

Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

SPRING 2017, ISSUE 70

**Encouraging
young leaders**

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Churches can help house the homeless

Fire recently destroyed our beautiful St John's Church building in Rotorua. The fire has taught us much about ourselves, including things that surprised us.

Among our surprises was the degree to which the community notices us and the things we do, including our small attempt at engagement with the issue of social housing.

The Rotorua District Presbyterian Church has acquired a range of one, two and three bedroom homes and offers these at affordable rentals. Some of the units have been made available to people who would struggle to get rental accommodation. This service is connected to wrap-around support from a range of other agencies. The church has slowly upgraded the accommodation to ensure that these homes are the best we can make them.

Because of this involvement in social housing, I was invited to attend the Community Housing Aotearoa Impact conference held at Te Papa, Wellington from the 7 to 9 June.

Community Housing Aotearoa has the vision of "All New Zealanders well-housed".

The NZ Human Rights Commission explain housing adequacy as: "New Zealanders see a future where housing is habitable, affordable, accessible, secure and culturally appropriate".

Housing First - a collaboration of agencies - speak of: "Creating a just and caring Aotearoa where all people are well housed".

Conference attendees represented a wide range of groups including national and local government as well as non-government organisations. Presenters included international speakers and people engaged in a variety of ways in the community housing sector from across New Zealand. The aim of the conference was to share information and encourage a collaborative approach to the homeless and housing challenges facing our nation.

Presenters identified many components of the homeless and housing challenges. Here are a few:

Partnership: The working together with other groups and agencies, to seek local solutions to local challenges. Collaboration is built on trust and trust is built as we work together. One phrase that caught my attention was "when working together, leave your logo and your ego at the door". Partnership also means the inclusion of the people we are seeking to help, as we determine how we may be able to assist. "Nothing about us, without us." Respect, mana, dignity.

Well-being: The right of our children should not just be a house to live in, but a home to be loved in. It should be a place of belonging. The provision of a healthy, affordable house with long-term secure tenure cannot be underestimated in establishing a home.

Whanau Ora: Strong and resilient families show amazing abilities to bounce back from the setbacks that are often part of life. Again, the place of appropriately located, accessible housing, in the formation of strong and resilient families is undeniable.

NZ Homes accord: The issue of housing has always been a political football. Housing issues last longer than any one government term. The call is for a cross-party housing accord that can bring long-term solutions to the issues



Lance Thomas

of housing. The provision of housing is a social investment; it is a big component in determining the nature of our society.

Infrastructure challenge: We know how to make things difficult.

More Houses: It is not just the challenge of building more houses, but building good, affordable houses for the lower income constituency in our growing population.

Our denomination has many churches with property that is no longer needed. Rather than sell these properties and use the returns for church survival, another option is to use these assets to be a small part of addressing the homeless and housing challenges in our nation.

– Rev Lance Thomas is a minister of Rotorua District Presbyterian Church, he retires in mid-September 2017. In June he represented the Presbyterian Church at the 2017 IMPACT social housing conference in Wellington. It explored solutions to improve housing outcomes for all New Zealanders.

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MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

The Right Rev Richard Dawson contributes a regular column to *Spanz*.

Being young in the Church

I am no longer young. I've known this for perhaps 30 years but for many of those years I was young compared to the demographic I met in most churches. Even when I was 40 there were usually many present who were considerably older than me. Now I am older than many, if not most.

Despite my considerable age I still love working with young people and seeing them grow in the faith.

If you read anything about youth and the Church these days it's likely to be called something like, '5 Ways to Get Millennials into Your Church' or '6 Things Millennials Don't Like About Church,' or the now famous '8 Ways Gen Z Differs from Millennials.'

Some of this material is interesting, and may even be helpful, but after working with people considerably younger than myself for 45 years there are some things, frankly, that never change about youth. For my money, these are the things that count for most young people:


1. A sense that they count with the person who is leading the gig. There is nothing quite like feeling that you're special enough to, a) be called by your first name, b) be asked about your week, c) be asked to do a favour, d) be thanked for just turning up.
2. A calm and unruffled demeanor. A leader who loses it is just plain scary. It's hard to trust them and they tend to look like a parent or teacher who 'loses it'. Calm and clear builds trust.
3. A sense of humour. Being able to laugh at yourself and share a good laugh brings almost instant rapport. Even better if you can laugh at one of their jokes.



4. Being available to talk or just hang out. This is costly but worth it. Even if it's just for a coke after school or something like that it counts enormously because most people can't tell the difference between being listened to and being loved (if there is one!).
5. Caring about what they care about. This is not easy but I believe every generation is given a special gift of knowledge about what's important in life. The present one thinks not eating meat is good, and they are okay with the increasing number of definitions of gender. Those are hard for me to get into, but hey, maybe that's my 1960s childhood! My real goal is to be Jesus to them and this means letting them know I care about them, which is almost the same as caring about what they care about so.... here goes!

Finally, don't be scared of young people. Even they can't understand themselves at times. And it's not really understanding that counts. It's loving them which will get them back to faith.

In Christ,
Richard D



YOUTH LEADERS SHINE AT REFORMED GATHERING

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) meets only once every seven years. This year's General Council took place in Leipzig, Germany, to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in nearby Wittenberg.

The WCRC groups more than 225 Protestant churches with a combined membership of about 80 million Christians in over 100 countries. The Presbyterian Church sent three delegates to the 10-day WCRC Council, held from 29 June to 7 July.

With this event marking the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the importance of the gathering was recognised, explains Assembly Executive Secretary Rev Wayne Matheson: "Since this global gathering of the family of reformed churches happens so rarely, and for such a significant anniversary, attending was seen as important."

Wayne was accompanied by Presbyterian Church Moderator the Rt Rev Richard Dawson and Hannah North. The 22-year-old from Glenfield was already attending the WCRC youth gathering that precedes the main conference and had been nominated by Presbyterian Youth Ministry, on the strength of her commitment to growing leadership skills.

▲ Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand representatives were among the 1000 delegates at the WCRC General Council. Pictured (from left) Rev Jordan Redding, and PCANZ representatives Hannah North, Assembly Executive Secretary Rev Wayne Matheson, and Moderator Rt Rev Richard Dawson.

MARKING THE REFORMATION

This year's Council revealed a strong tide of support for women in ministry. A woman was elected as the Committee's incoming president. From Lebanon, Rev Najla Kassab, gave the sermon at an ecumenical service of worship held in Wittenberg in which she said that Luther was a symbol of speaking up and this the perfect place to speak on women's ordination. "Luther's 96th question to the Church was not why is there a woman in this pulpit, but why did it take so long?"

Wittenberg is honouring the 500th anniversary of Luther nailing his 95 Theses to the door of the castle church. The 1,000 delegates travelled to Wittenberg for the service at the Stadtkirche, the town church that is now a World Heritage Site, where Luther preached and where the mass was first celebrated in German rather than Latin.

Luther's 95 Theses denounced Church corruption, including the Catholic view on indulgences – that freedom from God's punishment for sin could be bought with money. He preached that salvation could only be received as a gift of God's grace through the believer's faith in Jesus. This thesis became the Doctrine of Justification, and was a key dividing issue during the sixteenth century Reformation. At Wittenberg, delegates witnessed a milestone in ecumenical relations, as the WCRC signed up to the joint declaration on the Doctrine of Justification.

Signing up to this doctrine was immensely significant Wayne believes.



▲ Standing before the Luther Memorial in Wittenberg, birthplace of the Reformation, are (from left) Moderator Rt Rev Richard Dawson, Assembly Executive Secretary Rev Wayne Matheson and Rev Jordan Redding.



▲ Delegates of the General Council visited Berlin where they attended a televised service at the large Protestant Berliner Dom cathedral on 2 July. During the service, WCRC representatives spoke of the challenges facing Christians in their various regions and of the need to show the love of Christ to people in their communities.

“From the shared affirmation of the basic truths of the doctrine of justification, Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists and Reformed are signalling a commitment to continue to work together to deepen understanding of areas like theological study, teaching and preaching.”

Richard agrees that the day in Wittenberg was a highlight of the event. “It was a special time to visit,” says Richard. “Just wonderful. Pope Francis has also told all Catholics that they should recognise the positive aspects of the Reformation. He’s a brave man.”

The delegates had some precious free time after the service to make a pilgrimage to the seven “Gates of Freedom” and “Reformation World” exhibition. The other 10 days involved hard work and long hours, says Richard. The WCRC uses its combined voice to get behind issues, such as unification in Korea and the peace processes in Colombia and Syria. The gatherings also help strengthen ecumenical ties.

“I made a wonderful connection with the Moderator of the Pakistani Presbyterian Church,” Richard enthuses. “It has over half a million members, but is a poor church. I want to do whatever we can to help them.”

“It’s the only occasion when you hear stories from across the globe,” Wayne reflects. “Informal conversations serve to remind us how fragile life can be and how in some countries being a Christian is to risk your life. It reminds us, first, of need to pray regularly, then to share the story, and then to support them in ways that are appropriate.”

YOUTH LEADER NOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

Hannah had no idea that saying yes to being a delegate would lead to her election as a member of the WCRC executive committee for the next seven years. The committee has 27 officers and members, who serve in a voluntary capacity. She was one of only two candidates put forward by the Pacific region midway through this year’s Council.

“It was quite a shock,” says Hannah, who is studying theology part-time at Laidlaw and intends moving in the direction of ministry. “I’ve taken part in leadership training but didn’t realise I’d be going global so soon!”

“Hannah’s had a meteoric rise,” says national PYM Youth Manager Gordon Fitch, “but she was well incubated, if you like, as part of the PYM whanau in recent years. Eleven of our young people, including Hannah, came out of General Assembly last year putting their hand up for decision-making roles in the Church. They’ve all been to past PYM Connect gatherings and grown in maturity and leadership.”

As the sole person elected from Oceania, Hannah will be representing the views of these diverse nations when the committee meets each May, and in online communications.

“I’ll be getting in touch with WCRC member churches in the Pacific to get their views and thoughts,” she says. “I’m interested in ecology and spirituality, how we relate to the earth. Climate change is a big issue for the Pacific.”



▲ A business session of the WCRC General Council held in Leipzig, Germany. The PCANZ representatives table is bottom right.

She also hopes to push for the reinvolvedment of the churches in the Pacific, such as Kiribati, that no longer attend Council meetings because the cost of registration is prohibitive for them. "I want to see how we might get them involved again."

For Hannah, the business side of Council proceedings was not as daunting as it was for other young delegates.

"I'd been a youth delegate to General Assembly last year so I had experience in a similar setting and knew what to expect," she says. "I felt better equipped than most. Matt [Chamberlin] and Gordon have been amazing supporters."

Gordon says the Church excels at intergenerational mentoring. "It happens really well. We try to be one family and genuinely care for those young adults as human beings, not just as vehicles to serve the Church's future. We support whatever path they choose to take to reach their potential."

On her return, Hannah has shared her experience with other young Presbyterians and believes that her election to the executive council will inspire them to "think big" about their goals.

WCRC YOUTH GATHERING

Kate Murray was also chosen to attend the youth gathering in Leipzig that preceded the main WCRC Council, from 23-28 June. She and Hannah took part in this gathering which concentrated on study, fellowship and networking, and social and global challenges like climate change.

Kate describes herself as having fallen into leadership roles in the Church, being encouraged to attend events and camps, and be a youth commissioner at the 2016 General Assembly.

"I figured the youth gathering would be a bigger version of GA, and a real opportunity to see how the Church works.

"It was a fascinating experience," she says. "We had so many cool discussions, like whether growth is necessary to living a good life. Getting to hear different viewpoints from people who lived all over the globe really stretched my thinking and challenged my assumptions about what's normal."

AWARD FOR YOUNG NEW ZEALAND THEOLOGIAN

The WCRC produced another surprise for a young theologian. In January, Rev Jordan Redding entered an essay competition, open to theologians under 30, on this year's WCRC theme of "Living God, renew and transform us".

Jordan's essay won the Lombard Prize, and he was flown over to Leipzig on an all-expenses paid trip to receive the prize during the Council. His essay will also be published in an upcoming edition of *Reformed World*, the official theological journal of the WCRC. The idea for the essay topic of transformational prayer came out of doctoral research he is undertaking on the nineteenth century Swiss Protestant theologian Eduard Thurneysen. "Prayer is not about us coming to God alone," Jordan says, "but rather about God's awakening us to transformation and renewal."

His trip to Germany also allowed Jordan to conduct research in Basel where Thurneysen served as a theological pastor.

Jade Reidy [Spanz](#)

Charlotte Saunders (in white, centre back behind the car) with children from the Point Chevalier Girls' Brigade company on a Pork Pie charity run in 2013.



PRESBYTERIAN GIRLS' BRIGADE HEAD ENCOURAGES YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS

She's a registered architect, a member of Reporoa's St Stephen's Church and now a leader of more than 2,000 members around New Zealand.

She is Charlotte Saunders (34) who earlier this year was named the national commissioner of Girls' Brigade New Zealand (GBNZ).

Charlotte, who has been a Girls' Brigade member since she was seven, says she is honoured to head up the New Zealand arm of the international Christian movement for girls aged five to 18.

"GBNZ gives girls the skills and opportunities they need to succeed in life, such as leadership and inter-personal skills," says Charlotte. "Most of all, GBNZ enhances what the church does in terms of bringing girls closer to Christ with its life skills programme."

Charlotte attributes the global organisation with introducing her to the Presbyterian Church.

"When I was growing up in the 80s, my family didn't have the money for music or dance lessons. But Girls' Brigade was affordable so I went along to that. I was initially drawn by the social aspect and activities such as dancing and singing, but later by the religious context which I didn't have because my family weren't Christian."

It was on a Girls' Brigade trip to the UK when she was 15 that Charlotte cemented her commitment not only to the organisation which is now in 59 countries around the globe, but also to her faith in the Presbyterian Church.

"I really found the Presbyterian Church on that trip. I can remember as a teenager taking myself off to church."

Charlotte, who has worked as an architect for a building consultancy firm since she graduated from tertiary study in 2007, believes she wouldn't be where she is today without Girls' Brigade.

"I was quite shy as a child but GBNZ gave me the confidence to move to Auckland to study architecture at Unitec, as well as the leadership and interpersonal skills I use every day. I also learned stickability, to keep going when life challenges you."

Taking on the role of national commissioner, she says, is her way of giving back to the organisation which has given her so much.

The Girls' Brigade movement, which has been operating in New Zealand for 90 years, provides weekly meetings where members enjoy a range of games and activities including horse-riding, photography, music, first aid, cooking and sports. Life skills such as problem solving and effective communication are also taught, along with spiritual development and the opportunity to explore and strengthen one's faith – all while having fun.

Charlotte, who moved from Auckland to Taupo for her husband Dave's geothermal job two years ago, says there are no Girls' Brigade groups currently in the Central Plateau, but she is hoping to set one up.

In the meantime, she's focusing on the next three years, her term at the helm of GBNZ, where she's keen to unify the movement, which has been without a national commissioner for a few years, as well as grow membership numbers.

"It's my vision that every single girl in New Zealand should have the opportunity to participate in the programme and to grow and develop their talents, such as leadership skills, because it's so important that we have more women leaders in New Zealand. If you look at the current mix of leaders across all sectors of society there's a real inequality, with women leaders in the minority. GBNZ helps girls to break through some of those barriers to give a voice to women."

With around 40 percent of the country's Girls' Brigade groups meeting at Presbyterian churches, followed by Baptist and Methodist churches, Charlotte says she is hopeful that Girls' Brigade members can help spread the message of women leaders in the Church too.

"Women definitely bring a different perspective to leadership. It's one of the reasons I joined the Homestead Church in Pt Chevalier back in 2007 because of Rev Sandra Warner, who is such an inspirational women leader and mentor [Sandra is now at Knox Presbyterian in Morrinsville]," says Charlotte.

"By helping GBNZ members lead in a Christian context, I am confident that our girls can be empowered to succeed and move into leadership positions not just across business and society but also within the church community."

Sharon Stephenson [Spanz](#)



Face painting at local events is one of many ways that the Tirau Youth Group have been making connections with children and families in their community.

Youth group awarded for helping community

Wind the clock back four years, and Natasha Tanner wasn't sure she'd be able to help lead the Tirau Youth Group.

"I was driving to my first meeting thinking that I didn't really want to go, that I didn't have the skills to connect with the kids," says the mother of Paige (17), Ethan (15), Jeremy (14) and 12-year-old Sarah. "I could easily talk to my own children but some of the youth group kids are from different backgrounds to me and I really worried I wouldn't be able to relate to them. So I prayed to God to help me change my attitude and he did."

Today Natasha leads the group which is part of the Tirau Co-Operating Church. Under her watch, the group has grown from 10 to around 18 and they recently received a South Waikato District Council Youth Award in recognition of the work they have done in lending a hand at community events.

"The youth group helped with face painting for the younger kids, as well as making kites and helping the kids to fly them," says Natasha who took on the role of leader at the beginning of this year.

She's proud of the 12 to 18-year-old students who she describes as "precious jewels in our community that need polishing and encouragement".

"Some of these kids come from low socio-economic backgrounds. Some have only one parent, some don't have any parents and others experience bullying at school. Our youth group is one of the

few consistencies in their lives and I'm so proud that the kids go above and beyond, like helping out at neighbourhood parties during their weekends. To have that recognised by this award is amazing."

The group, which meets every Wednesday evening at the church hall, will use the prizes they won to help their community: the meat pack will be part of a meal cooked for homeless people, and the plant vouchers to brighten up local council flats.

Only two are church members, but Natasha says the weekly meetings have been a good outreach opportunity. "We do Bible devotions each week, where we relate issues they might be facing – from peer pressure to drugs and social media – back to the scriptures. Lots of the kids aren't from Christian backgrounds so the meetings help to give them a basic understanding of the Bible."

Natasha and her three leaders also plan a programme of speakers each term. Last year, drugs were a major issue in Tirau, so they organised former drug addicts and local Police to speak to the group about the dangers of drugs and helpful avoidance strategies.

This term, they're focusing on suicide, following a meeting with a speaker who once tried to take his own life. That meeting ran until midnight. "We had to finish then because I was getting calls from parents asking where their kids were!"

Natasha says the group provides a sense of purpose, connection and a safe place where attendees can meet and talk about what concerns them.

"Life for some of these kids can be quite difficult at home and at school. But at youth group they're treated the same. We welcome them the same way – it's a safe, consistent experience for them."

Natasha is thankful for the support of the Tirau Co-Operating Church, which not only lets the group use the church hall but also helps to fund the group for costs such as the annual Easter camp fees.

"The church has been wonderful and is pleased that the group gives local kids somewhere to go and a safe place where they can be exposed to Christian teachings and values. We couldn't have achieved everything we have without the church's support."

Bailee Dickinson (17) started attending youth group four years ago, mainly because "there wasn't much else to do in Tirau".

"At the beginning, I was both nervous and shy but now I feel like youth group is my second family," says Bailee. "I really enjoy playing games, talking in depth about Christianity and socialising with the others every Wednesday night. It's a relaxed atmosphere and a place to unwind and be yourself without being judged."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

PARISH TEAMS UP

TO OFFER STUDENTS ROLE MODELS

Otaki College has enhanced its already glowing reputation with a Church-sponsored programme designed to develop leadership in boys as they grow into young men.

In 2014, Otaki College was cited by the Education Review Office as a star performer among the lower decile schools. It had tackled a range of student and teacher issues that were hindering learning and had developed a strong culture of care. The following year, the school embraced among its extra-curricular programmes a partnership with Ignite Sport Trust and the Otaki-Waikanae Presbyterian Church.

One of the main needs identified in the school's pathway to success was to encourage leadership development in boys. Unlike girls, very few boys were stepping up. Principal Andy Fraser had heard about the Ignite Sport programmes at nearby Porirua College, where the organisation had been delivering programmes since 2010.

"They're a professional organisation driven to get the best results they can for students," says Andy. "Also very adept at securing funding for schools to support them in being able to deliver programmes at reduced cost."

Ignite reached out to the Otaki-Waikanae church, which came up with \$3,000 from Presbyterian Support for the Ignite team and the school, to deliver an annual series of programmes for around 60 students in years 10 to 12.

Ignite grew out of Youth for Christ Wellington and has been offering sports-based self-development programmes with youth since 2001. The challenge for churches, says coordinator Kevin Goldsbury, is how to engage with young people in secular institutions like schools.

"It's now more critical than ever to instil values and ethics in young adults because



Ignite, with support from Otaki-Waikanae Presbyterian Church and funding from Presbyterian Support, offered sports-based self-development programmes at Otaki College, Kapiti Coast.

society is degenerating in this respect," he believes. "There's less proactive, intentional youth work happening than ever before. One of the best ways churches can do this is through funding programmes like ours."

Partnership is also critical, he says. "When we do it together we achieve more. The churches are 'on the ground' and we're not. They have a great sense of what's happening in the community."

Participants for the first OnTrack five-day programme were selected by the school's PE staff. While the common denominator was an aptitude for sport, Kevin explains that the mix of girls and boys who took part ranged from the gifted and talented to some of the more disengaged underachievers. The Ignite team acted as role models, filling the sports coach gap that is being experienced in many secondary schools.

"Over half of all secondary students are still involved with sport, but only a quarter of the staff now assists with coaching," says Kevin. "Like parents, the demands on their time continue to grow and grow."

Led by Daniel Olive, the team of five helped young athletes to think more deeply about all the areas of their lives that were potentially working against them reaching their potential.

"We thoroughly enjoyed our time there," says Kevin. "Young male leadership in

Otaki is really more of a community issue than a school issue. They have a great sports facility connected to the wananga but like many small towns there's a lack of work opportunities. Many young people leave and the community loses good peer role models."

In 2016, those same students completed the Tongariro Alpine Crossing over the course of three days, as part of Ignite's Ambassadors programme. Parent Shelly Warwick has two sons at Otaki College, one of whom made the crossing. She believes the programmes are especially important for boys.

"My two boys are fairly typical of male learners in that they do not do so well sitting down at a desk to learn," she reflects, "but do very well if that learning is in a physical context."

Ignite had the funding to continue with the Year 12s in 2017 but the school's governance body decided the college had too many extra-curricular programmes on the go. Parish minister Rev Peter Jackson was disappointed at this decision.

"I've been in youth work for 30 years, mostly in Africa, and grew cynical about money being not well used," he says. "But that's not the case here. I've been impressed with the programme and am an advocate for it to be renewed. It's a shame the momentum has been lost."

Jade Reidy Spanz

Presbyterians create more social housing

An initiative that has united two Wellington-based trusts in a common goal has been welcomed by those keen to secure housing for the city's more vulnerable residents



Dwell Housing Trust Chief Executive Alison Cadman, and Wadestown Ark Trust's Dr Brian Ensor celebrate Dwell's acquisition of five church homes in Wadestown, Wellington.

Ownership of five homes built in the early 1980s by the Wadestown Ark Trust was transferred in late June to Dwell Housing Trust, a registered social housing provider with the Ministry of Social Development.

The Ark Trust was originally established by the Wadestown Presbyterian Church, Wellington, in partnership with its neighbouring Anglican congregation, to provide affordable accommodation in the area.

The ownership transfer was required as the small Trust Board struggled to find the human resources within the churches to take on the responsibility for the homes, while changes to retirement village law and compliance requirements also impacted on how the accommodation was managed. Working with Dwell was seen as a solution that would preserve the Ark Trust's intent and offer security of tenure for residents.

The Ark Trust considered Dwell to be a "good fit", says Ark trustee Dr Brian Ensor, and Dwell Housing Trust believed working with Wadestown Ark Trust helped it focus on its 'More Homes' goal.

Brian is director of Palliative Care at Wellington's Mary Potter Hospice and is married to Rev Sharon Ross Ensor, former minister of Wadestown Presbyterian Church and current director of the Presbyterian Church Schools' Resource Office.

He said the Trust was advised by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in 2015 that the housing units in their current form would come under the Retirement Villages Act 2003 and would need to be registered as a retirement village.

"They supported us in our plans to reshape the housing so that we would not need to register. What was being provided was closer to social housing, and by agreeing to unit titling and conversion to shared ownership, we reached a better situation.

"It has taken over two years of work to see this through," he said.

The five homes were finally acquired by Dwell on 30 June 2017. Two of the five units will be part of Dwell's shared home ownership programme, which allows residents to change their license to occupy into an ownership agreement. As residents couldn't afford to buy the homes outright, the shared ownership arrangement means they could obtain ownership and remain in their homes.

A further two homes will become affordable rentals, and the other one will be available to an individual or couple from the government's social housing register.

While Dwell does manage homes for various groups and works with churches in other ways, this is the first project of its type for the organisation.

"We are more than a landlord," says Dwell Housing Trust Chief Executive, Alison Cadman. "We ensure our tenants have access to the support they need. We believe that affordable, stable and healthy housing is a fundamental right."

Her view was echoed by Brian, who said the Church had a strong sense of the importance of community, and of being

able to maintain oneself through life as a part of a community.

"The provision of housing that is not expensive, that is small enough to be individual, and sited on accessible land, enables this."

A similar initiative in the South Island has linked Presbyterian Support Otago with the Dunedin City Council to help provide transitional housing.

Presbyterian Support Otago Chief Executive Gillian Bremner says her organisation had been involved in social housing for some time. It is a registered community housing provider through its Just Housings Trust, which has four social housing units on land subdivided from Wakari Presbyterian Church around 10 years ago.

"We are now in discussions with the Dunedin City Council to lease six bedsits of unoccupied council housing to add to the social housing mix," she says. "It is targeted at those requiring transitional housing for up to six months, with additional social work support.

"Through our Family Works welfare service, we have been aware for some time of the increasing unmet demand for housing for clients considered homeless – either living in cars or bunking with friends or relatives in crowded conditions."

She said the six bedsits coming on stream through co-operation with the Dunedin City Council were being refurbished and should be ready for occupation in spring.

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)

NEW KIDS FRIENDLY COACH

The Rev Robin Humphreys is the new part-time Kids Friendly coach.

Perhaps it was inevitable that Robin would choose a life in children's ministry; she led her parents to church as a child.

"They became connected with our neighbourhood church, St Giles Presbyterian in Raleigh, North Carolina, through an outreach program called Mothers Morning Out. They were so impressed with the care and love that I received at these sessions that they began attending the church," says Robin.

"Throughout my childhood and particularly as I reached my teenage years, my faith was nurtured in that church, where the gifts of all ages were encouraged and valued. That is where my strong belief in the importance of church as an outward-focussed and vital part of the community and as a welcoming place for children began."

Robin and husband Paul and daughter Moana recently returned to New Zealand from the United States. The couple are based in Christchurch, and Paul is the new South Island camps consultant for Scripture Union. From 2012 to 2014 they were based in Blenheim where Paul worked with a faith-based non-profit as well as working as a guide in the Marlborough Sounds. Robin was the community children's worker at St Ninian's, where she first became connected with Kids Friendly.

They have since been in the United States, Robin solo pastoring in a Presbyterian Church (USA) parish and Paul working in the Pittsburgh Presbytery in community development and as programme director at the Presbytery's camp and conference centre.

The couple met in 2001 when they both worked in Christian camp ministry on summer staff at the Calvin Centre, near Atlanta, Georgia. Paul became the full-time programme director at the camp. Robin, a trained teacher, who worked with



New Kids Friendly coach Rev Robin Humphreys with husband Paul and their daughter Moana.

new entrants, felt the call to ministry and entered Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, where she gained her Masters in Divinity. She was then called to working in outreach and children's ministry at a church in rural Georgia.

Robin believes children's involvement in church is a gift to the congregation. "We have a responsibility to welcome children into our churches and our communities, and it is a privilege to do so. God has placed within each of us a blessing to be used in the world. It is often easier to see it in children. Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me and do not hinder them'. The curiosity and creativity that children bring is gifted from God. We must make space for those gifts to be used in the community of faith for the betterment of the whole church.

"Our churches say they welcome children, but often only up to a certain point. Our churches have a desire for young families to become involved, and people my age with young children are desirous of authentic relationships but are often not finding them where they should be found, including at church. That is not unique to young families as loneliness is a big problem but the relationship between the church and younger families is one with potential for development."

Robin believes children should remain with the congregation during worship. "We are a community of faith and we

should worship together and grow together. We need to invite relationship building across the generations as much as possible, not always dividing ages up into their separate programmes. We need to provide many opportunities to be in the same space with all ages. Through that interaction comes authentic relationship and a richness that can often be lost when we only focus on a particular age group.

"Recently, back in the States, I was presiding at the Communion table. Our 18 month old daughter was sitting on Paul's lap. The next day Moana went and found a plate and a jug and brought them to the table and lifted them up and said, 'Jesus'. I found that symbolic of the beauty of having children in the service. We forget how much children notice and take in," says Robin.

The family has settled in Mt Pleasant in Christchurch and Robin has already become a part of the Kids Friendly team alongside national Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser in Auckland and Kids Friendly advisor for the Synod of Otago and Southland, Cheryl Harry. Robin is working part-time from home as she begins to build relationships, particularly in the Alpine Presbytery, and encourages churches to make greater effort to welcome children and value their contribution.

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)

Course helps work through grief

When a fellow parishioner in California asked Alison Heckler to help her evaluate the GriefShare ministry, she found it so useful that she has brought it home and has been running it at Mahurangi Presbyterian Church, Warkworth, since 2012.



Alison Heckler pictured with her late husband Derek. Alison says losing Derek was not a crisis of faith but she was totally unprepared for the physical pain of a broken heart.

Alison was attending Lucas Valley Community Church in California. Her husband Derek had died nine months previously in 2009, and her church friend was a widow of two years. "We started watching the GriefShare DVDs, and my friend kept saying, 'I wish I had had something like this when my husband died'. They helped us in the process we were both going through."

Back home in Warkworth, Alison showed it to minister Rev Nick McLennan, and received the blessing of the elders to have a trial run. The first group was almost all parishioners – widows and widowers, but also two sets of parents who had lost adult sons. "Because I was still so raw two years after Derek's death, I asked a couple and long-term friends to co-lead the programme with me," says Alison. "We would go through it in the afternoon and present it in the evening."

The programme examines what grief is and how to work through it. "People look at it as a sad period but it is also a time working out, 'Who am I now?' Everybody's grief is unique; what works for me won't necessarily work for you. Our personalities, the relationship we had with the person, and the circumstances of the death affect how we process our grief.

If a couple have lost a child, one might grieve, one might go to the graveside frequently, the other not at all. There is also the question of the secondary losses. Losing a child means losing the dream of grandchildren who might have cared for you later in life. What tasks did that lost loved one fulfil? How do you deal with insensitive comments?"

"We talk about the tangled web of emotion, how it all swirls up and down. People tend to think of grief as a time of crying. But the emotions visible on the outside do not reflect what is going on inside. If someone is crying a lot, outsiders will say, 'They are not really coping'. If someone is not showing their emotions, people think, 'That's okay. They've got over it and they're going forward'. That's not the way it is. One woman said that through GriefShare she had realised that it was okay to cry. She thought that as a Christian she had to be strong."

Each of the 13 sessions has a half-hour DVD featuring grief recovery experts and the bereaved. Discussion follows. There is a workbook with daily readings, personal journaling and questions to spark writing, but Alison says some people do not write anything.

She has found that grief can open the door to conversations about God. "I have a friend of 50 years whose mother died last year. She said to me, 'It makes you think:

where are they?' That kind of comment is a wonderful opportunity to reach into someone's life. As a Christian I know where Derek is, and that God works all things together for good for those who love him.

"From that perspective, losing Derek was not a crisis of faith for me. But I was totally unprepared for the physical pain of a broken heart. I remember thinking a broken heart was a turn of phrase, but I think you really could die of a broken heart – and people do."

Alison met Derek just before her 20th birthday. They lived a very varied life, including living in the United States, market gardening and working at Bible College for about nine years. They were youth group leaders at Mahurangi Presbyterian Church in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Derek was a horse whisperer, says Alison, and he used the same kind of patient listening and watching skills with young people. He died as a result of a freak horse accident. "We were very much a team. When he died I asked, 'Who is Alison without Derek?'" GriefShare has helped Alison work through that question.

If you are interested in finding out more about GriefShare, Alison is happy to discuss the GriefShare course, email her at Alison.Heckler@gmail.com.

Jane Tolerton Spanz



Somervell offer faithful McCahon exhibition

Dorothy Laing of Somervell Presbyterian Church stands in front of the Colin McCahon art work, *On the Road* which will be exhibited at Somervell during October.

When a seldom seen work of art by Colin McCahon goes on show to the public at Somervell Presbyterian Church, it will be the realisation of a year long journey for Dorothy Laing.

Dorothy is the curator of the October 2017 McCahon art exhibition, and a member of the Somervell Presbyterian Church congregation in Remuera, Auckland.

It was while sitting in the church's beautiful sanctuary and auditorium that the idea first came to her that the award winning architectural space had potential for the display of art, particularly faith inspired art. "I found myself in that wonderful white space, admiring its clean lines and its exceptional quality of light. It really does invite a fresh way of seeing."

Somervell minister Rev Brett Johnstone and his wife Bonnie are also "enthusiasts of modern art interested in exploring how the church space could be utilised," says Dorothy. "Together we formed a brainstorming group to investigate further. Confirmation that we were on the right path came with an offer from a private collector to exhibit, *On the Road*, a faith inspired art work by the celebrated New Zealand artist Colin McCahon."

This important art work was completed by the artist in 1976, 11 years before his death, and has not been exhibited in New Zealand for 17 years. The work is comprised of seven large panels.

A core theme of Colin McCahon's art practice was his exploration of questions of faith, his spiritual quest, and his use of traditional Christian iconography.

"Faith is a major component of McCahon's work, from his stunning *I Am* paintings to his *Stations of the Cross* series of which *On the Road* is the last," says Rev Brett Johnstone.

The exhibition was initially planned around the large McCahon work, says Dorothy.

An exhibition organising group formed in October 2016, comprising Brett, Dorothy, Matt and Jann Ensor, and Yong Tiong, went about securing other notable works by McCahon for the exhibition. They also selected accompanying works by contemporary artists inspired by faith or exploring aspects of faith in their work. These works, by artists Nigel Brown, Theresa Cashmore, Jessica Crothal, Simon Lewis-Ward, Gary Silipa, Shaw Anderson, John Laing, and Rosie Brown, will be displayed but not be for sale. Dorothy says those interested in buying will be able to communicate with artists after the exhibition ends.

"It seemed timely to ask new generations of artists inspired by faith to respond to McCahon, as 2017 marks 30 years since he passed away," says Dorothy.

The exhibition is, Dorothy explains, a faith community endeavour for which the organising group sought expert advice. "We were fortunate that art auction house Art + Object generously offered to us their expertise." Securing insurance cover was a challenge but with perseverance they found a broker. Extra security has been arranged for the event and will be present but not distracting.

The exhibition will form part of Artweek Auckland, an annual week-long festival celebrating the visual arts of Auckland.

A number of events will accompany the exhibition including a panel discussion by McCahon experts on the Tuesday evening, an art and liturgy special worship on the Thursday evening, and a 'meet the artists' talk on the Saturday morning.

On 9 October the exhibition will be opened by Dr Peter Simpson, an authority on McCahon's work and author of four books about the artist. He describes centre piece of the exhibition, *On the Road*, as "majestic".

"Colin McCahon wrestled memorably with questions of faith in his paintings throughout his long career," says Peter.

"At first he placed figurative treatments of traditional subjects of Christian art such as the Annunciation and the Crucifixion into local landscapes; later he foregrounded the text of the Gospels in abstract settings."

Dorothy says she hopes the faith-inspired exhibition will draw many church-goers and open them to the work of Colin McCahon. "The exhibition promises to be very inspiring. We have the combination of a magnificent space and exceptional art works. Somervell is, as our motto puts it, a space 'where faith inspires life'."

The "Colin McCahon, On the Road: Inspired by faith" exhibition will be held 10 to 14 October 2017, 10am to 2pm at Somervell Presbyterian Church, Remuera, Auckland. Email art@somervell.org.nz to RSVP for the opening on Monday 9 October 2017, 7:30pm to 9:30pm. See www.somervell.org.nz/artweek for more information about the exhibition and associated events.

Angela Singer Spanz

YOUTH CREATE JOYFUL NOISE

Music has long been known to bridge cultural, economic and language barriers, but in Hamilton music has now brought two different churches together.

Students from the Chartwell Cooperating Church have joined forces with youth from Te Whanau Putahi (TWP), also known as the Family Church, which was born out of the Baptist Church in 1997.

Amanda Bowcott, Chartwell's youth and family coordinator, says she has long been keen on fostering the musical talent of her church's youth.

"I knew we had some great musicians and singers among our youth but they didn't quite have the confidence to get up and help lead the singing," says Amanda. "I was trying to find a way to encourage that confidence and to showcase some of the great Christian music I knew they had been listening to."

At a combined service of local churches in 2015, Amanda says she was inspired by the musical talents of the TWP music team. When she found out the TWP youth were looking for donations to help get them to their annual Baptist Youth Camp, she suggested to Rebecca McTanish at TWP that the youth from Chartwell and TWP get together to form a music group.

"At the end of April, we asked who would like to be involved and on the first day, five from our church turned up and six from TWP," explains Amanda. "We were blessed with the talents of singers, piano, violin and keyboard players, while our new friends from TWP arrived with more voices and even more skills and instruments, including the drums, guitar and saxophone. Suddenly we were in business."

Amanda laughingly admits she doesn't have a musical bone in her body, so instead called on the talents of parishioners Derek Kingsbury, who has extensive experience in musical theatre, as well as Catherine Polglase, a mother, youth group helper and violin teacher who is a member of several orchestras.



Musicians and singers from Chartwell Cooperating Church and Family Church have joined to form 'Joyful Noise'

The first order of business was to come up with a name. Joyful Noise was chosen, inspired says Amanda, by a conversation with Derek.

At the group's first meeting, the students discussed their favourite Christian music and, surprisingly, it wasn't all modern. "They also liked a lot of the more traditional music, so we opted to play the hymns *10,000 Reasons* and *Here I am to Worship*," she says.

The group only had two practices before their first performance in May but Amanda says they came together well and sounded great. "I think a few of the older parishioners may have thought the drums were a bit loud, but overall people loved them."

The second performance was in June and there are two more to come. "They've really gelled as a group and their confidence has grown to the point where they are able to get up in front of the church and help lead musical worship. It's wonderful to see," says Amanda.

Rebecca McTanish, from TWP, says she was excited by the suggestion that youth from her church could work with youth from Chartwell Cooperating.

"I was so excited because this is what I had been thinking and praying about," says Rebecca. "As a parent of two 15-year-old boys I noticed within our church that there were no opportunities for my sons to be involved with the worship team. There were many other youth I knew would also love the opportunity to share their talents through worship."

Joyful Noise has been the gateway for TWP youth to serve, grow and develop their musical gifts, as well as being blessed by strangers who have welcomed, accepted and loved them, she says.

"We are so thankful to Amanda for her vision and passion that inspired Joyful Noise. What an answer to our prayers!"

Nicola (16) and Emily (14) Hollis are both members of Joyful Noise. The sisters are singers and say they enjoy being part of the group.

"It has broadened my horizons and I've met people from different backgrounds, which has been great," says Nicola. Emily says her highlight has been singing a medley including *This Little Light of Mine* and *This Train is Bound for Glory*.

Sharon Stephenson Spanz



Professor Gregor Coster: faith in the health system

Many years ago Gregor and Heather Coster helped run a youth group called The Bunch at Khandallah Presbyterian Church in which they invited speakers to share how their faith-life and work-life worked together.

"Looking back, we see it was about the interaction between faith and work," says Gregor. "We drew in people to share how their faith interacted with their work-life. Senior leaders in Wellington, who were Christians, came to talk to the group, including the City Missioner, and the Director-General of Health, and a researcher in the Chemistry Department at Victoria University who was a priest," says Gregor.

Gregor and wife Heather's move to Wellington, from Auckland, in June this year brings them full circle; Gregor did his PhD in health policy at Victoria University of Wellington, where he will take up his new role as Dean of the new Faculty of Health.

It is a role well suited to his strengths and where he wants to put his energy. "The outworking of my faith is in providing guidance and mentoring to help young people realise their potential. Giving people a chance to be heard, to engage, and to feel valued in the workplace is founded on my personal faith."

Gregor was born in Wellington. He attended St Andrew's Presbyterian and at 13, after the family had moved to Christchurch, made a commitment to the Lord. He completed a Master of Science degree, majoring in thermodynamics but while writing his thesis decided to study medicine – "because of my heart-felt passion for the care of people and the example of Christ as he cared for his communities."

Gregor and Heather met as youth group leaders in Khandallah, Wellington, and married during Gregor's first year at medical school in Dunedin. He worked in public hospitals in Hamilton and Christchurch, and then became a GP and Chair of the Royal New Zealand College of GPs. He was invited to apply for the role of Professor of General Practice and Head of Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care at the Auckland Medical School. He later became Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Auckland.



Professor Gregor Coster is Dean of the new Faculty of Health at Victoria University of Wellington.

He was appointed to the Board of the Health Funding Authority in 2000, became deputy chair of Pharmac and chaired the West Coast District Health Board, and then the Counties-Manukau DHB. "I took on these roles because as a Christian I believed I could make a difference. It is one thing to have faith but another to put it into action to provide leadership for a community – not only the community within the hospital but in high-needs populations outside," says Gregor.

When they moved to Auckland, Gregor and Heather attended their local church, Greenlane Presbyterian. "We felt led and following that leading we knocked on the minister's door before a service and said we were coming to join. I don't think I have ever seen a minister look so surprised. We are still members of that church 37 years later. Both us were elders and have had periods as session clerk. We led our home group for 12 years.

"It was important for us to be in a place where our children could be exposed to the truth alongside us in a faith community. Greenlane Presbyterian is an amazing community of believers, with excellent leadership, and I see there every day of the week a commitment to Jesus that truly represents faith in action. The relationships established in that faith community have been a real strength and we hope we have provided the same sense of encouragement others provided us with."

Gregor has a belief in the value of prayer in his work as a doctor. "I found it valuable to pray with patients where I felt that God was leading me to do so. It was very valuable, especially for Christian patients but also sometimes for non-Christian patients because deep down many people have a faith even if they are not in active church worship, and they wish to pray. I have prayed for healing and on a number of occasions have seen remarkable recovery."

Jane Tolerton Spanz

THEOLOGY MATTERS



Being Presbyterian

Recently I was talking with an elder in a Cooperating Venture (CV) which is about to embark on calling a new minister. They were trying to appoint some parish Presbyterians to the ministry settlement board, and this seemed to be a rather anachronistic requirement. It raised a question that is more and more pertinent in a post-denominational age: What does it mean to be Presbyterian? What distinguishes being Presbyterian and does it matter any longer?

I want to suggest several approaches. Firstly, does Presbyterian mean a certain genealogy – a whakapapa? If you were raised in, have been a member of, been converted into, or have served in a Presbyterian church within your life, does that make you Presbyterian?

Secondly, does Presbyterian mean a style of church organisation and membership? We do seem to spend inordinate amounts of energy and time checking, re-negotiating and fussing over matters of church organisation. To function, however, some form of institutional framework is necessary.

Denominations are one of the manifestations of this need, and are largely an invention of the 18th century religious settlements in America. Presbyterians were particularly adept at this. Non-established churches could settle in new colonies and call together those who would affiliate and own a particular “brand” of religious identity to fill their pews. Different Protestant versions would then continue to self-define by

their style of church government, constitutional documents, rules of worship and leadership procedures. It worked for a long time, and to some extent continues to do so today.

Being Presbyterian simply because of a functional set of forms, structures and accountabilities is, again, a rather thin basis for identifying as disciples in God's world.

Which brings me to the third approach, and one that I think offers a more satisfying basis for identity: being Presbyterian is the practice of theologically informed values, and I will briefly distinguish just a few (from a much bigger list) that make sense in our current milieu.

Stronger together than apart. Presbyterians, at our best, recognise that we are meant to be in this together, and that being diverse but interdependent congregations, networked, accountable and trusting one another, is the sweet spot. To either splinter off in self-defined silos or try to quash diversity by imposing conformity is not a model of gospel-informed reconciliation. To work at the challenges of diversity and difference is part of our discipleship, and in mission it is fuel for innovation.

Distributed leadership. A Presbyterian theology of leadership can trace itself back to Calvin's very realistic view of human nature. The more cynical view might call Presbyterian ordering of ministry leadership, sin management. No one gets to exercise unchecked power and risk damaging the community irrevocably. The order of teaching and ruling elders means the minister did not have unbridled power and sway. But at the same time, the minister was not beholden to every whim and fancy of the elders either, and their duty was to remind them and the congregation of the calling of the gospel.

Head and heart. Presbyterianism draws on both pietistic and modern enlightenment traditions. Both can distort and exaggerate living out our

faith. An over emphasis on the authority of the affections or the intellect betray what it means to be whole people forming into the likeness of Christ's humanity. Presbyterianism at its best affirms a Christian humanism that values the Spirit working through all our faculties.

The Bible as pivotal. Our relationship to Christ pivots on Scripture. The Bible is the written word, which discloses Christ the living word. We cannot truly know Christ outside this story and its parts. We do not read and hear Scripture nakedly: experience, culture and Church traditions play their part, which is why Presbyterians value the tasks and disciplines of interpretive work and biblical, cultural and historical studies.

Every sphere of life. The earth, and all that is in it, is the Lord's. This means for Presbyterians faithful practice matters as much on Monday as it does on Sunday, in the marketplace and unjust structures as it does in the home, in all of creation as it does in a prayer meeting. As a young person said to me recently after returning from a contemporary worship service, “Songs about me and Jesus are not enough. I want to know and sing about a God who is interested in this world”.

None of these values belong exclusively to Presbyterians, however collectively they are part of a signature. Nor do they sum up all the values that will give shape to the Church in the world. We need to learn from other Church roots to do that as well.

Now, back to the question of what it might mean to have Presbyterians on a CV ministry settlement board. I think the answer is not who, but what: What are the Presbyterian values that sit alongside others that constitute a CV identity and its vocation in this place?

– Rev Dr Mark Johnston is the Auckland Coordinator, Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership.

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Presbyterian Foundation grant reaches those in need

An initiative embedded in Christian hospitality has brought practical benefits to one Hamilton community.



Since opening last year, Bottle Top Café at the Co-operating Parish of St Clare, Dinsdale, has evolved into a welcoming outreach.

Friday gatherings of up to 20 people are centred around lively community engagement, and for some, those few hours are the highlight of their week.

Bottle Top Café came out of a realisation that some in the community were struggling with loneliness, health or financial issues and sometimes all three. When Rev Tania Shackleton came to the parish just over a year ago, the ministry vision was shaped around those needs.

"This is home to a lot of people who are ageing and isolated... I was sure there was a way we could get the congregation's support for a ministry that would help. I also wanted it to inform our congregation around the importance of not just paying lip service to helping others, but to find the confidence to do something about it."

Margaret Whiting, a St Clare's parishioner for 27 years, has seen the community change, saying that there are now fewer young families and more aged and lonely individuals.

"It is very sad, but this parish is very supportive," she says. "It's wonderful to see how this [Bottle Top Café] has taken off."

The bottle top concept came after Tania saw a sculpture made from bottle tops while attending a church mission. She came back with an idea that linked her own love of art with her desire to help people, so she kick-started a bottle top collection at St Clare.

The Bottle Top Café at St Clare, Dinsdale, has evolved into a welcoming outreach of community art making, social ministry, and sharing of free food from Kaivolution food rescue.

"I didn't think we'd get many, but we ended up being overrun with them."

The parish council approached the Presbyterian Foundation for funding, and was delighted to receive a start-up grant of \$5000.

The concept launched in November 2016 when St Clare hosted a well-attended community barbecue. It was there that Tania announced that the parish would become a distribution centre for Kaivolution, a not-for-profit organisation that saves edible food from being discarded by stores and ensures it reaches those in need.

Kaivolution had always been part of Tania's vision, and food collected by them – principally bread, baked products, fresh fruit and vegetables – is now distributed to those attending St Clare's Friday gatherings. Anything left over is taken to a nearby halfway house.

Bottle Top Café's success as a social ministry is matched by its success as a creative hub. The "Friday folk" converted the bottle tops into art forms subsequently displayed at a bottle top art exhibition in March, an event that attracted around 80 people. More recently, they have started working with mosaics.

Tania is delighted with how it has turned out. Organisers have seen visitors who lacked social confidence at the outset become more outgoing, with some even

joining another new group – a Wednesday session offering tea, an exercise class and an activity.

"Bottle Top Café is an outreach based on simple hospitality, with no strings attached. Some of those who come now join us at our Sunday worship, which is wonderful."

She is deeply grateful to the Presbyterian Foundation for its support.

At around the time Bottle Top Café was coming on stream, changes were made to the way the Foundation's funds were administered to make better use of the money available, explains PressGo Catalyst Lisa Wells.

While oversight of the Fund has now moved to the PressGo Board, application criteria for small grants are similar to before, says Lisa. Grants of up to \$10,000 can be made for the ministry of people to people, for collaborative ventures or leadership development, and also new creative ventures of mission beyond current church membership.

Lisa says the Bottle Top Café met that brief well.

"It showed them to be a parish willing to take its ministry into the community in such a way that met the specific needs of those people. It made it clear that it was a parish that knew what it wanted to do."

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)

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FOR CENTRAL AUCKLAND CHURCH

The **Auckland Chinese Presbyterian Church (ACPC)** is an evangelical Presbyterian church located in central Auckland, comprising two congregations; one Cantonese-speaking and one English-speaking. We are seeking a full-time minister to lead our English-speaking congregation.

We are a young, vibrant Presbyterian church in the inner city. Auckland is experiencing significant demographic growth and diversity, but we are one of the few Presbyterian churches here.

ACPC believes that our location and the multi-ethnic, multi-generational nature of our English-speaking congregation is a great opportunity to be part of God's mission sharing the Gospel in this city.

This represents an exciting opportunity for someone who feels called to be part of this vision; a person who will lead us in reaching out to the city for Christ and helping it flourish. This is not a call to "business-as-usual" ministry! This person would naturally have an affinity for working with Chinese people, but would not need to be Chinese or speak any Chinese language.

We are seeking a Minister who:

Affirms the orthodox Christian faith, and can communicate the Gospel in a modern secular context with intellectual heft.

Is comfortable providing pastoral care to the diverse cultures and age-groups in our English congregation and beyond.

Has a strong sense of mission and service to the local community.

Is able to help, develop and deploy the spiritual gifts of our church members.

Our English congregation has about 60 regular attendees with a range of ethnicities (NZ-born Chinese, foreign-born Chinese, other Asians, Europeans, and others) with ages ranging from children to grandparents.

The English minister will work alongside and report to our senior minister, Reverend Micah Tang, who is responsible for the Cantonese congregation.

Please email your interest to

msb-contact@acpc.org.nz.

A copy of our detailed church profile is available on request via that address. Our church website is <http://acpc.org.nz>.



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is seeking a Full-Time minister to lead us spiritually in our mission as the church of God in the inner city of Auckland.

We are a gathered church with a strong, reformed, Bible-based heritage situated next to the University of Auckland in Symonds Street.

We feel particularly called to minister to the transient, multicultural student population and inner city dwellers in Auckland.

We are looking for a minister who:

can encourage and nurture both traditional and fresh expressions of the church to celebrate the unity and the diversity of St. Andrew's and the body of Christ as a whole.

will be enthusiastic for both strong pastoral care inside the church and mission to the community around us.

We are a combined church of International and Indonesian congregations, and so it will be beneficial to have some proficiency in both Indonesian and English languages.

For more information, please contact:
Ministry Settlement Board Convenor

Rev. Richard Ward
rward@actrix.co.nz



Expressions of Interest

St Andrews
Mount Maunganui



St Andrews, Mt Maunganui is a dynamic evangelical congregation in the growing city of Tauranga. We are committed to living with a resurrection mind-set, and a mission heart. We have five congregations reaching a range of different age groups as well as a commitment to local and overseas mission. We are looking for a minister to join and lead our team of staff and elders. If you are a Nationally Ordinated Presbyterian Minister (or a minister of another denomination willing to become a Presbyterian minister) and you feel that God might be calling you to St Andrews, please contact: The convenor of our Ministry Settlement Board, Rev Simon Mcleay

PHONE/ 027 270 5426 EMAIL/ simon@stpeters.org.nz for a church profile.

GOING FURTHER IN DISCIPLESHIP

Young Adults' Discipleship Camp

 Ponui Island 6-12 Feb 2018	 279
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The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand invites young adults (17-30) to attend our national young adults' discipleship camp, Going Further, on Ponui Island.

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UN EMPOWERING NZ — WOMEN —



Rev Carol Grant (3rd from right) led a 12-person Presbyterian Women delegation to the United Nations 61st Commission on the Status of Women held in New York recently.

Change happens when women come together. That maxim brought 9,000 women to New York earlier this year.

Among them were 12 Kiwis representing Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand (PWANZ). The 61st Commission on the Status of Women was held in March at the United Nations to hold governments to account for their progress in achieving gender equality, and to share experiences.

An early spring blizzard mirrored how many women felt about Trump's election.

"The US election cast a shadow over this year's proceedings," says Rev Carol Grant, PWANZ United Nations convenor and delegation leader. "Trump's exclusion edicts meant some women felt too unsafe to attend... And threatening to pull out of the UN caused a lot of distress."

Focused this year on "women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work", the Commission was tasked with producing an agreed conclusions document with new action pathways to overcome persistent inequalities, discrimination and barriers that women face at work.

Keeping its 162 member states accountable for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 was also on the agenda.

PWANZ has special consultative status with the Commission as a faith-based organisation.

"We were granted this rare status in 1998 for the work we do as Presbyterian women," says Carol. "It's the only international forum where we, as a Church, can stand up and say what we think."

For Greymouth lay pastor Lyn Heine, this year's Commission was her third. She

says the Commission not only provides creative ideas and practical support – such as an interactive media group – but also gives participants the confidence and courage to put them into action.

"Students from Columba College who attended in 2015 made t-shirts afterwards that cost more for men to buy than for women," she says. "Dunedin City Council is also quietly working away at a programme called 'Cities for the complete elimination of discrimination against women.'"

Lyn's motivation for attending the Commission came from feeling the New Zealand government relies too heavily on past achievements for women, while ignoring current problems.

"We're killing our babies at a rate that's one of the worst in the world," she says. "We're just not saying it as it is. I think the Commission is a challenge to us as people of faith to take a hard look at our communities and institutions, to become better informed and be prepared to give voice to demands for human rights."

Rev Jin Sook Kim was attending her first Commission. Jin Sook is the minister of Waikouaiti Karitane Church in east Dunedin. As a Korean woman minister in a semi-rural parish, she deeply understands the experience of feeling marginal in society. In her Church, older women hold up most of the sky.

"That's when I began thinking about the role of women," she explains. "The two weeks in New York were overwhelming, but also a wonderful opportunity. The young women asked excellent questions. Sometimes, for me, the content was too hard to digest in the moment. I needed time to reflect on it."

Jin Sook says she learned a significant truth for herself.

"Women's empowerment is not only a human right but directly related to Scripture. In the Bible women are significant figures. Hearing the living stories of women corresponds to the biblical truth of equality in Christ."

Women in the developing world have used tactics that range from sex strikes in Liberia to micro-finance businesses in Bangladesh to regain power and respect. Jin Sook believes empowerment begins with empowering yourself. "You have to know yourself. I am happy to have an identity grounded in Christ. If you are strong in yourself you can love others."

Jin Sook has forsaken Church language in her quest to help, what she describes as "post-modern, self-centred westerners" find out who they are. Her monthly newspaper article uses storytelling techniques to engage her local community and to introduce what she calls "God talk".

Rev Carol Grant has now taken 36 women to a Commission, at their own expense, to observe and ask questions.

"Every one of them has experienced it as a game changer in their own lives, from rubbing shoulders with so many incredible women," she says. "That's been hugely rewarding for me personally."

A new UN convenor will be ratified at the AGM, part of the inaugural Presbyterian Women's Assembly to be held on 3-5 November in Mosgiel. To find out more, see www.presbyterian.org.nz/publications/news-archive/womens-assembly-coming-in-november

Jade Reidy Spanz

New pastor has heart for student ministry

It's a long way from Hong Kong to Dunedin but lay pastor Hokye (Daniel) Sun has made the transition with ease.

The 45-year-old and his wife Chinhung Ng arrived in Dunedin in January this year to begin their work with the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church.

"This is my first time in New Zealand and I'd heard it was God's garden," says Daniel. "It certainly is! The fresh air and amazing natural scenery make one full of praises for God and his amazing creation."

Ever since a holiday to Vancouver 17 years ago when he noticed the number of Chinese students overseas, Daniel has had a "spiritual burden to work with overseas Chinese students".

"I had been praying, hoping God would reveal to me his will, which he did last year when I saw that Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church was looking for a new pastor."

Daniel's ministry in Hong Kong served young workers, couples, families and elders and he admits his new role in New Zealand as a lay pastoral worker isn't so different. "I'm honoured to accompany brothers and sisters to walk through different phases of their lives and experience God's grace."

He is impressed with the importance that the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church places on evangelism, especially to university students. "Every Friday night, the church provides students with meals, as well as Bible study, in which they share their own gains from the Bible."

Daniel, who graduated from Hong Kong's Bethel Bible Seminary in 2008, has been working with students to help them value God's words, encouraging them to read the Bible and to do daily devotions. "In such a way, they develop a good relationship with God. His words, as a

result, become a lamp to their feet and a light to their path, and guidance for their whole life."

Dr Peter Liu, pastor at the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church, says he was thrilled to be able to bring Daniel to New Zealand.

"We've been looking for an assistant pastor for many years, but no-one suitable has come along up until now," says Peter. "I am due to retire sometime next year but that's not the only reason we needed to find a new pastor. Our parish has increased to around 170 each Sunday, which has meant an increased workload. So the parish council has been looking for someone to help me for a long time."

In fact, Peter says they have been advertising since 2010, including in Chinese Christian newspapers and magazines globally, as well as at Chinese seminaries in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and the US.

Peter says their criteria, which was set by the 12-person pastoral search committee, was quite detailed. "We were looking for a graduate from an accepted evangelical seminary aged between 35 and 45, who was able to relate to both our students and our elderly."

They also required someone fluent in Mandarin with good English skills and preferably married, which meant both husband and wife could serve together.

"And of course applicants had to have a burden for overseas Chinese mission for our student ministry."

After many years of no applicants, last year there were five. Their CVs and sermon videos were viewed by four members of the search committee and candidates were interviewed by Skype. Daniel's application stood out, says Peter.

"I think Daniel is suitable not only to assist me, but also to hopefully take over my role in the future. He and his wife have served in our church well, with Daniel helping in adult and university student fellowships, while his wife has been mainly involved in high school groups and Sunday School. Both of them have training in relationship and marriage counselling which will be a great help to our congregation in the future."

Peter also has high praise for Daniel's preaching capabilities. "He is very good and faithful to God's word. He recently applied for the Elder of Sacrament and I hope he can lead the Sacrament soon. He will also soon apply for training as a local ordained minister, which I fully support."

"It might have taken a while but we are so glad to finally have someone like Daniel and his wife serving the people of the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz



New Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian lay pastor Daniel Sun, wife Chinhung Ng and their daughter Omega Sun, flanked senior pastor Dr Peter Liu (far left), and his wife Rung-meei Su (far right).

Indonesian trip builds connections

While most of New Zealand shivered through a colder than usual winter, 13 parishioners from St John's in the City, Wellington, managed to escape to the warm climes of Indonesia.



A delegation from St John's in the City, Wellington, attended Sunday morning worship at HKBP Ressort Church in Pangururan.

But it wasn't for a holiday. The delegation travelled to Jakarta and Samosir Island in Northern Sumatra from 12 to 20 July to help build connections with worshippers in Indonesia.

Rev Allister Lane, minister at St John's in the City, says there are around 30 Indonesians in his church community and when they suggested it would be a good idea to build connections with churches in Indonesia, the entire church community got behind them.

"It was a great opportunity to provide practical assistance to communities with fewer resources than ours, to experience for ourselves a different culture, particularly a Christian expression of that culture, and to share our culture with those in Indonesia," says Allister.

It was decided to call the trip a "cross-cultural encounter", rather than a "mission trip", he explains. "We saw it as a mutually beneficial exchange of experiences, insights and encouragement. The title also reflects the Church's character of being cross-cultural, in that we recognise our cultural identity in relation to the journey in faith we make together, united in the identity we share through the cross of Christ."

Fundraising for the trip started 18 months ago and included an Indonesian food festival.

The 13 participants, both Indonesian and non-Indonesian, ranged in ages

from 17 to 60+ years and the Indonesian participants made the initial connections for the people to be visited.

As well as meeting locals, listening and sharing their New Zealand experiences, the team also provided practical assistance to local churches in the form of seven electricity generators and a water pump.

Allister says a highlight of the trip was delivering greetings between churches - from Moderator Rt Rev Richard Dawson to Rev Deborah Sinaga of HKBP, the largest Protestant Church in Indonesia. "HKBP has more than four million members in a country that's majority Muslim," says Allister.

Allister believes it's one of the first times a "grass roots" trip of this nature has been initiated within the St John's community and says the group is keen to build on the success.

"Everyone is very excited about the possibility of either going back to the same region or another part of Indonesia. It was a great experience and we were humbled by how many times we were asked to pray for the people we met, including the mission of their regional church, the ministry in their congregations, the challenges in continuing to teach the Christian faith, their communities and even their newborn babies.

Allister is particularly indebted to Indonesian parishioner Ino Pasullean, the group leader. "Ino made a massive contribution to the success of this encounter event, from the planning and preparation through to translating and pointing out the dangerously spicy food! Ino's sense of humour and consultative leadership style set the tone for the group to enjoy each others' company and learn as we journeyed."

Global Mission Coordinator Rev Phil King helped the group prepare for their trip with a series of meetings prior to their departure.

"It was good to help the participants explore the nature of this trip, including working out their expectations and helping them to prepare for a different culture," says Phil. "That included suggesting they meet each day of the trip for a devotion and to talk about their challenges and growth points and how to support each other in prayer."

Phil was pleased to be asked to work with the group. "People often come back from a trip like this changed and I was able to talk to them about what that could mean to them personally as well as to the group. I hope it also helped them think about how global missions can help us do local missions."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

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World Vision

Church helps build children a better life

Vulnerable children in Bangladesh are being provided the opportunity for a better life thanks to a new orphanage and free school in the rural northwest community of Naogoan.

Upper Clutha Presbyterian is working alongside others to help fund the estimated \$USD 340,000 cost.

International Needs Bangladesh is leading the project, with support from their counterparts in New Zealand and around the world.

Children in the region who live in extreme poverty often have no one to care for them, and are subject to exploitation from forced labour, human trafficking, physical or sexual abuse and other forms of mistreatment. The school is expected to improve outcomes for these children.

Upper Clutha's recent gift of around \$6,000 has brought the total parish donation to the project to over \$13,000. A majority of these funds have come from two quiz nights (one in 2016 and another in May this year), says Inez McClea from the parish's missions abroad committee.

The Naogoan orphanage and school project is building on the success of an existing slum school in the area which provides education to around 220 primary aged children. The new facility will also offer secondary schooling, and will allow the school to increase its capacity to 400 students.

The top floor of the facility will be a dormitory accommodating between 50 to 100 orphans plus vulnerable children from remote villages. A separate dining hall and kitchen will be built to make sure the children in residence, students and school staff are well fed.

A computer lab, chapel and administration area will be part of the new facility as well, and training for adults is also expected to be offered at the school.

A fee-paying kindergarten for more affluent members of the community is planned, and income generated from this will help sustain the school, explains John Elen of International Needs New Zealand, which has been building support for the project among New Zealand donors.

Construction started on the ground floor of the school and orphanage in December last year and the three-storey building is expected to be completed by the end of 2019, although this is dependent on how long it takes to raise funds for each phase of the build, says John.

The Upper Clutha Presbyterian parish became interested in the project following an exploratory mission trip to another International Needs facility in Bangladesh – Savar Children's Village – a couple of years ago, explains the mission trip leader, Inez.

"We were impressed with the facilities in Dhaka, and in the south, and how they had made such a difference, not only to the children who lived there but the whole community.



Local parents are among those assisting with construction of the new Naogoan school and orphanage in Bangladesh.

"Women could learn computer and sewing skills to gain employment. There was also a health clinic where doctors volunteered their time to treat the local community. Children, who wouldn't otherwise receive an education, were taught in little classrooms on the property. They were also taught about Jesus.

"Once you see directly how this can make such a difference to the children, then you want to help this become a reality," explains Inez.

A visit to Wanaka by the head of International Needs in Bangladesh, MacDonald Adhikary, in August last year provided further impetus for the congregation to get behind the project. Some congregation members chose to get involved by sponsoring children at the school in addition to the congregation's involvement, says Inez.

Funds from half-way around the world in New Zealand are not the only thing kick-starting this project - local parents are also pitching in with construction where they can, providing some of the physical labour for the project, says John.

Once the school is up and running, parents are also expected to play a critical role in implementation, monitoring and maintenance of the school, he says.

"International Needs was founded and continues to work on the principle that effective indigenous ministry is most successful when served and led by locals," explains John.

Regular reports from International Needs keep the congregation up-to-date with how the project is going, and Inez is keen for Upper Clutha to have continuing involvement with the Naogoan school and orphanage once it's up and running. "I hope we will have ongoing contact with the school to help outfit the facility, and perhaps have a team visit," she says.

Jose Reader Spanz

Volunteers quickly rebuild cyclone damaged church

When a group of eight Presbyterians arrived in a Vanuatu village in June to help rebuild their cyclone-devastated church, there were a few local eyebrows raised. The prevailing thought was that most of the well-meaning volunteers might have been slightly too “geriatric” for the task... but that view soon changed.

Seven and a half days after the team arrived at Lamnatu village on Vanuatu's Tanna Island, the rebuild was complete.

A 12m by 6m church, which doubles as the village meeting house, had been raised from the original concrete slab floor, which had been left bare when Cyclone Pam destroyed its predecessor in March 2015.

The New Zealand church members also succeeded in reinstating the village's roof water storage supply to an existing concrete storage tank, bringing a much-needed daily supply of clean water to Lamnatu residents. Until then, pumped water had been available only once a week.

Pulling it all together was a team of eight from Whangarei, Whanganui, and Palmerston North.

They were led by project designer Garth Stevenson from Whanganui's St Paul's Presbyterian Church. Father and son duo, Peter and McCade Monk, represented Palmerston North's St Alban's Presbyterian Church, and Whangarei's St Andrew's Presbyterian Church fielded five members – Kevin Hollis, David McFarland, John Nicole, Rick Tillett and Dave Roke. The latter is the convenor of the St Andrew's overseas mission group.

Imbued with a common desire to provide cyclone relief wherever it was needed, the men forged warm friendships as they worked shoulder-to-shoulder alongside villagers. Appetising meals were provided by local women throughout the rebuild, and at the end of the visitors' 10-day stay, the village prepared a great feast as a mark of thanks. Many of the locals, says Dave Roke, were overcome with gratitude. When the group left the island, it was with a heartfelt offer that they were welcome to return at any time.

The visit was so successful that plans are now underway for team leader Garth Stevenson – who is an adopted member of Lamnatu village – to attend the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu's national conference in the village next February. The newly-dedicated church will be the focus of activities during that conference week.

Garth has a long-standing relationship with the Lamnatu village and its people, having first been there to help rebuild the old church after it was damaged in a 2005 cyclone.

“I've continued to go back... doing water supplies, building schools and so on. After a request, I took over moulds to make concrete blocks, and we built a ladies' hall for the village,” he explains. “This is what they sheltered in during Cyclone Pam.”



Eight Presbyterians volunteered to work alongside locals to rebuild the Lamnatu village church in just seven and a half days.

On hearing of the devastation caused by the 2015 storm Garth started putting together another rebuild project and called on volunteers to join him.

Most of the funding for the latest trip came from Whanganui Presbyterian churches, who have steadfastly supported Garth's projects over the past 12 years. Additional funds were raised by the Whangarei team and there was a donation from Global Mission.

“I also had donations from several groups and service clubs I spoke to,” Garth says, “and an offer to top-up from benefactors.”

The Kiwi team brought a range of skills to the task. Included in their number were a couple of retired part-time builders, three experienced rural lifestyle blockers and an engineer. Local men and women of all ages readily stepped up to swell the ranks of workers.

As is the way with projects of this sort, not everything ran smoothly. Interruptions in the supply and delivery of building materials almost saw the project abandoned at one stage, and Dave says that without the untiring support of Neville and Gloria Jones – Global Mission workers who serve with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu – the project may not have succeeded at all.

As David McFarland puts it, “It seemed the bigger the need, the more God seemed to assist”.

But succeed it did. The rebuild has had a huge positive impact on the people of Lamnatu and continues to be widely applauded.

Plans are afoot for other projects, including a rebuild of the pastor's damaged house, and the strong links forged during construction are likely to continue well into the future.

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)

Students experience Vanuatu village life

Getting students out of their comfort zones by experiencing life in a totally different culture was one of the aims of an 18-day trip to Vanuatu by members of Dunedin's Brockville Community Church and St John's Anglican Church in July.

Rev Andrew Scott, minister of Brockville Community Church, says the 11-strong delegation included eight students and three adults from the two churches.

"We've been working with St John's for some time and when we suggested the trip to them, they were keen to be involved," says Andrew.

The idea to take youth on an overseas mission trip was first floated in 2014. Andrew spoke with Rev Phil King, the Presbyterian Church's Global Mission coordinator, who suggested Vanuatu, because of the Church's strong connections with the South Pacific nation.

And so began the group's fundraising efforts, which included two market days, an art auction, car washes and quiz nights. Julie Fern, one of the trip coordinators, says considerable effort was needed to raise money for the trip because Brockville is a small church in a low socio-economic area.

"It just shows God's hand in all of this, that we were able to raise so much. For example, we raised \$6K with the art auction, which was amazing," says Julie. "We also had contributions from the Presbyterian Church, the Anglican Church and the West Dunedin Youth and Community Trust, as well as from generous parishioners."

Once there, the group visited Malekula Island, the second largest island in Vanuatu. They were put in contact with Southwest Bay Presbyterian School Principal, John Knox Tolish. The school services five main villages and four smaller villages on the island.



Rev Andrew Scott and the 11-strong delegation from Dunedin's Brockville Community Church and St John's Anglican Church.

As the first Presbyterian Church group to visit Southwest Bay, the aim was to forge relationships with the local villages and particularly the school community. An important aspect of the visit was connecting with the churches of the five villages in the area.

The team packed a guitar, a binder and a laminating machine, as well as sports equipment such as soccer balls and frisbees. They built relationships with the students and spent time training teachers, elders and parents on topics ranging from classroom management to preaching and phonics.

"Our students sat in on classes in the kindy and primary school, they talked about life in New Zealand, shared learnings, and played a lot of sports with them," says Andrew.

A key focus of the trip, which ran from 4 to 22 July, was making introductions throughout the Southwest Bay community, coordinated by the principal and the community's moderator.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the trip was seeing the students grow and adapt to the often basic conditions, says Julie. "It was good for them to see how some people live with so little, yet are so happy. We have so many 'wants' in the Western world but others can live happily without very much."

The team was humbled by the way the locals looked after them, from doing their laundry, to cooking and cleaning. "Carlos and Larros were our cooks for the entire time we were in Malekula and worked incredibly hard to make sure we were well fed and watered," says Andrew. "We offered to help but they wouldn't let us. It really was a wonderful gift."

It's fair to say that the team fell in love with the island and the people so much that returning to New Zealand after 18 days away was something of a challenge.

"Arriving at Auckland Airport and seeing people bump into you and no-one smiling was a bit of a shock to everyone. In Vanuatu everyone smiles at strangers on the street, whereas here if you smile at someone they think you're crazy! I think if we could have, we would have got on the next plane back," laughs Andrew.

Having had such a rich cultural and spiritual experience the group is keen to host five people from the Southwest Bay community next August and is already planning for a return visit to Vanuatu in 2019.

"Now that we've made these valuable connections we want to work more closely with the school and villages and continue to help them in whatever way we can," says Andrew.

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

Grappling with Climate Change

Around the world, people and communities are struggling with the impact of extreme weather events and other effects of climate change.

In the south of Uganda, small farmers use every last drop of water. Hit by crippling drought yet again, they know how to reuse the grey water from household activities to keep their garden growing. They have learnt how to adapt to the changing climate with help from Christian World Service partner, the Centre for Community Solidarity. New growing techniques and rainwater harvesting systems are vital to their continued survival on the small plots of land that have sustained them for decades.

Closer to home, Filipinos living in the northern tip of the Aklan province have been busy planting. In 2013, they lost homes and crops in one of the largest typhoons to make landfall in the Philippines.

Their immediate concern was shelter and ensuring food security for their family. Fishing families shared rafts and other equipment, and a micro credit scheme run by CWS partner, Developers, helped replace lost farm equipment and set up small businesses.

Donations made to Christian World Service (CWS) provided funds for corrugated iron roofing and the special project of Presbyterian and Methodist women also helped the recovery process.

Now locals have put their minds to improving their livelihoods. A new covered farmers' market in one community is helping to expand the local economy and farms have been replanted. After a second major planting drive across the six communities, Developers reports that 49,540 trees and root crops are now in the ground, more than replacing those lost in the storm.

Another component of the recovery is replanting mangrove trees that once protected the coasts, which was made possible thanks to donations from New Zealanders.

A further planting drive is planned. This time they will plant one hectare of mangroves, to protect a section of the coast from tidal surges associated with large-scale weather events. It will also provide habitat for the fish locals depend on for their daily food.

Another part of the recovery process has been to prepare in case of another disaster through emergency drills, first aid and other training.

CWS partners around the globe are confirming reports of climate change. For some rainy seasons are shorter and less reliable. For others, the monsoons and typhoons are heavier and more damaging. Small farmers are finding it harder to farm because of unpredictable weather.

For our Pacific neighbours, who are among the poorest people living on the most marginal land, the future is bleak. They face losing their lives in stronger natural disasters, their land and livelihoods because of rising water levels and environmental degradation. The people made homeless by climate change are



HIV AIDS orphan watering a seedling with grey water in drought affected Uganda. Image: CCS and Philippines Developers.

not refugees – a designation under international law reserved for those who have fled because of war or persecution.

With your support those affected by climate change are preparing for the tough times they know lie ahead. They are determined to use the resources they have to invest in their, and their children's, future.

Donations to CWS appeals will get help directly to people who are making their own preparations in case of disaster. Our partners are making sure the money communities earn stays there, and that the most vulnerable people get food, water and protection. Local communities are learning about the effects of climate change on the local environment and exploring ways to respond.

In 2015 the world agreed to limit warming to below two degrees Celsius by cutting emissions. However, in Aotearoa New Zealand emissions are rising and there are no substantive plans to take action. Many other countries are ahead of us in their efforts to avert a global crisis affecting the planet.

CWS is supporting a new campaign to pass a Zero Carbon Act, based on legislation passed by the British parliament in 2008. The campaign is proposing a cross-party commitment to zero carbon by 2050 or sooner.

The actions required to keep the global temperature from rising are bigger than any of us. In the face of climate change we are no longer individuals, but we can choose to become part of communities that look out for each other and for the world that God loves.

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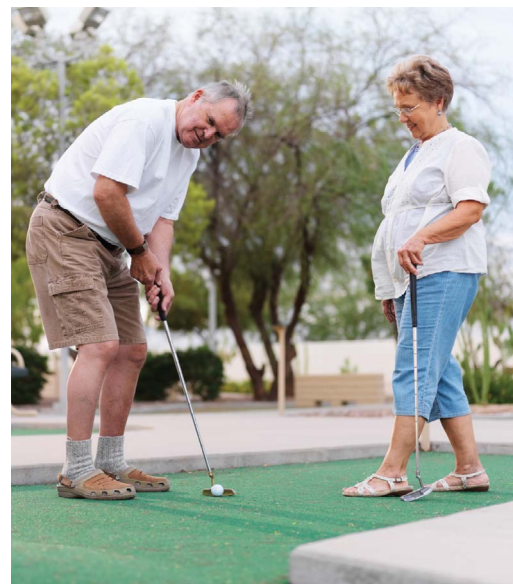
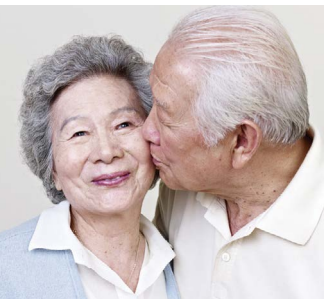
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