



## The Maori and Native American Connection

**A paper prepared by the Rev W Te Kaawa in response to the Native American Ministry Supplemental Report 2010.**

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**To:** Roger Lee

Moderator of Synod of Alaska Northwest – PCUSA

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On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 I was contact by Mr Roger Lee the Moderator of the Synod of Alaska Northwest from the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America. Mr Lee asked for advice on Presbyterian interactions with Maori of Aotearoa New Zealand to help shed light on conversations between the first nation people of Aotearoa New Zealand and the United States of America. The histories of both first nation people have some similarities and have intersected over time to partnership status.

The background for this paper is the paper prepared by Mr Lee entitled: *Native American Ministry Supplemental Report*.

Perhaps there are lessons from both perspectives too be leant for the global Presbyterian Church.

Arohanui

Rev W Te Kaawa

Director of Te Wananga a Rangī

## The Maori Experience:

### The Contact Years: 1812 – 1899:

1. 1812 Christianity is invited to Aotearoa New Zealand by the northern chief Ruatara who had travelled internationally and experience the benefits of Christianity from the Rev Samuel Marsden while in Sydney, Australia.
2. In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi is signed between Maori Chiefs and Governor Hobson representing Queen Victoria of England. This document annexes Aotearoa New Zealand as a colony of Great Britain.
3. Ten days after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi the first ship load of Presbyterian settlers arrive in Aotearoa New Zealand. Included amongst the Presbyterian settlers is the minister the Rev John Macfarlane who also extends his ministry to Maori people in Wellington.
4. Macfarlane appeals to the Church of Scotland to send a minister specifically to establish a Presbyterian mission to Maori.
5. 1843 the Rev James Duncan arrives to establish a Presbyterian mission to Maori. Duncan spends 22 years ministering to Maori in the lower North Island largely on his own with limited financial support.
6. The New Zealand war begins in the early 1860s between Maori and colonial settlers. This war see Maori people eventually lose over 60 million hectares of land and the Maori population decreases from an estimated 250,000 people to 40,000 people by the early 1900s.
7. In 1865 Duncan resigns from his mission amid controversial involvement in political affairs during the New Zealand wars. Duncan concentrates his missionary endeavours on colonial settlers.
8. A Maori Missions Committee is established under the oversight of the Foreign Missions Committee to monitor and develop missionary work to Maori. Limited funding is advanced to pay mission workers.
9. The Rev Abraham Honore, Mr George Milson and the Rev H J Fletcher continue the missionary work of the Rev J Duncan amongst Maori. There is little and at times no financial support from the Presbyterian Church in Aotearoa New Zealand or Scotland for mission to Maori.
10. Missionary work amongst Maori in the South Island closes due to lack of interest and support from the southern Presbyterian Churches in the late 1880s.
11. The Maori Missions is placed under the jurisdiction of the Home Missions Committee.

12. In 1895 the North Island Maori missions close in the lower North Island due to lack of financial support and workers. Only the Rev H J Fletcher remains as the sole missionary to Maori.

**Lessons learnt:**

- a) *Christianity was invited to Aotearoa New Zealand by its indigenous inhabitants.*
- b) *The Presbyterian Church arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand as a settler church with no specific intended mission to the indigenous population.*
- c) *Mission to indigenous people began as a by-product of its settler mission.*
- d) *While other Churches developed their own indigenous models of ministry where the indigenous people evangelised their own people the Presbyterian Church relented from this model preferring the settler model.*
- e) *The Maori mission received little or no financial support from the Presbyterian Church in Aotearoa New Zealand. Annual financial support for Maori missions averaged at £120 per year.*
- f) *The few people involved in Maori mission retired disillusioned due to lack of support from its parent Church.*
- g) *The Presbyterian Church lacked any development of an indigenous model of ministry employed by other Churches and concentrated its efforts upon a colonial mission to Maori.*
- h) *By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century all Maori missions had ceased to operate.*

**The age of expansion: 1900 – 1935:**

1. The Rev H J Fletcher moves his mission to the central North Island and establishes a mission in Taupo, an area that was abandoned by Churches during the New Zealand wars in 1860-1880.
2. Fletcher surveys the interior of the North Island and finds areas in the King Country where there is a high Maori population and no Church work.
3. The Rev E J Ward enters the Maori missions with Fletcher and begins his mission in the King Country.
4. Sister Alison Spence, a Deaconess enters the Maori missions with Fletcher and Ward. This move sees other women enter the Maori mission that becomes the catalyst for expansion.

5. In 1912 Sister Edith Walker and Jessie enter the Maori missions on the East Coast of the North Island in a Mormon stronghold area.
6. Fletcher sets out and surveys the Urewera National Park and sees opportunities for the Presbyterian Church.
7. The survey by Fletcher sees Sister Annie Henry and the Rev John Laughton enter the Maori missions. Sister Annie Henry becomes acknowledged nationally as the most successful missionary in history to Maori of any denomination. Laughton will go on to become the most dominant figure in the history of the Presbyterian Maori mission becoming the architect of the Presbyterian Maori Synod.
8. In the 1920s the Presbyterian Church led by the Rev J Laughton enters into a number of covenant relationships with Maori communities.
9. By 1935 the Presbyterian Maori mission has 17 mission stations, 9 mission schools, 1 mission hospital and its own printing press and publication.

**Lessons Learnt:**

- a) From 1907 33 female deaconesses enter the Maori missions. Women missionaries are received with open arms by various Maori communities as they are viewed with less suspicion than their male counterparts. The Deaconesses establish at least 12 mission stations compared to the 3 that are established by their male counterparts.***
- b) Covenant relationships are established between the Presbyterian Church and various Maori leaders. These Covenant relationships are still in existence in 2010.***
- c) In the 1920s the Maori population decreased to 40,000 people in total and were on the verge of extinction. During this time 11,000 Maori people were under the pastoral care of the Presbyterian Church.***

**The age of consolidation: 1936 – 1965:**

1. The Maori missions chose Ohope as their National base.
2. The issue of turangawaewae (a place to belong) becomes a paramount issue amongst Maori.
3. Ohope Marae is established as the home of the Presbyterian Maori missions.
4. WWII and the success of the 28<sup>th</sup> Maori Battalion becomes the catalyst for recognition of indigenous leadership throughout Church, society and Government.

5. 1952 Roundtable Conference on Maori Affairs sees two issues come to the fore: Developing an indigenous model of ministry and self governance and autonomy.
6. 1953 General Assembly gives permission for a Maori Synod to be established with Synodal powers and a Maori Theological College is also given permission to be established.
7. Maori are now trained as fulltime paid ministers and many of them replace their European counterparts in the Maori mission field.
8. Maori missions are now recognised as 'Pastorates' of the Maori Synod.

**Lessons Learnt:**

- a) ***Indigenous leadership and models of Church are finally recognised by the Presbyterian Church.***
- b) ***Maori who were once the unwanted subjects of mission now become the animators of mission.***
- c) ***Maori are given permission to develop their own Theological College to train their own for ministry.***

**An International Indigenous Church:**

1. Cy Baker the acknowledged paramount chief of the Navajo people visits Aotearoa New Zealand as part of a PCUSA delegation in 1968(?). Mr Baker makes important links with the Maori Synod and promises to bring his people to Ohope marae to fellowship with Maori.
2. In 1990 Mr Baker honours his words and returns to Ohope marae with 50 of his Navajo people and forms important links throughout the Maori world.
3. In 1993 Mr Ceesaw Corbet visits Aotearoa New Zealand as part of a PCUSA delegation and stays with the Maori Synod as their guest.
4. The Rev Jack Wilson from the Synod of Alaska Northwest of PCUSA takes up a two year post with the Maori Synod in the parishes of Waimana and Opotiki.
5. The Rev Pinky Thomas, Tom Tweedy and Tom Gulliland all of the Synod of Alaska Northwest, follow the Rev Jack Wilson in succession.
6. The Rev Jack Wilson brings a delegation from The Synod of Alaska Northwest on a visit to the Maori Synod in 1993(?).

7. The Very T H Takao of the Maori Synod and former Moderator of PCANZ is posted to Neath Bay, Seattle for a two year term. The Very Rev T H Takao is also received as a guest at the General Assembly of PCUSA.
8. The Very Rev T H Takao leads a delegation from the Maori Synod on a visit to the Synod of Alaska Northwest in 1998(?).
9. The Maori Synod of PCANZ and the Synod of Alaska Northwest of PCUSA form a partnership Synod relationship.

**Lessons Learnt:**

- a) *The main lessons learnt from this relationship is the forming of life long friendships between people from both Synods.*
- b) *The partnership Synod relationship is based upon the sharing of knowledge and experiences between the first nations people of both countries.*
- c) *Often the Maori Synod will seek the advice of the ministers from the Synod of Alaska Northwest who ministered within the Maori Synod.*

**The Indigenous Church Experience: 1966 – 2010:**

1. A Joint Committee is established between PCANZ and Maori Synod. This committee still in operation is the place where both parties come together to discuss common issues. The main objective of this committee is to develop understanding and projects that promote the bi-cultural relations within the Presbyterian Church and beyond.
2. The 1984 General Assembly of PCANZ acknowledges the Treaty of Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and seeks to honour the Treaty within the life of the Church.
3. The Maori Synod is given constitutional rights to 'stand aside' on decisions of General Assembly when it believes that a decision has been made by General Assembly that contravenes the bi-cultural partners as outlined in the Treaty of Waitangi.
4. PCANZ in partnership with the Maori Synod establish the Maori cultural teacher to the Presbyterian Church. This position is to be largely an educational position from 1990 to 1995.
5. PCANZ establishes the Race relations committee in association with the Methodist Church. This committee is to operate educational programmes that openly challenge attitudinal and structural racism within Church, society and Government.

6. In 1993 PCANZ institutes the 'Gift of Partnership' with the Maori Synod. Under this arrangement PCANZ gifts 11% of its national budget to the Maori Synod. This gift acknowledges that PCANZ has never adequately funded the Maori Synod or the former Maori missions. The 'gift of partnership also acknowledges the partnership status of PCANZ and Maori Synod. This lasts until 2005 when PCANZ runs into financial difficulty and lessens the 'Gift of Partnership'.
7. The Maori Synod is granted two seats on the Council of Assembly and one seat on each of the PCANZ standing committees to give voice to the aspirations of Maori Synod within the Church structures of PCANZ.
8. In 2009 PCANZ and the Maori Synod find a new expression of the bi-cultural relationship and sign a Covenant between the Maori Theological College of the Maori Synod and Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership of PCANZ. This Covenant sees both institutions working in mutual partnership with Knox contributing to the stipend of the Director of the Maori Theological College.

**Lessons Learnt:**

- a) *The Treaty of Waitangi 1840 is acknowledged by PCANZ within its life as a Church.*
- b) *There is a standing committee of PCANZ (The Joint Committee) to monitor and develop the bi-cultural partnership within PCANZ.*
- c) *Constitution rights are given to Maori Synod in the 'Stand aside' rule of General Assembly.*
- d) *A Committee is established to monitor race relations within the Church.*
- e) *A position of cultural teacher is established to educate people on bi-cultural matters.*
- f) *Financial support is finally given to Maori Synod. However this is withdrawn when PCANZ runs short of finances.*
- g) *Representation is given to Maori Synod on different Courts of the Church.*
- h) *Maori and non-Maori enter into a Covenant relationship in 2009 in an attempt to keep the relationship alive.*
- i) *The multi-cultural journey of the Presbyterian Church is acknowledged as being part of the bi-cultural journey of PCANZ and not separate from it.*

These are only highlights from our historical journey as a Church. Please feel free to contact me for any further information or help. I must add that as the bi-cultural and multi-cultural teacher to the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand I would be only too willing to fly over to the USA and make representation to PCUSA if you believe that would be of benefit.

Arohanui

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