century ... and in touch with the lives and realities of younger people."

Visit www.bridgebuilders.org.nz for more details on the network and recent Consultation. The host group for the next Consultation, the Cook Islands Women's Fellowship, has taken on the roles of the International Board of Officers, including that of International President.

Joan Begg Spanz

Rev Sharon Ross Ensor to direct Presbyterian Schools Resource Office

The Rev Sharon Ross Ensor was an accountant thinking about becoming a youth worker when she found herself drawn into ministry. It has been a winding path which has led her to her new role as Director of the Presbyterian Schools Resource Office.

"I started talking about going into youth work – and people started talking about ordained ministry. It was a feeling of gradually being drawn in," says Sharon who was a member of the Institute of Accountants before changing careers.

She had grown up in a Presbyterian family. Her parents Pat and Noel Ross are now members of the Pohutukawa Coast Presbyterian Church.

Sharon has mainly served in three parishes – St Ronan's, Eastbourne in Wellington, Somervell Presbyterian in Auckland and Wadestown Presbyterian – with six years at home raising son Jonathan and daughter Bronwyn in the middle. Her husband Dr Brian Ensor is Director of Palliative Care at Mary Potter Hospice.

In the early 1990s Sharon was a chaplain at St Oran's College in Lower Hutt and is a Presbytery representative on the Board of Governors at Queen Margaret College in Wellington.

All of which has landed her in a place she is very keen to be, Director of the Presbyterian Schools Resource Office, a three days per week role she took up in May 2014.

She is based at the Assembly Office in Wellington along with Global Mission Co-ordinator, the Rev Phil King, with whom she is working one day a week on a Council for World Mission project.

Sharon says, "The sense of call has grown and changed over the years. Awareness of what it is I have to offer, the person I am and the gifts I bring has strengthened and become clearer.

"I came to a point of feeling I was in a new season of ministry and this job came up and I felt I could offer something in it."

She follows Carolyn Kelly and the Rev Caleb Hardie into the position.

The Director's role has a number of strands including:

- » to serve and strengthen the relationship between the Presbyterian Church and the church schools
- » to coordinate the development and provision of resources in keeping with the schools' Presbyterian character
- » to provide support and encouragement to those providing religious education and chaplaincy in Presbyterian Church schools and
- » to engage with the school leaders about what it means to have a special Presbyterian character.

In her first few months Sharon has visited all 15 Presbyterian Church schools and is preparing for the Annual Church Schools Conference in August.

"The challenges I see are around what it means to be a Presbyterian School, how each school can embody that while keeping its own particular flavour, and how we can strengthen the connection between the schools and the Presbyterian Church tradition. The Church has some great resources we can offer in terms of Youth Ministry, Kids Friendly and Global Mission," she says.

Sharon is developing a handbook about the Presbyterian Church to help new chaplains and principals as part of their orientation. She is also looking at developing a resource which will tell the stories of the Church's history in New Zealand. "Some schools do work around Christian leaders or heroes. We can look within our own church and our own country and find great stories of people who have done amazing things in terms of serving communities."



Rev Sharon Ross Ensor has been Director of the Presbyterian Schools Resource Office since May 2014.

“It’s estimated that about 10 to 20 per cent of the students at our Presbyterian Church schools are regular churchgoers”

Sharon is very clear about the advantages of a Presbyterian Church school education. "My daughter was fortunate to be educated at Queen Margaret College," she says.

"It's estimated that about 10 to 20 per cent of the students at our Presbyterian Church schools are regular churchgoers. So for many of the students what they do in Christian Studies and in chapel services – that's their experience of church and Christian faith. It is an important thing our schools are offering.

"When I attend chapel services the students come in and there's just this space in the middle of a busy, pressured environment – that's significant in itself. And then we have the message that is being brought by the chaplains, based on Scripture, inviting the students to find a connection with it in their lives. I think it is something special that is being offered and I'm glad to be part of it."

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)

Three generations of Maori women influenced by Turakina

Dr Kathie Irwin, from a family of educationalists, has been appointed by the Church in a Commissioner role for the Board of Proprietors dedicated to keeping Turakina Maori Girls' College open.

Dr Kathie Irwin's grandmother, Horiaana Te Kauru Laughton, was almost disowned by her family for joining the Presbyterian Church and going to Turakina Maori Girls' College in 1914.

Three generations later, Kathie's daughter, also named Horiaana, has just returned from Harvard University with a Master's degree in law. The family credit Turakina for launching their women into education and creating the pathway that took their mokopuna to Harvard. It took four generations and over a hundred years to achieve that outcome!

Kathie's family is full of educationalists, including her mother Kathleen who taught in Native Schools while bringing up her children. Kathie has lectured at Massey and Victoria universities. She worked at the Te Kohanga Reo National Trust before setting up Hope Brothers Inc in 2007 using her experience in public policy, tertiary education, research and evaluation. She has also held the position of Chief Maori Advisor to the Families Commission and is currently Chair of Te Awe, the Wellington Maori Business Network.

Three generations of women in Kathie's whanau were highly influenced by Horiaana Te Kauru Laughton's experience at Turakina.

"Our grandmother going to Turakina changed the lives of every generation



Horiaana Irwin-Easthope recently returned from Harvard University with a Master's degree in law. She is the great-granddaughter of Horiaana Te Kauru Laughton and the Rev John Laughton.

after her. She – along with my grandfather, the Rev John Laughton – put education at the front of our lives," says Kathie. "My mother became a teacher and married a teacher. We three children are all teachers. When my daughter became a lawyer, it was almost a relief!"

Kathie, who was a member of the Turakina's board of proprietors, was appointed Commissioner of the school last year in a crisis period during which closure seemed probable. Kathie is leading a project called Tihei Turakina – "which means rise up, Turakina! It is aimed at breathing new life into the school.

"It's called Tihei Turakina, but the vision is 'te rangatiratanga o te rongopai o mana wahine' – 'the good news of the sovereignty in women's authentic status,'" says Kathie.

"It's really about how Maori women's status is wonderful when it is given a true place to stand tall. Within 25 years, we want to see the school as a world-class academy of indigenous women's education.

"We're trying to find the modern systems that help a very old vision of social justice and equity to remain available to Maori women. It's a faith-based vision, and it's testing every

element of our faith as we go through the journey."

"The big question was whether we could open in 2014," she remembers of the crisis days of late last year.

Kathie decided to use her public service skills in a bid to pull the school out of its immediate credit crunch – a debt of \$400,000. She wrote a report and took it to the Associate Minister of Education, Dr Pita Sharples. He was impressed and agreed to invest in a project to review and strengthen the hostel operations while the school focussed on chasing unpaid school fees.

Kathie took a firm line with families: "If there was no agreement on how the debt would be met by 30 January, the girl would not be allowed to come back to the school. It was tough for us to front. We made phone calls. But we were very pleased with the response – some families must have gone to extraordinary lengths to start the repayment process. By the end of January we had \$50,000 that we didn't have in December."

This year the school has 65 students, but it needs 120 next year to keep going. It is the only Presbyterian Church Maori girls' school; there is no Maori boys' school.

Kathie has developed a plan to support girls and their families which has elements similar to the sponsorship model used by organisations like World Vision to sponsor children overseas. It will include mentoring, regular reports from the students to their sponsors and preparation for the interface between education and employment.

"It's a partnership between families, girls and sponsors," says Kathie who is confident, with the right promotion and support that the scheme will work. She is currently working on a marketing DVD about the school featuring successful former students and church leaders.

"Education is my professional field so I am aware of the research on what it takes to promote educational achievement. We are going to put every ounce of effort we can put in. The main focus is getting more girls in next year."

Kathie's whakapapa has made her the woman for the job.

Her grandmother's family in Nuhaka were strong Mormons when the Presbyterian Church opened there in 1914.

Horiana started attending Turakina in 1915 and was their 149th pupil. "This caused big ructions. She suffered a severe beating for wanting to convert – but she still converted."

She was dux of the school in 1917, and taught there in 1919.

In between she became the first Maori woman to work in her own right as a

“ It took us one hundred years, and four generations – to get Horiana to Harvard ”

teacher in the Presbyterian Mission. She worked at Waiohau amongst the Tuhoe people – and there met the Rev John Laughton who was working in Maungapohatu.

"They met as peers. He was a missionary and she was a teacher. He was ordained in 1921, and they married that year," says Kathie.

"She became the minister's wife and worked very strongly with him as his partner. They worked together for the church but her contribution became invisible in the church records upon marriage.

"They both served on the Turakina Board of governors, and Laughton House was named after them. My grandfather went on to become Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in 1942 and he was the first Moderator of the Maori Synod when it was established in 1956."

Millie Te Kaawa, former Te Aka Puaho Moderator is a Turakina old girl who was encouraged to attend by the Laughtons as were other girls from the Bay of Plenty. Former Cabinet minister and first Maori woman to qualify in law, Hon Georgina Te Heuheu, and the Reverend Hariata Haumate also studied there.

Says Kathie, "The reason I am trying to make sure Turakina stays open is that the future of New Zealand can't just be for families rich enough to afford options. Many of the Maori families who want their girls to go can't afford to send them. So I am trying to do something with the Church and with the government to keep it alive. It's clear that without the ongoing support of the Church, the membership of the Church, including Te Aka Puaho, the Presbyterian Women, and the Friends of Turakina, the school would not have survived. I acknowledge and pay tribute to the Church for the special support for Turakina over the years.

"My grandmother, to the day she died, was passionate about women and women's education.

"When I taught the Women in Education course at Massey University, I wasn't just armed with feminist literature; it was the impact and stories of my own grandmother and mother that gave me the background to teach that course.

"My mother was able to keep teaching after she was married because she taught in the Native School system. In the mainstream school system women left teaching when they married. She taught through her pregnancies and kept on teaching while raising her children.

"I returned to teaching after the birth of my children, which wasn't ideal because we lived away from the university and I commuted to work. But I was the only Maori academic in the education department at Massey at the time and the Maori courses in education would have stopped until I came back if I took maternity leave!"

Kathie's daughter, Horiana Irwin-Easthope, 28, did a BA with a major in Maori Studies and a Law degree. She worked as a solicitor at Russell McVeagh and Kahui Legal before going to Harvard as the 2013 Nga Pae o Te Maramatanga Fulbright Scholar to do her Masters in Law last year. Her thesis was awarded with honours.

As Kathie puts it – "It took us one hundred years, and four generations – to get Horiana to Harvard. Change has to happen faster than that in New Zealand and Turakina can play a critical role in helping young Maori women to chase their dreams."

She hopes the school, families, sponsors and students will be inspired to follow in the footsteps of four generations of the female line of her family to educational success.

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)

“ The reason I am trying to make sure Turakina stays open is that the future of New Zealand can't just be for families rich enough to afford options ”

Catalyst connects churches and communities

Growth is top of the list for the Presbyterian Church's Lisa Wells who took up the newly created role of PressGo Catalyst in mid-June.

"Growth is not only about getting more people into church for the Sunday morning service," says Lisa. "It's about engaging with people and the community through other means. This could be an after-school get-together for students, Friday night group for young married couples, Sunday afternoon Messy Church service for young families, and not necessarily in the church buildings either."

"In some cases growth in these forms may feed into a traditional church service but in so doing may change the shape of that," adds Lisa, who has served on the both the PressGo Board and Church's Council of Assembly.

Lisa and her husband Ian live in Mosgiel where she is an elder at East Taieri Church. She has three adult children and three grandchildren.

Her appointment marks a shift in approach for PressGo, the project approved by the General Assembly in 2008 to collectively fund promising growth ideas proposed by parishes. It's no longer just about funding and it's very much a team approach, Lisa stresses.

As Catalyst she will talk with parishes about their proposals and vision, about connecting with possible partners or sponsors, working through the strategic planning process, and potentially setting up fundraising campaigns.

"In my experience I've found that once you get the groundwork sorted finding the money is no longer such a problem," she says.

Her experience in these areas will be invaluable. It includes 25 years as a fundraising consultant and the last decade as development director for Presbyterian Support Otago, working on strategic planning, project management, and marketing among other things.

"When this role came up, I had a very clear sense of a call to come out of a job I was enjoying to do something that would be a challenge," Lisa says. "From the inception of PressGo I have been excited about its vision to ignite change around the Church."

Lisa takes some inspiration from a quotation by contemporary theologian Craig van Gelder: "It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission that has a church in the world."

"It's the idea that it's the impact we have on our community rather than the numbers we have in church that really counts," she says. "Some of our churches have already taken this on and made changes. Some of these changes have worked and others haven't."

Lisa is a great believer in learning from what doesn't work as much as sharing ideas on what does, and not allowing fear of



Lisa Wells is the Presbyterian Church's new PressGo Catalyst.

failure to inhibit action. She plans to make the sharing that took place at last year's Offspring Conference a more frequent occurrence, possibly through the presbyteries.

"The alternative to change is to stick with the one size fits all approach," she explains, "and continue to lose church members and see the influence of the church diminish."

PressGo Convenor, the Rev Andrew Norton, says the board is delighted with Lisa's appointment. "Her understanding of church, passion for mission, and fundraising and strategic planning skills will greatly assist PressGo in providing resources for presbyteries and congregations in their mission."

Lisa has kept busy from day one, meeting PressGo board members to discuss expectations and priorities, checking on the progress of projects, and talking with parishes about proposals. She's also revisited some of the 14 completed PressGo projects to assess how they shaped up, what worked, what didn't, and whether in hindsight another approach might have worked better.

As for growth, thanks to her recent work with Presbyterian Support's social service arm, Family Works, Lisa already has an idea about how parishes might reclaim some of their former status as the hub of local communities. It's based on the idea that healthy communities support healthy families and children by fostering resilience so people can better cope with their lives. It's about community-led solutions. And it's an area in which some churches are already involved.

"There's a great opportunity for more churches to pitch themselves as key assets in their community," says Lisa. "It's never going to get to a point where the church is the standard norm setter of society that it once was. But in terms of caring for each other, it's a great role model."

Joan Begg Spanz

New archivist committed to conserving tradition

Eva Garbutt is the new archivist at the Presbyterian Research Centre at Knox College in Dunedin. Previously she was the sole archivist at what is now the Waitaki District Archive in Oamaru.

Eva has a degree in archaeology from the University of Otago and a Masters in Museum Object Conservation from University College, London, studying the principles of conservation and cultural heritage preservation.

Her thesis focussed on the conservation issues associated with preserving historic Maori meeting houses overseas. "I was interested in whether and how conservators dealing with these 'objects' considered their spiritual dimension and integrity," says Eva.

She says her interest in history was sparked by the contrasts of her childhood. Until she was nine when her family moved to New Zealand she lived in a village near Freiburg in the Black Forest in Germany.

"I grew up in Europe surrounded by history and heritage. As a teenager I was going on visits back to Germany and I loved that. I ended up studying archaeology because I had a love of old cities and sites and an interest in history."

Like many students, Eva's sister Antje Luebcke, used the Presbyterian archives while researching her thesis. In her case this involved looking at the photograph albums of Presbyterian missionaries in the Pacific.

Eva says she finds the church records fascinating, "particularly the minute books, especially the early ones, because they tell us so much about what was happening in communities and throughout New Zealand at a congregational level. There are fascinating insights in the detail and in the personal stories. You can tell how small the communities were, how interconnected."



Eva Garbutt takes over from Yvonne Wilkie as archivist at the Presbyterian Research Centre.

The records are also very useful for genealogical research with the archives receiving a lot of requests for marriage and baptismal certificates.

However the most emotionally affecting material is often not the official documentation but the correspondence, diaries and reports by ministers and other church workers. "When family members come in they can see some of the papers their relatives have written. Even just seeing the handwriting is an amazing experience for them," says Eva.

After the decision was made to house most of the records of parishes within the Synod of Otago and Southland at the archives part of Eva's former job had been to transfer the North Otago presbytery and parish records to the Presbyterian Church Research Centre.

Families sometimes question why material is in the archive rather than held by them. But they are often reassured by seeing the care with which these documents are kept for posterity.

Family members will often return home and send more, says Eva. "Someone came in who had a relative who had been involved in missionary work. She was thrilled to see how we cared for the items. She talked to other family members who still held material and said, 'Wouldn't it be a great to pool all the resources in one place? These guys do a good job.' So those who held other material brought it in and it was added to the collection."

"Some parishes and presbyteries feel that Dunedin is a long way to come to view their records. But we look after

“ The most emotionally affecting material is often not the official documentation but the correspondence, diaries and reports ”

them here. They are used and they are accessible. Parishes and presbyteries can even ask to borrow records back for a time. They are a great resource for all levels of the Presbyterian organisation to have access to."

Plans are afoot to enhance the Presbyterian Archive website so people can see what the archives holds. Eva is also working on digital archiving.

She is keen to visit or talk with parishes and presbyteries about how best to look after their records if they choose to retain them, to discuss the process of transferring them to an approved regional repository, or to begin discussions about transferring them to the archive.

Her message is that if materials are put into the archive they will be well cared for by the staff (Eva, assistant archivist Andrew Smith and curator of photographs Myke Tymons) and a dedicated band of volunteers, all committed to making information more accessible to members of the Presbyterian Church and beyond.

Visit Presbyterian Archives online, www.presbyterian.org.nz/archives/

Jane Tolerton Spanz

A peasant woman readies the ground for planting rice.



Photographs from the Presbyterian Archives are on show in China

Photographs of New Zealand Presbyterian missionaries have shown the people of Guangzhou how their forebears lived a century ago.

The New Zealand Presbyterian Research Centre at Knox College in Dunedin has about 4,000 Cantonese photographs taken by the missionaries, says photographic curator Mychael Tymons who is continuing to catalogue 2,000 that have not yet been recorded.

About 40 of the photographs formed part of an exhibition entitled "A Shared History: New Zealand Connections with old Guangzhou" in the Guangzhou Library.

The exhibition was instigated by George McKibbens and the New Zealand Consul-General in Guangzhou, Rebecca Needham. The Guangzhou Library says the exhibition is the most successful ever staged by a consulate at the library which has 500,000 members and 18,000 people visiting each day.

The New Zealand Chinese Villages Mission was started by Presbyterian minister Alexander Don in 1901.

"His first visit to China was in 1896 when he went to learn the language so he could converse with the Chinese miners working on the goldfields of Otago province. He also learnt how to write it," says Mychael.

"Then he came back and taught two other Presbyterian ministers, George McNeur and William Mawson. In 1903 McNeur and Mawson set up the New Zealand Chinese mission, initially in Fong Ts'uen. Later they purchased land and established a compound at Kong Chuen which at the time was a rural area dominated by rice fields. Today Guangzhou City has spread across all this land and it's become part of the city."

Alexander Don was a proficient and prolific photographer, says Mychael. "He used photos in fundraising and recruiting for the mission. He came back from China with magic lantern slides and went round the parishes in Otago and Southland raising money."

The photographs show not only the mission, but also peasant life. As a result the people who went to the exhibition were able to see aspects of how their forebears lived, Mychael says.

"Don encouraged a lot of young people to become missionaries. A fairly steady stream of people went over the years,



Chinese orphans, circa 1938. If you recognise the apron pattern please contact Mychael so he can identify the parish that supplied them.

about 50 in total. Many were women. For them it was a way of travelling and seeing the world. They saw it as an adventure.

"Originally the New Zealand missionaries shared facilities with the American Presbyterians. But by about 1917 they built their own hospital compound and a school at Kong Chuen.

"The missionaries would go out and preach but they were also responsible, through their hospital, for bringing food and general hygiene. It was a pretty unhealthy place at the time. One of the missionaries, Dr Ing who had come from England, died of dysentery. It went with the job. The villagers lived in primitive conditions, often living with pigs in the house, and were very superstitious.

"The missionaries took in and raised abandoned children, especially girls, teaching them skills such as reading and writing and occupations such as nursing and teaching.

"From after the 1937 Japanese invasion until 1941 they were allowed to continue at Kong Chuen under guard. But with a formal declaration of war after the bombing of Pearl Harbour they were interned in the Oriental Mission while the Chinese nursing staff were retained when the hospital was taken over by the Japanese for their soldiers."

The only missionary who managed to escape was a woman, Annie James. "She went up country and evaded being interned. But at the end of the war she was arrested on false charges. She spent time in a Chinese jail before returning to New Zealand and being given the MBE," says Mychael.

The Communist Government asked the missionaries to leave in 1951, buying back the land at Kong Chuen and taking over the hospital.

The exhibition came about after an American foreign languages lecturer in China, George McKibben, saw the Cantonese photographs on the Presbyterian Church Archive's website. He contacted Mychael and asked him to talk about them on a Chinese radio station at which he is an intern.

"I did this interview focussing on how a little archive in New Zealand had all these photographs and the fact that there weren't many in existence".

The original plan was to use a few photographs as part of a function by an Auckland-based education group to mark the 25th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Auckland and Guangzhou. But when McKibbens showed the photographs to Rebecca Needham, New Zealand's Consul-General in Guangzhou, she decided they should go on display.

There has been much media interest. The exhibition's opening was shown on television and a feature is planned for the Southern China Airways magazine.

They are of particular interest in the region because of the huge change that has taken place there in recent years, says Mychael.

"Guangzhou has gone from over one million people in 1950 to 12.7 million



Cantonese villagers.

today. In the earliest photographs of Kong Chuen, all around the mission is just rural land. There are paddy fields for miles. Now Kong Chuen has disappeared as an entity and it is in the middle of the huge Guangzhou city. There are very few images of that time. So they are fascinated by the photographs.

"We were just so lucky we kept them. They were mostly the property of the Church so they were kept first in Auckland, then Wellington, and then when we started the archives, here.

"Donald Cochrane, my predecessor in this role, did the bulk of the work describing and organising them and writing the webpages that tells the mission history.

"I'm preparing a blog and we'll put up a photo gallery of the exhibition on the website so everyone can see them."

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)



Missionaries, 1903: L-R: Rev. Alexander Don, Mr A Porter, Rev William Mawson, Mr H Barton, Mr H L Watt, Middle row: Miss Sinclair, Miss J Blackie, Rev W Hewitson, Miss S M Gordon.

KCML graduates

This year's KCML graduates have a range of backgrounds and experience. All are eager to commit themselves to ministry within the life of a congregation or in other ministry roles. Profiles for each are available from the Rev Allister Lane who coordinates introductions and discussions between final year interns and Ministry Settlement Boards. For more information, please contact Allister, a.lane@stjohnsinthecity.org.nz.



Jill McDonald

I am married to Chris and we live in North Otago. I grew up on a farm in Southland and before beginning my internship, I spent six years working as a celebrant, conducting funerals and weddings throughout Otago. I have a particular passion for working with the elderly and thoroughly enjoyed the two years I spent, before our move to Oamaru, working as the Pastoral Worker for Seniors at Highgate Church in Dunedin.

I have been deeply shaped by the year I spent working for the Iona Community in Scotland as well as the eight years I worked for Presbyterian Support Otago managing the Buddy programme – a befriending programme for children.

I am currently completing an integrated internship with both Waitaki Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Support Otago. I have a strong sense of social justice and am passionate about Christ's call for us to be a missional Church, engaged with our local community and beyond.

I am a warm, vibrant 'people person' and I love creating engaging and meaningful liturgy to enable us to worship God together as a faith community. I also relish engaging with individuals to explore where they are experiencing God in their lives.



Erin Pendreigh

My husband Rob, two of our three children (Noah 16, and Kate 14) and our foster child (Kayla-Rose 14) live in Cromwell, Central Otago, where Rob is minister of the local Presbyterian church. Our eldest daughter (Emma) moved to Dunedin a few weeks ago.

Currently I am an intern based at St Johns, Arrowtown, part of the wider Wakatipu Community Presbyterian Church. I have spent 18 of the past 22 years as mum, and seven of those years a minister's wife. Most of this time has been holding a sense of call into ordained ministry, waiting for the right time to explore and start the necessary foundational studies.

I graduated from the University of Otago in 2012, studying full time by distance for three years before entering the internship program at the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership. Having three teenagers at home takes up most of our spare time, but I enjoy coffee, reading or walking with Rob and friends. I am also a fan of netball.

I am passionate about our local churches – as communities of faith in themselves and as ambassadors for Christ in our neighbourhoods. Our communities are better for having us dwell amongst them. We are better for knowing God is active in our communities and desires us to join in the work already being done.



Dan Spragg

Hi, I'm Dan. I'm married to Sharon, a Primary School Teacher and we have two children, Asher (10) and Hannah (8). We hail from the beautiful, regenerating city of Christchurch.

Prior to my ministry internship I was the owner/manager of a private music school which saw approximately 185 students come and learn the drums and guitar each week. My background is mostly music. I have been a drummer and percussionist, learning and performing since the age of 7.

Currently I am completing the second year of my internship at The Village Presbyterian in Christchurch where I am enjoying all the variation that parish life brings. I get really excited about the potential of the local church – the community that seeks to live as a sign of God's future coming at us in the here and now. In particular I am passionate about worship that seeks to inform this – the 'what' that gives hands and feet to our following Christ.



Chris Milham

I'm married to Vicki and we have three daughters – Erin, Sarah and Leah. As a family we've been involved with the Presbyterian Church for a decade or so, and before that we had many years with the Methodist Church.

My role in recent years has come to be more focused on Bible teaching and preaching, and I have been privileged to build on this in my internship at Glendowie Presbyterian Church. As well as being a mum, Vicki is involved with music ministry and also leads a Mainly Music group at our former church.

Prior to the internship I was teaching Secondary science and biology, and before doing that I worked in the IT industry. Along the way I completed a BD through Laidlaw College. At home we enjoy plenty of books and general chaos, along with a growing contingent of pets, including a cat, rabbit, guinea pigs and chickens.

What gets me excited about ministry is the teaching of God's Word and seeing people transformed by the Spirit of God. I am looking forward to seeing God continue to work in the local church as I move into serving as a missional leader in a new context.



Carolyn Kelly

Kia Ora tatou. I'm looking forward to continuing ministry in an ordained capacity next year, probably in central Auckland.

Together with my husband Mark (Johnston) and alongside other friends and neighbours, students and artisans (including our young-adult kids), we are exploring what it means to be Christian and practise faith in this rapidly growing, changing urban context. Here, our church faces significant challenges and the reality that it no longer shapes public life. But we can also be expectant of the future God calls us into; that God is glorified by human beings, fully alive! So as we 'seek the welfare of the city ... and pray to the Lord on its behalf' (Jer 29:7) we can rediscover forms of communal life and witness that are fresh and ancient, simple yet creative.

My approach to ministry and leadership can be summarised as 'Living well, loving much and speaking truthfully', here and now.

Personally, I am particularly interested in theology and Christian spirituality past and present, the arts, and human embodiment in space and the natural world. For fun, I gad about in this wonderful playground, the big little city.



Brendon McRae

Kia ora. I grew up in Gore next to the Mataura River. I am married to Catherine and we have two sons – Taylor and Cade. I enjoy reading, gardening, keeping fit, playing soccer and am a fanatical fly fisherman. As a family we are often a buzz with sports, homework, more sports, and school activities with the occasional breather.

We currently live in Mosgiel, Dunedin, where I am completing a two-year internship at St Marks Presbyterian Church in Pine Hill. For 16 years I juggled study and youth ministry. I served seven years in Cromwell and nine years in Mosgiel at East Taieri Church as a youth worker, then youth director, with five of those years working part-time for Praxis (a network of practitioner educators in youth work and community development).

I believe the church is called by God to serve the local community, not in some idealised or abstract way, but in a practical hands-on way where mission and worship are not separate but rather hug each other. I get excited and energised when the local church exists in genuine organic relationship with its community. I am looking forward to serving within a multigenerational context and listening better to what the Spirit of God might be saying (and doing) within our life, community, worship and ministry together.



Andrew Howley

A born and bred Cantabrian, for the past two years I have been serving my internship in Dunedin at the parish of St Philip's, Grants Braes in Waverley.

Before my internship, while completing a bachelor of theology via correspondence from Otago University, I was employed at St Margaret's Presbyterian Church in Christchurch for five years where I have served in the role of children's worker, and community-based intermediate youth worker. During this time I was also involved in the leadership of an ecumenical youth lead worship service ACT1V8. Prior to this I worked as a qualified painter and decorator and before that in the Salvation Army's Community and Families ministry.

I have a real passion to see all people grow to their full potential as leaders and go on to serve their neighbours, their communities and God. I count it as a real privilege to journey alongside people as they navigate life's joys and challenges, to help them find God in the midst of life.

For recreation I enjoy encountering the wonders of creation, be that going for a walk, boogie boarding, or going for a paddle on Otago harbour in my kayak.



Our Church and its Property Resources

The Church as a community is committed to good stewardship and its importance for future generations. One way of doing this is to look to using our property resources more strategically.

Everyone who makes decisions about property or finance within the Church is a "trustee". However, it falls to the Church Property Trustees, guided by the recommendations of Presbyteries, to make the decisions in relation to property proposals.

In order that the Trustees have all the information they require to make prudent property decisions, a robust application and approval process is essential.

First and foremost, the Trustees want to see that all property proposals fit with both the local mission goals of parishes and the regional strategic development of Presbyteries. They also want to see congregations fully involved in all discussions and decisions around property proposals.

New property application forms are now in use and incorporate what were previously called the Supplementary Questions. These questions have been updated to reflect their importance in the Trustees' eyes and the General Assembly guidelines. They are now regarded as "fundamental" to a proposal not "supplementary."

The new forms are available on request from the Trustees' office or your Presbytery and replace all previously used forms.

The Trustees are confident the new forms will help parishes and Presbyteries to focus on the reason for each property application and how it will contribute to the mission and growth of the Church.

Enquires for the Trustees may be made to:

The Executive Officer, Kos van Lier
Presbyterian Property Trustees
PO Box 9049, Wellington 6141
(04) 381 8296 or
kos@presbyterian.org.nz

THEOLOGYMATTERS

Can we simplify the good news? Can we distill the gospel down to "doing unto others"?

If "doing unto others" is the gist of following Jesus then it requires you to be in a position to do the "doing". That means you need to be the protagonist. In fact it demands that *everyone* be a protagonist. The doing *starts with us*. When we look a little deeper, we realise this 'golden rule' insists that everyone be in a position of power.

The trouble is that the gospel of Jesus does not require everyone to be powerful. In fact, it is those who are powerful, with an abundance of freedom and choices, who seem to have the most difficulty getting in on what Jesus is doing. (Think the rich young ruler in Luke 18).

Yet there is an irresistible gravity towards distilling the message of Jesus down to something that actually reinforces our position of power rather than challenges it. Something is wrong.

That "something" is easily seen in our interpretation of one of Jesus' most famous parables, the Good Samaritan. If you ask people what the main message of this parable is the response you tend to get is something like, "be nice to other people." Notice how easily we assume the position of the helper, the powerful position. The problem is that I'm not sure Jesus (or his listeners) saw the story like this.

Scholar Kenneth Bailey points out that the first person Jesus names in his parables is usually the person he wants his listeners to relate too. And in this one, it is not the helpful, golden-rule-following Samaritan who enters first. It is a fool.

The parable starts, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho..."

First century hearers would have known immediately that:

- only an idiot travels down that road on their own, and
- Jesus is calling me an idiot.

The second issue with our traditional angle on the parable is that Jesus' hearers were Jewish. And the hero of this story is a Samaritan. They were half bloods

It seems Jesus knows about loving his enemy from the inside

('mudbloods' in Harry Potter-speak). No Jew is going to let themselves be cast in a story as their own sworn blood enemy.

So what is Jesus saying? You can't be a rescuer until you've been rescued. You can't serve until you've been served. Jesus tells this story in such a way that our own powerlessness becomes inescapable. We are the ones who set off on a dangerous journey on our own. It was foolish and misguided. Then we are rescued by one we have been taught to hate since birth, to fear and exclude. It turns out this is where God's hides himself in the story, in the place of our enemy. It seems Jesus knows about loving his enemy from the inside.

So you see, the gospel is not the same as being good to other people, because the gospel doesn't let us bring our riches with us, all our status and symbols of wealth and power. The gospel asks that we first find ourselves as the powerless one, the one rescued when all hope seemed gone, that when we thought God was our enemy, he turned out to be our best friend.

The gospel is a far richer story than the golden rule allows for. The gospel will undoubtedly bring us to a life of compassion towards others but it asks us first to rest awhile in the place of God's compassion towards us.

So how do we let this truth shape us? Worship helps us do this when it begins with God's call and initiative towards us. It does this when it brings God's assurance of grace in contact with our confessions of foolishness, selfishness and shortsightedness. While the golden rule demands a power from us that we don't actually have, the gospel makes room for who we really are right now. That's why it's called 'the good news'.

Malcolm Gordon Spanz
PCANZ Music Enabler

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Presbyterian good books

Sharon Stephenson takes a look at recent books by Presbyterian authors.

Hallowed Be Thy Name: The Sanctification Of All In The Soteriology Of P.t. Forsyth

by Rev Dr Jason Goroncy (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2013)

No one could accuse Rev Dr Jason Goroncy of being idle. The theologian and historian from Dunedin's Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership has published three books in the past two years.

Hallowed Be Thy Name comes from Jason's PhD dissertation, which was aimed at demystifying the work of the Scottish Congregationalist theologian P.T. Forsyth.

"I wanted to offer a more accessible way of reading and critiquing the work of one of the most creative and robust theological minds ever produced," says Jason. "It explores whether the notion of 'hallowing' provides a lens through which to read and evaluate his work."

Jason also edited a book on Forsyth's preaching ministry, *Descending on Humanity and Intervening in History: Notes from the Pulpit Ministry of P.T. Forsyth* (Pickwick Publications) and, earlier this year, he edited *Tikkun Olam – To Mend the World: A Confluence of Theology and the Arts*, also published by Pickwick Publications, which explores how artists and theologians can participate in God's work of healing.

He's not done yet either. In the works is a book on the theology of death, another book on Forsyth and he'd love to write a book on Sri Lankan cooking.

"John Updike said that 'most of our lives are basically mundane and dull and that it's up to the writer to find ways to make them interesting'. The 'ways', though, usually involve bleeding to death while dragging oneself across a desert driven by a series of mirages which promises to make and break the soul! However, compared to writing, the publishing process is like all-you-can-eat ice-cream!"

The Journey

By Karalyn Reid and team (Published by Albury/Pleasant Point Presbyterian Church in association with the Cancer Society, 2013)

Karalyn (Joyce) Reid is no stranger to story. The Albury Pleasant Point parishioner has been writing for the past 20 years.

"I've mostly written short stories and poetry which have been published in NZ anthologies and magazines such as *North & South* and *The Listener*. I've even written

romances in woman's magazines and a few children's picture books."

However, it wasn't until Karalyn finished editing *Ragworts & Thistles*, an anthology of writing about rural women, that "God began to creep" into her work.

"My writing began to take a new direction and over the past six years, I've edited three faith-based anthologies of poems and short stories by New Zealanders. The first was *Fuel for the Soul*, then came, *I Saw Love Today* in 2011 which was dedicated to those affected by the Canterbury quakes, and last month I published *The Journey*, a collection of hope and encouragement for those suffering from cancer or other serious illnesses."

The Journey was prompted by a friend suffering from breast cancer, and then Karalyn had her own brush with eye cancer.

"I thought there should be a book of life stories about survival. Then I stopped thinking someone else should put it together and did it myself."

With financial backing and support from her parish Karalyn says this latest book has been her most satisfying.

"It isn't over-the-top Christian writing, because we wanted to be able to touch people from all walks of life. I'm thrilled to use my skills to promote God!"

The Church In Post-Sixties New Zealand: Decline, Growth And Change

by Rev Dr Kevin Ward (Auckland: Archer Press, 2013)

Rev Dr Kevin Ward is proof of the adage that if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Based at Dunedin's Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Kevin wrote this book in 2003. But it took 10 years to be published.

"The book came out of my PhD and focused on the growth of the church since the 1960s – why, while there had been an overall decline, some churches had shown a significant vitality and growth."

Although initially taken on by an Australian publisher "who messed around for a long time", Kevin was about to self-publish when he was taken on by Archer Press.

"It took some time to update the book with the changes of the past decade, but I think it turned out a better book as the patterns I highlighted have been reflected in the most recent Census and Church Life Survey."

Kevin's second book, *Losing Our Religion: Changing*

Patterns of Believing and Belonging in Secular Western Societies, was published by a US publisher last year.

Coming from an oral tradition (as a preacher and secondary school teacher), Kevin initially found writing challenging.

"I've tried to bring the warmth and colour of oral communication to the page, while keeping the discipline and accuracy that it demands. I now enjoy writing and often turn to it to process my thinking. There's a wonderful line from a movie, 'Write the first draft with your heart and the second with your head'. I've found that enormously helpful."

Next up for Kevin is a book on the 40 year ministry of Murray Robertson at Spreydon Baptist Church, which he's been working on for the past three years.

Teaching Hundreds To Heal Millions – The Story Of Dr Beryl Howie

by Bartha Hill (Daystar Books, 2013)

Bartha Hill's CV runs to about 20 pages. The Dunedin church member has done everything from teaching and photography to food editing and missionary work.

But Bartha is probably best known as the author of 15 books, as well as numerous articles and newsletters, many of which written during the seven years she worked for World Vision.

The story of Dr Beryl Howie wasn't easy to write as she was a very private person.

"I was thrilled to be able to write her story. Professor Howie was a Presbyterian who worked with the women of India for 23 years bringing hope and healing to thousands," says Bartha. "She developed a world class department of obstetrics and gynaecology at Ludhiana Hospital and raised money for a new hospital."

"I write as the spirit moves me and all my work is Christian-based. Fortunately, I've never had much trouble finding a publisher and my books are published in Scotland, the US, Canada and New Zealand."

A Rising Tide: Evangelical Christianity In New Zealand, 1930-1965

by Stuart Lange (Otago University Press, 2013)

Ever wondered about the post-war resurgence of evangelical Christianity in New Zealand? The Rev Dr Stuart Lange did, and the reflection and research for his PhD led the Massey-Riverhead minister

and Senior Lecturer in history at Laidlaw College to produce *The Rising Tide*.

"In New Zealand, evangelical Christianity has always played a significant role and this book explores evangelicals in the mainstream churches, universities and other organisations during a time when a moderate British-style evangelicalism was paramount."

"I thoroughly enjoyed writing the book and making my research accessible to general readers. The book explores an indispensable part of New Zealand's church history and is full of life and colour, particularly the fascinating personalities who were involved."

Many readers have suggested to Stuart he might like to write a sequel. It's something he's considering but he's also turned his attentions to a DVD that focuses on 200 years of Christianity in New Zealand: see <http://nzchristiannetwork.org.nz/te-rongopai-dvd/>

Embedded Faith: The Faith Journeys Of Young Adults Within Church Communities

(Wipf and Stock, 2013)

Until recently, Dr Carlton Johnstone was the Church's National Youth Ministry Development Leader, a role he'd held for five years. But since starting an internship to become a Presbyterian minister, Carlton has relocated to Christchurch and a placement with The Village Presbyterian Church.

In between, he found the time to publish his first book, the result of his PhD research on young adults and faith.

"It's a resource for all involved in ministry to, and with, young adults and provides an insight into their engagement and disengagement with church life," says Carlton. "It will enable anyone working with young adults to give shape to a ministry that's more sensitive and connected to the realities faced by young adults today."

It wasn't all plain sailing though. Carlton says it took about five submissions to various publishers before it was accepted by Wipf & Stock in America.

"I was grateful to friends who wrote letters supporting publication, including Andrew Root, currently one of the leading international thinkers and writers on theology and youth ministry, agreeing to write the foreword."

Carlton admits he enjoyed the research and writing process and says he is keen to tackle another book.

"At this stage, however, I am focused on the internship and writing my assignments!"

General Assembly 2014: Key business

Presbyteries have asked that mission-related business be given priority at October's General Assembly.

This feedback was given at a gathering led by the Assembly Business Workgroup where presbyteries were invited to discuss the business going before General Assembly.

"Feedback was very clear," says Moderator-designate the Rev Andrew Norton who attended the gathering.

"Presbyteries told us that the priority focus of Assembly should be on mission. They also told us that there was a very low appetite for the ongoing debates about sexuality that have occurred at Assemblies in recent years."

Presbyteries also asked the Assembly Business Workgroup, which is responsible for overseeing and organising the business of General Assembly, to dedicate some time for discussion of the issues raised in the Council's Mission Clarity document, which was published in April this year.

"Mission Clarity identifies some challenges and opportunities for the future and makes suggestions about how, as a Church, we might respond to and resource these," explains Council of Assembly deputy Convener, the Rev Dr Colin Marshall.

It is hoped that some of the points raised in the Mission Clarity document, which will be part of Council's report to General Assembly, will be offered to dialogue groups for discussion.

A summary of some of the key matters expected to go before General Assembly are noted below.

Cross-cultural Church

The last General Assembly asked that the wider Church engage in conversation about the possibility of declaring

ourselves to be a cross-cultural Church within the context of a bicultural Church.

Feedback from consultation with parishes and presbyteries was largely positive, and accordingly the Council of Asian Congregations is asking Assembly to consider adopting a short statement that declares the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand as cross-cultural.

Funding Mission

Assembly will be asked to invite the Church Property Trustees to make an annual contribution to the Church's mission equal to 5 per cent of the interest earned on balances held in the Presbyterian Investment Fund. The funds would go toward supporting new mission ventures, the work of Press Go's mission catalyst and funding the stipend or salaries of those in growing congregations.

Assembly will also be asked to consider establishing a Mission Enterprise Fund, which if approved, would be funded by 10 per cent of the proceeds of congregation and presbytery property sales. (Excluded from this would be the sale of manse or worship centres for the purposes of their replacement.) The Mission Enterprise fund would be administered by the Church Property Trustees to enable the work of Press Go and support Te Aka Puaho's work with disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

Investment in Fossil Fuels

Coastal Unity Parish has put forward a proposal that encourages divestment of the Church's investments in fossil fuel.

The proposal asks the Church to express its mission of care for creation by establishing principles that will guide future ethical investment, and by asking that the Church Property Trustees and

other agencies divest investment in coal, oil and gas companies by General Assembly 2016.

"Divestment is a small move which sends a powerful message," according to proposal authors, the Rev Anne Thomson and Rev Dr Bruce Hamill. "Churches and other faith communities are in a position to exercise moral leadership on this urgent issue."

Assembly is being asked to "regard investment in the fossil fuel industry to be unethical, socially irresponsible and contrary to the Church's stated mission – in particular its 'care for creation'".

Reform of presbyteries

Assembly will be asked to approve amalgamation of several central and lower North Island presbyteries and union district councils to create the new Presbytery Central. Approval will also be sought for the formation of the new Alpine Presbytery comprised of upper and mid-South Island presbyteries as well as the West Coast Union District Council.



Peace and reconciliation

Wellington Presbytery is asking General Assembly to call on the country's political leaders to commit to active initiatives that promote peace, through non-violent conflict resolution and to oppose armed conflict.

In this year, which marks the centenary of the outbreak of World War I, the proposal asks congregations and other church agencies to join the call for peace and reconciliation by establishing a programme of Just Peace (based on the WCC Ecumenical Call to Just Peace 2011).

Additional confession

St Luke's Remuera is asking Assembly to consider adding the Confession of Belhar (1986) of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (now part of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa) to the list of confessions recognised by the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Building standards

A proposal from St Andrew's Marton asks that "In light of the difficulties and huge costs which would be incurred by local congregations to upgrade their buildings to 67 per cent of the

New Building Standard, that Assembly requests that the Church Property Trustees allow parishes to upgrade to the lower percentage of 34 per cent or similar, in line with most local body building requirements".

Congregational amalgamation

A proposal being brought before Assembly by Greyfriars Eden Epsom Presbyterian Church asks Assembly to allow two congregations to amalgamate without the need for one or both congregations to dissolve.

Representation at General Assembly

In response to decisions from General Assembly 2012, the Book of Order Advisory Committee has made recommendations for altering the way the number of commissioners to General Assembly is determined. Assembly will consider the revised formula for representation which is based on one representative (either a minister or elder) per 100 full members.

Same-sex marriage

Several proposals ask Assembly to declare that ministers may only conduct marriages between a man and woman.

Other proposals ask that the decision of whom ministers marry be considered a "liberty of conscience" matter. Other proposals take the opposite view and ask Assembly to declare that the principle of "liberty of conscience" does not extend to permitting Presbyterian ministers to conduct same-sex marriages.

Sexuality in leadership

Some proposals seek deletion from the Book of Order the section that prohibits the training, licensing or induction of anyone outside a faithful, loving marriage between a man and woman, or ask that Assembly give permission to fall from these provisions under certain conditions.

A further proposal asks Assembly to acknowledge that sexuality not be a barrier to leadership in the Church.

Editor's Note – This article is not intended as a full list of every proposal before General Assembly. For a full list and detailed explanation of every proposal before General Assembly, please read the Assembly White Book.

Jose Reader Spanz

Enrol for GA Assembly Week business or the Inspiring Mission programme



All commissioners, observers and associates to General Assembly are encouraged to enrol as soon as possible. While registration for the Inspiring Mission programme will be open until two weeks before the start of Assembly Week, enrolling now will help secure a place in the streams and workshops you are interested in.

Check out information about the streams and workshops here:

- **Streams:** <http://www.pcangassembly.org.nz/#!/streams/c15ji>
- **Workshops:** <http://www.pcangassembly.org.nz/#!/workshops/c9cp>
- **Video:** <http://www.pcangassembly.org.nz/#!/blog/cpx6> or <http://vimeo.com/presbyterianchurchnz>

If you are attending Workshops or Streams you can also attend for free the daily keynote speaker addresses and evening 'Inspire' sessions.

Remember, you can enrol for either the Inspiring Mission programme or General Assembly business online <http://www.pcangassembly.org.nz/#!/enrol/citr>. Or phone 0800 100 996 and someone will complete the online form on your behalf.

Please use any of the resources on the Assembly Week website News page <http://www.pcangassembly.org.nz/#!/blog/cpx6> to promote the Inspiring Mission programme within your congregation. There are several short videos and a flyer to download.

Connect looks forward



Two hundred youth workers attended Connect 2014 in Christchurch.

Take 200 youth workers. Marinate them in two days of theoretical, theological and practical workshops, keep them toasty in near-new accommodation, add a dash of spirituality and musical talent, and you'll cook up a very satisfying event – Connect 2014, the national youth leaders' conference.

Both paid and volunteer youth workers flocked to the Presbyterian Youth Ministry (PYM) flagship conference in Christchurch from 11-13 July. Organiser and National Youth Ministry Manager, Gordon Fitch, says the 12th annual conference was bigger and better than ever.

"It was a fantastic weekend of learning, inspiration and networking. We had a phenomenal line up of keynote speakers, teaching slots and 30 workshop options. So there was a chance for everyone to really connect with each other and take away a lot of great learnings."

More than 55 churches had representatives participating in the programme which focussed on the concept "Forward" – a theme deliberately chosen to be less prescriptive than previous years'.

"We wanted to make it more open this year, to provide a wider platform for our speakers to get into the theme. So, for example, keynote speaker Mike Dodge, who's been involved in youth work for more than 35 years, approached the concept of Forward as progressing or growing your youth ministry," says Gordon.

Other keynote speakers included Stephen Graham of Equippers Bible College in Auckland who looked back at New Zealand's Christian history as a way of moving forward; Jude Simpson, Family Violence Prevention Advocate for Presbyterian Support Northern, who spoke of her personal experience of family violence, domestic abuse and gang association; and Gary Mauga from St Andrew's in Henderson who posed the question of what was stopping attendees from moving forward in their journey towards Jesus.

Although Connect's primary focus is training another key element is networking. Gordon says it was a good opportunity for participants to share learnings, experiences and resources such as books using techniques including post-it notes left on an Insight Board.

"Being a youth worker, especially in more rural areas, can be quite isolating. A few years ago we realised that youth workers were getting burned out and leaving after about 18 months. But by introducing a more regular networking aspect, not just at the conference but throughout the year, we're finding they're staying longer."

A new feature of this year's programme was the interactive element. Gordon says it's important to engage the participants, not just talk to them. So this year the conference included a session entitled Forward Conversations which encouraged participants to sit down over a coffee and have intentional, structured conversations.

"It was a great opportunity for the youth leaders to get help with challenging areas of their ministry or discuss ideas they'd heard at Connect 2014, including games, using technology in youth ministry and creating camps that transform lives."

Another new feature that proved popular was Connect's Got Talent which expanded on previous years' practical musical workshops by encouraging participants to showcase their singing and song-writing abilities.

"It was a little bit like America's Got Talent but instead of Simon Cowell our judges gave positive feedback. The talent was incredible and there was a range of styles, from a traditional Cook Islands performance to original music. It was definitely a highlight of the conference."

Of course the spiritual is the core of these annual conferences and Gordon says Connect 2014 was no different.

"Everyone there had a passion for seeing youth further their God-given potential and in expressing that through their faith. Before each keynote we had time for worship and throughout the conference there was ample time to reflect and pray. One highlight was the St Paul's Trinity Worship Band and another was Mark Pierson from World Vision who curated a reflective workshop space where people could go to recharge their soul, as he put it. He took it to another level and I think everyone visited the space over the weekend."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

Time of change for Friends of Jagadhri

It's the end of an era for the Friends of Jagadhri as Doreen Riddell, who has led the group since 1997, is set to retire and the core work of the group is moving from Hamilton to Auckland

The Friends of Jagadhri group was formed in Christchurch in 1986 to support the Presbyterian Church's mission work in North India, especially in Jagadhri, where the first Presbyterian missionaries from New Zealand arrived in 1911. The group wanted to support the work of the hospital and school in Jagadhri. They encouraged people to join them, and sent donations to complement the Presbyterian Church's funding.

In 1997 Doreen Riddell, who had recently returned to New Zealand after serving more than 35 years in Jagadhri, was asked to head up the Friends of Jagadhri. The group consequently moved from Christchurch to Hamilton where Doreen lives. With Doreen's retirement it's time for the group to move again, this time to Auckland where it will have the support of the Somervell parish and others. Global Mission Coordinator the Rev Phil King will take on the group's leadership.

Doreen first headed to Jagadhri in 1959 at the age of 25 in response to an inner call. The mission was looking for a qualified teacher with theological training, and she fitted the bill. "When I got there I needed to learn the language," recalls Doreen, "so I studied full time for a couple of years. Then they needed someone to take charge of the girls' school for a year, so I did that."

In the 1960s it was decided to open an English language school, the St Thomas School, in place of the girls' school. "I took charge of it and enjoyed it," says Doreen. "It grew slowly at first but then suddenly took off and became independent of New Zealand aid. However we continued to subsidise places for very poor Christian children in the community. We



Since 1997 Doreen Riddell led Friends of Jagadhri. She retires this year.

negotiated with parents about what they could afford and provided great opportunities for the children."

"By the time I left in 1993 there were about 1,600 children at the school and about 200 of these were getting huge help with their fees," says Doreen. "After attending the school the children could go on to study medicine, for example."

The hospital in Jagadhri no longer functions at a high level but has become an education and medical centre instead with a nursing school and a blood testing lab. Over the years the Friends of Jagadhri group has sent lots of money to the hospital.

The Rev Phil King is talking with the director of the hospital about the future. "Things are at a crossroads," Phil says. "We're trying to work out what the future holds in terms of our support of the hospital and how we can develop our mission support for the Church of North India. The hospital is adapting and its main work now is the nursing school."

"These days there are at least a million people in Jagadhri and its twin city,"

Doreen adds. "The nursing school is flourishing and is taking in 60 new students in each batch. Scholarships are offered each year to students from needy families, something that was initiated by the Friends of Jagadhri too."

Doreen hugely enjoyed her years in Jagadhri and says, "Seeing the children from needy homes in school uniforms looking sparkling and bright and getting a great education was a wonderful thing."

The doctor in charge of the Christian hospital and the nursing school is a former student of the school. It's rewarding to see former students rising up and taking positions of responsibility. I'd like to thank everyone who has supported the mission in Jagadhri over the years."

Phil adds, "We're delighted to be taking the mission partnership forward and continuing the great work that the Friends of Jagadhri have supported. We will be keeping everyone informed and ongoing support for the work in Jagadhri will be greatly appreciated."

Kate Davidson Spanz

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Going Global mission trip no holiday for Presbyterian youth

Most university students spend their holidays topping up their tans, bank balances or sleep accounts. Occasionally they might do a bit of study.

Not so a group of Presbyterian Kiwi students who recently spent 10 days in Vanuatu connecting with, and learning from, local school children.

The six students were part of Going Global 2014, a mission trip for young Presbyterian adults (18-30) who travelled to the Vanuatu island of Tanna.

Global Mission Co-ordinator the Rev Phil King, one of two adults who accompanied the students, says the group spent their break living at Lenakel Presbyterian College and sharing learnings with around 250 students aged between 11 and 16.

Phil says the aim of Going Global is two-pronged: as well as sharing in the life of a local community, the programme challenges participants with different social and economic realities and leads them on a spiritual journey.

"Going Global is all about being with peers, being among them, rather than going with a pre-arranged plan or doing something specific for them," he says.

"You learn a lot by simply being with others, hearing their stories and being part of their daily routines. The 10 days we spent at Lenakel College allowed us to learn more about their lives, their culture and what their faith means to them."

The students travelled to Vanuatu in late June. Four, along with Team Leader Ruth Pearce, hailed from Leith Valley Presbyterian Church/StudentSoul in Dunedin while two made the trip from St Columba in Auckland. It wasn't by design but there was an even gender split with three male and three female students, says Phil.

It's the third time the Going Global programme has visited Lenakel Presbyterian College.

"Previous church schools and groups have had successful contact with Onesua College on the main island of Efate but we realised there were more regions we could learn from so that's why a relationship was formed with Lenakel."

The 10 days were "pretty full on", starting at the early hour of 5.30am with devotions. This was followed by lessons, lunch and more classes. The day finished with devotions at 8.30pm.

A large part of the programme included sharing with the students in their classes. The Kiwis each gave an initial personal introduction which led to interactive activities with the locals.

Following a request from teachers they also each prepared and presented a lesson about their particular area of study. "The team members covered a range of academic disciplines so I asked each of them to prepare a presentation on their areas of speciality. We had psychology and music majors, as well as food nutrition and engineering

students, a youth worker and a French and politics graduate."

They each spoke about what they were studying, why they were studying it, what they had learned so far and what they hoped to do after graduation.

"At the end of every day we would debrief and share the highs and lows. It was great to hear most of the team members say that giving their presentations was the highlight of the day."

It wasn't all work and no play, however. The group got to see the island and even took a trip to Mt. Yasur, an active volcano which is a popular tourist attraction.

Phil says both participants and the Lenakel students benefited greatly from the visit.

"Our team members took on leadership roles and did things they hadn't done before. For example, one of the girls led the devotions in front of 200 students, something she'd never done. We also learned a lot about the Ni-Van culture of the people of Vanuatu and hopefully taught them a little about us and our faith."

While optimistic about future visits to Vanuatu Phil admits he'd be keen to further grow the relationship by providing the opportunity for Vanuatu students to come here.

"There's already a bit of knowledge there about New Zealand because a number of the locals come here for seasonal work. But to be able to have their students to come and visit our churches and colleges would be fantastic. Making that a reality is something we really need to look at."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

Going Global's students visited Mt Yasur, an active volcano.



Presbyterian Church concerned about migrant worker exploitation

The Presbyterian Church is working to raise awareness of migrant workers' rights in New Zealand and is holding up its pastoral care for Pacific seasonal workers as an example of what can be achieved.

Presbyterian Church Moderator, the Rt Rev Ray Coster, and Global Mission Coordinator, the Rev Phil King, recently attended a multi-agency conference on human trafficking and labour exploitation.

The conference, organised by the Salvation Army in Porirua, included representatives from Immigration New Zealand, the Police and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment as well as other church groups and NGO representatives.

In the New Zealand context the main area of concern was workers' rights in industries such as fishing, dairying, aged care and construction.

Ray says it is important these workers are treated well and that their employers act according to the law.

"Some people are being treated as commodities and that is a concern from a Christian point of view where we would see all people as being made in the image of God and deserving of respect," he says.

"Many of the employers are migrants themselves and what they would see as acceptable in their home country may not be acceptable in New Zealand."

Ray says the Church is happy with the work government agencies are doing but wants to provide a support role if called upon and to take the initiative to make its own congregations aware of the problems that may exist out in the community.

"I think one of the things the Church should always be trying to do is give a voice to those who don't have a voice, to speak in positions of authority where the voiceless ones are unable to speak."

That's a point picked up by Phil King.

"One of the things we can do is heighten the awareness of the potential problem so that if people come across someone in their community who is in a really low paying job with poor conditions, they follow that up and do something about it."

If church members see injustices he asks them to contact the authorities and if possible to encourage the workers concerned to stand up for their rights.

"That's often the most difficult part. An employee will be scared of addressing the issue because they don't want to lose their job and lose whatever income they are getting."

Ray Coster says the role the Church plays with Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers is a good example of what it can do.

"When many of the ni-Van (people from Vanuatu) arrive to work in viticulture in Blenheim or with kiwifruit in the Bay of Plenty or in the apple orchards of Hawke's Bay, they will often very quickly search out a Presbyterian church," he says.

About 8000 RSE workers arrive in New Zealand each year and the Government is considering raising the number to 10,000. Phil says it has taken time for the scheme to settle.

"In the early days there were concerns about pay and conditions and so on, but it's much improved and employers now are required to offer pastoral care, in the secular sense, for their workers and provide a certain standard of accommodation."

Nevertheless, the practice of coming to New Zealand to work still had an affect on families which are often separated for months at a time.

"Some of the workers have problems with alcohol and there are people in prison in New Zealand as a result of being here," says Phil.

The Church has recently been able to get a visa approved for a minister to come out from Vanuatu to help prepare a report on the pastoral care of RSE workers

Phil says that although this is an important development the work being done on the ground by church members is phenomenal.

"I think that one of the good things happening in RSE is that local communities are reaching out to support the workers. The church has that ability to network at the grassroots level and some people are doing a lot of work in a voluntary capacity to look out for these guys."

Robin Martin [Sanz](#)



Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees Cares for Gaza's Children

In 2011 and 2012 Presbyterian women raised funds to improve maternal health in Gaza. Christian World Service is grateful for their efforts and the many church people who gave to the Special Project appeal. They contributed to a global endeavour to care for babies and mothers in an area where health services are in short supply and often disrupted. Three years later International Programmes Coordinator Trish Murray found the clinics providing much needed healthcare to a community of 80,000 where little is available.

Walking into Gaza's busy Shija'ia Medical Clinic Trish found mothers and children waiting. The routine at the Well Baby Clinic is familiar. The mothers take their seats in the waiting area surrounded by health posters in Arabic. The children are given a cup of formula to drink by friendly staff. One in ten are stunted by age five. The warm atmosphere is occasionally broken by a cry from a child. But mostly they wait patiently.

Shija'ia clinic is one of three run by CWS partner, the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR). Last year DSPR staff treated 20,155 patients half of whom were under six. Each child is weighed and measured. The mother answers questions about the health of her child. Any symptoms are attended to and records kept. The clinic has nurses, midwives, a paediatrician, dentist, pharmacist, lab technician and psycho-social counsellor on staff. It offers basic dental services including x-rays, fillings and extractions.

Many mothers are anxious. They live in a state of chronic stress, worrying about the lack of food and water and their constrained lives. In November last year the Gaza Power Plant was shut down due to a lack of fuel, affecting water supply and sewerage services. There have been some dangerous sewerage spills and households are often without power for up to 16 hours a day.

More than 1.7 million people, half of whom are under 18, are squashed into a tiny piece of land where conflict has become routine. The borders are tightly controlled and Israel decides what and who can enter. For Trish getting a visa into Gaza was the first achievement. The second was navigating the long solitary walk through the caged pathway at the Erez Crossing.

Glad to return after five years she could see signs of progress. There were new buildings painstakingly recycled from the ruins of the old. Israel will not allow cement and other construction materials to be imported. A new hotel had been built on the coast and the mothers she met were hopeful their children could attend school despite their desperate poverty.

But now she worries about them all. Three weeks after she left Israel's military attacked killing people and damaging vital infrastructure including schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency with responsibility for the resident 1.2 million Palestinian refugee population. Talking to the counsellor she heard stories of children who were suffering because of their situation. On the wall, there is a sign saying,

"When the child refuses to play, we have to fear more than when he/she rejects food and drink." Last year DSPR had held three summer camps for 535 affected children aged 7 to 12. Over ten days they made a rare visit to the beach. Drawing, singing and dancing helped them to relax and have fun.

Life is getting harder for Palestinians and DSPR is worried about the decreasing population of Christians in Gaza. Five years ago there were 2000 but now the population has dropped to 1313. It is symptomatic of what is happening throughout the region. Without opportunities but with good contacts overseas, Christians are finding it easier to leave. While most have strong relationships in their communities it is not enough to keep them when the dangers are so great.

DSPR, set up in 1948, has been a powerful witness to Christian concern for the vulnerable and refugee. Attending the regular regional roundtable of DSPR and its international partners, Trish was struck by their irrepressible peacemaking efforts. "A Moment of Truth" <http://www.cws.org.nz/files/Kairos.pdf> documents their deep commitment to their land and people. Written in 2009, it has become a firm basis for their advocacy work and an expression of lives lived under occupation.

DSPR needs support to provide practical help through cash payments, medicines, and psycho-social support to women and children. Donations can be made at <http://www.cws.org.nz/donate> or sent to PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140.

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Sexual Ethics

The latest social issues study guide is available free to all parishes in September.



Sexual Ethics



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Sexual Ethics will be sent to all parishes in September. The study guide examines biblical sexual ethics and considers issues like marriage, divorce and contraception. Aided by biblical narrative and discussion of these issues in the context of history and modern society, the guide encourages users to think about their response, and that of the church, to these important ethical issues.

Sexual Ethics is the latest of 12 studies produced by the Presbyterian Church for use in group or Bible study groups to help prayerful reflection on some of the key issues facing us and our communities.

To order free copies of this booklet, or any of our other study guides, email office@presbyterian.org.nz or phone 04 801 6000. The study guide will also be available for download from the church's website: <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/speaking-out/resources-for-speaking-out>



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