

Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

SUMMER 2018, ISSUE 75



The gift of
pastoral care

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Four Women Moderators: the challenge to diversify leadership

Earlier this year as an intern at the Presbyterian Research Centre I got a closer look at the extraordinary women who have served as Moderator of the General Assembly.

Since 1901, four women have served the Church in the role of Moderator: Mrs Joan Anderson (1979), Very Rev Margaret Reid Martin (1987), Very Rev Margaret Schrader (1995), and Very Rev Pamela Tankersley (2006). For each, the experience was different.

The late Joan Anderson's nomination was a historic moment in the Church for two reasons; she was the first woman to hold the role and only the fourth lay person.

She described her year as Moderator as "very daunting" but enormously enjoyable. Her term was not limited by her gender but in smaller meeting settings, "Where there were only men, the female voice is easily drowned by the male... there (I) tended to be a bit more forceful".

As the first women Moderator, Joan had done her bit to "break the patterns of the past", and the appreciation is visible in the boxes of thank you letters she received.

In 1965, the late Very Rev Margaret Reid Martin was the first women to be ordained in word and sacrament as a minister in the Presbyterian Church. Twenty-two years later, she became the Church's second woman Moderator.

Her Moderator theme was "Choose life in all its fullness". She was "one of the visionary figures" always looking forward.

In the 1995 Association of Presbyterian Women "Women's Stories Project", she said a major task for the Church

would be to ensure women's perspective "influenced both the style and the direction of decision making".

Rev Rev Marg Schrader became Moderator in 1995. Her style reflected her vocation as a counselor and spiritual director. She focused on "how can we all open ourselves to God and listen at depth to those with different opinions, to learn from them, to sometimes be changed by them, so together we can discern more clearly God's way and be one body."

Marg has been outspoken about the need for women to be in leadership roles in the Church. In April 2018 she wrote on the Candour blog, "Time for another woman Moderator?" For Marg, this is not a question of whether there are women with the skill and call within the Church, there are many "we don't seem to look at the women, we tend to bypass them and see only the men".

Very Rev Pamela Tankersley was elected Moderator in 2006. During her ministry training she felt called to serve the whole Church – not just the parishes she might be called to.

She found the Theological Hall an adjustment, "I could not believe how male...the system was." In Pamela's class 1984 to 1986, eight of 15 students were women. These "stropky women" were determined to open doors with feminist theology, "We were on fire".

The 2006 General Assembly for Pamela was coloured by divisive debates on sexuality, as it had been for both Marg Schrader and Margaret Reid Martin. "It was about being compassionate but at the same time not leaving room for any of that horrible stuff to emerge."

Her theme was being "Christ centered and community facing" and she spent most of her time as Moderator travelling to run workshops around the country.



Rachel Tombs

A highlight of her ministry was working with the late Millie Te Kaawa, then moderator of Te Aka Puaho. Together they worked towards "being able to recognise our partnership as a treaty partnership". She felt there was a solidarity between them, "women, having been excluded, understand inclusion of other people".

Pamela's significant contribution to the Presbyterian Church and her community was recognised this year when she received a New Zealand Order of Merit.

In 2018, diversifying our leadership to reflect the fullness of the Church continues to be a challenge. The stories of Joan, Margaret, Marg and Pamela are examples of breaking out from the pattern of male leadership. Women's leadership in the Church is a part of our history and we must continue to do the "hard work" for it to be a part of our future.

– Rachel Tombs was an intern at the Presbyterian Research Centre whilst studying for a paper at Otago University. She is an elder at Knox Presbyterian, Dunedin and was recently elected to the council of Southern Presbytery. You can read her full article, "Four Presbyterian leaders and the continuing challenge to diversify leadership to reflect the church" at <https://presbyterianresearch.atavist.com/we-dont-look-at-the-women>

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MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

The Right Rev Fakaofa Kaio contributes a regular column to Spanz.

**"Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol him
all you peoples. For great is his love towards
us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures
for ever. Praise the Lord". Psalm 117.**

In all that we do and all that we hope to
achieve in our lifetime, may the name
of the Lord God Almighty be praised.
May all generations lift high God's holy
name. May every nation shine forth the
light of the truth of the creator, so that
every being may know the presence of
the Holy One. Come upon our struggling
world and transform our hearts with fire
and fervour for Jesus Christ as Lord and
saviour. Come, O Holy Spirit, come with
all your power and grace.

General Assembly has come and gone.
Now, the important part of our response,
our witness and our service to the Lord
of the Church, Jesus Christ. GA 2018 is
not a stand-alone event in our calendar.
It is indeed an event, a highlight or a
climax, but it does not stop there. We
must continue the work of the Kingdom
of God. Every General Assembly is meant
to challenge, inspire and help us in our
service as Christians.

The focus for GA 2018 was, "Jesus the heart
of all relationships with God, and people"

The contemporary cross was the logo of
GA 2018. This is a reminder that Jesus
is Lord and saviour, "yesterday, today
and tomorrow". I encourage you to pray
that we put Jesus in the heart of all our
relationships. Going forward in service
to the Lord, he calls us to "deny yourself,
carry your cross and follow me". Jesus'
words are not a burden or a load, rather
they are words of life; words of purpose
and meaning; words that build family,
community, friendship and the Church.

Ministry and mission for the kingdom
goes on as does pastoral care in all facets
of life: to the young, old, disabled, new
immigrants – and it is urgent.

Involvement between parishes and
schools was a characteristic of the Church
in its formation as a denomination. It is
part of our DNA as a faith community.
We must maintain our partnership.

Appointments to newly created direct-
or roles at Assembly Office and the



ordination and induction of new
ministers are signs of life and progress.
We must honour, support and keep our
people in our prayers. Paul says we must
care and provide for those in positions of
responsibility and leadership.

Our global mission to neighbouring
nations like Vanuatu, Myanmar and
many other nations is a sign of a healthy
church family. I believe that when we
bless others, we are drawn closer to the
heart of God. When we feed and give
to those in need, we experience Jesus
personally. Jesus said, "What you do to
the least, you do to me".

There are many areas of church life
before each one of us. Do one kind deed
at a time.

Be involved in your church's life. You
are not expected to do everything by
yourself. There is always a community, a
gathering, a crowd of witnesses around
you. You are never alone. Enjoy and be
happy in service to and for Jesus. The Lord
will never forsake you.

We are now upon the Advent season in
our Christian Calendar. It is a time for
Christians to prepare, to be ready for the
of baby of Bethlehem. For me, it's a time
of reassessing one's life. We accumulate
baggage that we each carry through the
year. In my assessment, I identify and
determine what excess baggage I will
let go. My load becomes lighter, manage-
able, and I feel emotionally renewed
and refreshed.

PASTORAL CARE FOR EVERY SEASON

The very essence of what makes us human also equips us with a natural inclination to care for others. As we approach Christmas, a time when some in our communities can feel stressed, lonely and down, are pastoral care workers able to meet demand?

While the concept of caring has been part of human activity throughout history, in etymological terms, pastoral care is deeply rooted in the Christian church. The word "pastoral" is derived from the Latin "pastoralis", relating to herdsmen and referencing the metaphor of the Good Shepherd... one who cares for and guides his flock.

The Christian definition of pastoral care is straightforward. Its function is to care for people throughout life, to support those facing difficulties, those who are bereaved or ill, or who require special nurturing or prayer.

Pastoral care also has context outside the church, finding expression in simple acts from neighbourliness to assisting in schools, workplaces, hospitals, prisons. Pastoral care is also evident in our efforts to combat injustice in what often appears to be an increasingly unjust world.

Global pressures have become local pressures. Communities everywhere face challenges that differ in scale, if not form, from those of earlier generations – relationship break-ups, single parenthood, mental health and addiction problems, ageing populations, families fragmented through migration, loneliness, homelessness, cultural tensions and the refugee crisis.

The coalface of pastoral care has become grittier at the same time as we notice a decrease in the numbers of those who have traditionally provided it.

Despite these pressures, says Dr Lynne Taylor, Jack Somerville Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at the University of Otago's Department of Theology and Religion, the "naturally organic" pastoral care that has long been part of church life is still there in outreach groups, Bible study gatherings and visiting networks, as well as informally.

"Where things are functioning well, that primary level of caring can happen organically. Sometimes, more specialised care is required and people are referred to those more equipped to help. That can be a very workable system.

"At the same time, we are seeing a widening out of care now. There has been a move away from pastoral care as being a primary responsibility of the minister – it is now viewed as a responsibility of the congregation; and the recipients of that care may no longer simply be church attenders, but the wider community itself."

In her course, Lynne explores the underpinnings of pastoral care, its form in today's world, its context beyond the church; and examines the interplay between pastoral care and justice, asking if the church's role extends beyond caring for suffering persons to challenging the forces which impact on personal and communal needs. "Pastoral care is increasingly viewed as outward-facing, lay-centred, and attentive to communal, societal and intercultural dynamics."

Churches, she says in a comment that encapsulates the spirit of pastoral care, are not only places where people grow in their relationship with God, but are also places where human relationships flourish and where wider connections can be enhanced. "As humans we are created for connections, for relationships, with other humans and the world."

Lynne's views are echoed by the Rev Dr Hyeeyun Kim, Lecturer in Counselling at Laidlaw College. She says traditional pastoral care – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual – has always been part of what the church does.

"But because of the complexities of society today, it has become more difficult to deliver the level of care now needed in our communities. We are faced with increasing mental health issues; there are more suicides, greater numbers of people with addictions, violence, trauma-related issues, cultural diversity, poverty, and relationship and family issues. While we see more and more people look to the church for help – and that is good – pastoral care workers are often burdened by it, sometimes to the point of burn-out.

"By nature, those who enter pastoral care have caring, loving hearts. Saying 'no' is difficult for them, even when they are so thinly-stretched. They are further stressed because often they can't fix people's problems as easily or quickly as they were once able to do. It is due to increasing complexities in our society, and some of the more senior pastoral care workers find it difficult to relate to the contemporary issues which are beyond their experience."

Hyeeyun believes there is a need for more structured and ongoing training around pastoral care, and perhaps even broader efforts to look after the carers themselves, particularly given that some of the problems they deal with – such as addictions and trauma – have a long-term ripple effect through both church and community.

"There are training workshops, and regular speakers who cover guidance around referrals and the like, but perhaps there could be more structure and more



The Pacifica Festival run by Rev Nick McLennan and his team at Mahurangi Presbyterian Church is a rich example of intentional pastoral care extending into the community.

regular mentoring offered to those in pastoral care," she says. "We could always benefit from more."

Pastoral care in the Presbyterian Church is guided by a Code of Ethics*. The 1996 General Assembly encouraged its adoption as an agreed minimum standard of practice for all clergy and lay people providing pastoral care, and earlier this year it became a stand-alone Supplementary Provision. It states that in accordance with the Gospel, all people should be treated with honesty, transparency, dignity and respect. The Code upholds obligations of truthfulness and confidentiality, compassion, stewardship and appropriate supervision, and prohibits exploitation and harassment.

How pastoral care plays out differs across parishes, and often those differences are governed by geography and community.

Warkworth

"Pastoral care is how we look after the church family," says Rev Nick McLennan of Warkworth's Mahurangi Presbyterian Church. "I guess you could say it's an extension of Jesus' command in John 15:12 for us to love one another. While it might not be a uniquely Christian concept, it should be a defining Christian practice."

Those called to it are, he believes, people with compassion and empathy; many will draw on their own difficult experiences to help others.

"Pastoral care to the elderly requires compassion and patience. For immigrants, key needs are often around finding suitable accommodation and advocacy to deal with the bureaucracy of government departments – that needs someone who can communicate effectively and understand cultural nuances. For youth, the major stressors seem to be anxiety, mental health and issues related to alcohol abuse. This requires an extensive skillset and the ability to work constructively with other social agencies."

Christchurch

In his own "fervent days", as Rev Dr Matthew Jack of Knox Church in Christchurch puts it, "personal encounter was meant to be about the great commission".

"Slightly after my fervent days, a mentor told me that most pastoral ministry was drinking tea and talking about the weather. Small talk was that upon which relationship was built ... it was about investing in the future. That struck me as sensible, but a little full of tannin."

Later, by then awash with tea, Matthew considered a new approach. Christ did a lot of meeting and talking to people, wherever they were, he was advised. "How can we talk about that Christ, and our place within his body, without giving ourselves to engage with the other?"

Matthew now asks. "Pastoral care is not a Christian/ministerial function. In the here and now, it is God working God's passionate work through flesh and blood, as it happens, then and there."

Auckland

Rev Glynn Cardy of St Luke's Presbyterian in Remuera says he prefers the term "spiritual care" when referencing pastoral care. That's because it focuses on the way we know God and how God is known in the context of relationships, trauma, tragedy, loss and more.

St Luke's has been an Auckland-based centre for counselling for years and offers a host of other facilities. It is also an important community centre and home to many groups catering for children and seniors, as well as offenders and victims. Their pastoral care team meets weekly for peer review and support, drawn together by mutual concern for others and a desire to help. Regular dinners, one of which is for those living alone, is part of a network of activities offered to a community in which many elderly reside.

Albany

It is the congregation as a whole that plays a huge part in the provision of pastoral care at Albany Presbyterian Church, says Care Team leader Carrie Turner. Church members extend that team work by engaging informally through friendship circles and home groups – just one example is the shared weekly



Dr Lynne Taylor, Jack Somerville Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at the University of Otago's Department of Theology and Religion says, "pastoral care is a living, forever thing. It will change as society does. The delivery may change, but the concept will remain the same".



Laidlaw College Lecturer in Counselling, Rev Dr Hyeun Kim, says traditional pastoral care – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual – has always been part of what the church does.

visits made to play scrabble with a member of the congregation home-bound through disabilities.

Albany's pastoral care includes doing working bees at people's homes, offering help with live-in care when needed, helping shower an older church-goer following surgery, offering babysitting, visiting and collecting food for the needy. It will echo much of what is done in parishes around the country, but Albany is proactive in seeking out new initiatives and meet ongoing challenges.

They have established Elder Lists where elders keep an eye on church members and matches are made where needs are identified for early follow-up.

"Supporting people with mental health and addiction problems is one of our current challenges," says Carrie. "Two members have trained in Mental Health First Aid and this is being promoted alongside traditional first aid/health and safety initiatives. The fact that mental illness commonly leads to highly-distorted views about God, religion and Christianity, is a very specific area that is difficult to address. Some skills can definitely be learned but will be harder for someone without the necessary patience and ability to accept and understand another's position."

Other steps are being taken to support those affected by marriage break-ups, and the growing numbers seeking budgeting advice. Because the church has a significant number of Asian members, specific areas of need have been identified and are being acted upon, including regular English practice sessions.

Pastoral care training

Training pastoral care workers or volunteers is done principally in-house, with elders leading training sessions and supervision often provided.

Nick says Mahurangi Presbyterian's pastoral team is led by a co-ordinator. They try to run regular training workshops and have put people through chaplaincy and pastoral courses through Alphacrucis Bible College (AOG).

Carrie says while pastoral care workers often deal with age-old human situations and emotions, the requirement to use new technology and methods, such as communicating via email, can prove testing.

Communicating in general terms is a challenge at St John's Church in Bucklands Beach. Rev Lorraine Francis says Mandarin Chinese make up a sizeable ethnic group in her area, a group they have been working with both within and through their congregation for the past seven years. Communication is difficult at times and the workload has seen much of the pastoral care delegated to Mandarin-speaking church members.

Janet Thompson, former pastoral care leader at Glendowie Presbyterian, Auckland, and a long-time member of the New Zealand Counselling Association, believes pastoral care has changed in recent decades, and says there is a need for training to handle particular issues. She used her extensive skills to oversee Glendowie's pastoral care network, but is on the point of relocating to Wellington for a well-earned retirement.

"We have been doing ongoing pastoral care training at Glendowie for quite some time, and I have seen the benefits that

training has given," she says. "It seems the level of training in pastoral care varies in different parishes... just what is offered is often determined by the minister."

Pastoral care in migrant communities sometimes requires particular attention. Many migrants have faced violence in their home countries, while others struggle with deep cultural differences. Those are factors calling for special training.

Changes have affected pastoral care workers in other ways, too. Time-poor pastoral workers are stretched to support others, and risk management is an issue, with some female carers expressing reservations about doing solo visits to male parishioners. Complexities around language difficulties, and the implications to everyone of a politically correct world add additional strain to the process.

Dr Lynne Taylor believes it is possible to train pastoral care workers to meet these changing demands.

"There is a lot of good material available to pastoral caregivers. Perhaps the particular need today is around coming alongside those providing pastoral care and supporting them on their journey, both in terms of their own personal resources and wellbeing and their knowledge of who and to where they can refer care-seekers.

"Pastoral care is a living, forever thing. It will change as society does. The delivery may change, but the concept will remain the same."

**Read or download the Church's Code of Ethics in Pastoral Care <https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/for-parishes/code-of-ethics>*

Viv Posselt Spanz



Low cost power for low-income neighbourhood

Several hundred low-income households in Hastings could benefit from a ground-breaking project aimed at offering low-cost power.

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Hastings is nesting a project that aims to build a solar panel farm to bring low-cost electricity to around 1,500 people in the Hastings low-income neighbourhood of Flaxmere.

Rev Jill McDonald has ministered at St Andrew's for just over a year. Since moving to Hastings, both she and her husband Chris Lambourne have been struck by two things – first, the disparity between the rich and poor in Hawke's Bay, and second, the region's sunny hot climate.

Their proposed solar farm project, currently named Power to the People (PttP), brings those two elements together.

Chris, who has a background in the electricity industry, was concerned about rising electricity prices that are increasingly unaffordable to low-income households.

"Even after adjusting for inflation, electricity prices have more than doubled in the last 35 years. And this doubling is predicted to occur again over the next 30 years," he says. "PV [photovoltaic] solar panel prices keep falling; electricity prices keep rising... sooner or later, PV farms will be common in Aotearoa."

Jill, together with a team from St Andrew's, was invited to August's *Lighthouse 18* – a Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership initiative, aimed at equipping churches in

mission innovation. Their presentation of PttP at Lighthouse 18 – and at other subsequent presentations – has elicited support that suggests the project may well be a "goer".

Jill says it hits three St Andrew's mission objectives: "First, we see it as providing loving service to people in need. Second, it will deliver service in a manner that benefits the environment, and third, we encourage our members to be individual agents of mission. St Andrew's looks at what skills, passions and opportunities we each have to be missionaries every day, sharing Christ's love wherever they are."

Chris, the more practical half of the duo, says Jill's comment aligns with his view of a mission plan: "That last one is really about me getting off my butt and doing something with what God has given me. To many people, religion lacks relevance. Here, we are using technology to address a pressing social issue, and in a way that cares for the environment."

Still in its feasibility stage, PttP envisions mounting solar panels on around two hectares of leased land in the area. Jill says research has shown that the panels can be positioned above ground level, allowing sheep to graze underneath while offering shelter from the sun.

Being nested within St Andrew's means that a PttP governance team of parish council elders and parishioners is overseeing the project and supporting PttP to find funding pathways. St Andrew's PttP has also liaised with other churches and groups, gathering expert

advice and opening doors that might help bring the project to fruition.

Chris says around \$40,000 is needed during this feasibility stage to cover marketing, engineering, setting up financial models, legal structures and the like. Once there, they will be at the "go or no-go" decision stage.

"Pushing on to building the infrastructure and setting up the homes as our consumers will cost about \$2.5 million," he estimates. "We are looking for funding for both the feasibility stage and the actual build. We're looking at many different routes to get that funding; that might include 'selling' individual PV panels at \$50 a pop – there will be about 4500 panels – through to seeking large grants."

"If everything goes well, the feasibility study will be completed by the time this article goes to print, with the build project and customer recruitment taking about nine months."

Interest has also been shown by a local high school, where students might find ways to use elements of the project as part of their technology and robotics curriculum.

Jill concludes: "We as a Church need to be committed to social justice, where all people can experience fullness of life, in particular those who are marginalized. We as a Church need to stand up against the powers that oppress and we as a Church need to work for environmental responsibility. PttP is a mission project that hits those goals."

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)



Power to the People solar project manager Chris Lamborne, right back, with some of Hastings' St Andrew's Presbyterian Church's youth leaders and members. They hope to bring low-cost electricity to around 1,500 Flaxmere residents.



General Assembly 18 decides...

General Assembly opened with the installation of new Moderator, the Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaio.

As its first order of business on 3 October, at an event attended by many of his friends and family who had travelled to Christchurch, Fakaofu was installed as the Church's Moderator. The special service at St Andrew's Centennial Chapel involved the transfer of a ceremonial cloak (Te Korowai Tapu) and the laying on of hands by past Moderators.

Fakaofu will be Moderator until the 2020 General Assembly, when Moderator-designate, the Rev Hamish Galloway will take up the position.

Appointment of Te Reo Commissioner approved

Assembly agreed to appoint a Te Reo Maori Commissioner to promote and extend use of the Maori language within the Church.

"A commissioner is a practical way to build our Te Reo capacity," said Rev Andrew Harrex from Southern Presbytery, which brought the proposal to Assembly. Moderator of Te Aka Puaho Marina Rakuraku spoke in support of the proposal.

It is envisaged that the Commissioner would be an encourager and could source or write material to be shared.

Commissioners warmly welcomed the proposal saying that they would appreciate additional resources to support Te Reo use during their worship.

Assembly says "no" to End of Life Choice Bill

Assembly strongly affirmed that it does not support provision for euthanasia and

medically assisted suicide as proposed in the End of Life Choice Bill, currently being considered by Parliament.

This decision was taken on the grounds that legally sanctioned provision for doctors to actively end people's lives or assist their suicide is ethically unacceptable and would in the long term be dangerous for public safety, especially for those who are seriously ill, depressed, disabled or very elderly.

Assembly urged Parliament to respect the dignity and value of all human lives, to protect the lives of society's most vulnerable, and not to pass the Bill.

The Doctrine Core Group's paper, which Assembly considered in dialogue groups, will be made available to congregations for further study.

Sharing the Church's wealth

A task group will be appointed to examine the Church's collective wealth and establish a theology and practice of sharing property and money. The task group will consult widely within the Church and make recommendations to the 2020 Assembly for a national framework for sharing resources.

Commissioners considered the proposal, brought by PressGo, in dialogue groups before a decision was reached.

Pacific Presbytery strengthened

General Assembly gave its support for the Pacific Islands Synod to be renamed the Pacific Presbytery.

Assembly also approved changes to membership regulations, which will improve the ability of individuals and groups who are members of other

presbyteries to participate in the life of the Pacific Presbytery.

A task group found that membership regulations placed unintended barriers to participation in the Pacific Presbytery. Under new rules agreed to at Assembly, individuals or ethnic fellowship groups can now join as associate members – even if their church has voted not to join the Presbytery. This means that those within multicultural congregations have an easy pathway to participate in the life of the Pacific Presbytery.

Church supports Korean reunification

General Assembly expressed its support for steps made towards peace between North and South Korea.

Assembly asked that a prayer for peace be written and distributed to all congregations so that New Zealand Presbyterians can pray together as one body of Christ for peace on the Korean peninsula.

New process for Moderator election

Assembly agreed to implement a new process for electing future Moderators of General Assembly.

Changes were aimed at streamlining the process and improving diversity in nominations.

Church councils will now be invited to submit up to four suitable nominees to their presbytery or synod, and the step of shortlisting candidates before stage-one voting has been removed (it was needed when there were 23 presbyteries, but is no longer necessary).

A preferential voting system will be used and church councils will list their top four candidates in order of preference.

In addition to changing the Moderator election process, Assembly clarified its understanding of the Moderator's role and tasks.





Refreshed understanding of the Westminster Confession

Assembly was asked, and agreed, to re-interpret some clauses of the Westminster Confession that relate to the Catholic Church's beliefs and practices.

During debate it was noted that the "fiery clauses" represent a very different time and place.

Assembly approved that statements within the Westminster Confession of Faith relating to monastic vows, the Pope, inter-denominational marriage and the Catholic Mass are to be seen in their historical context, not in the light of today's much better respect and stronger relationships between the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and the Catholic Church.

Assembly offers forgiveness to Anglican Church

Anglican Archbishop Most Reverend Philip Richardson, was one of many guests invited to address the Assembly.

In an unprecedented move during his speech on Friday, he said: "Ecumenical partnerships have been on the back burner for too long. I ask the Presbyterian Church's forgiveness for our failures as partners in faith."

In a moving response, Moderator Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaio, graciously accepted the apology and noted that the Presbyterian Church was also in need of forgiveness for our part in that neglect. He then led a prayer for both churches.

A decision on day four of Assembly formally acknowledged the assurance of forgiveness given during that prayer by Fakaofu immediately following the Archbishop's address.

New rules for Co-operative Ventures

Assembly approved a request from the Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New

Zealand to change the procedures under which Cooperative Ventures operate.

Changes agreed to make financial assessments compulsory, not voluntary as at present. The Partner Support Fund, in place since 1988, will be replaced with a new funding model.

The other major change is that the existing role of coordinating partner (denomination) will now be split into two roles: Convening Partner and Appointing Partner.

The changes will take effect from 1 July 2019.

Care for Creation

The Church made a commitment to reduce its impact on the environment, and acknowledged the important role we play as Christians in caring for creation.

Assembly asked that all church councils, church schools and social service agencies connected with the Church implement three achievable and measureable acts of waste reduction and recycling.

The measures approved include eliminating the use of disposable, single use items like Styrofoam cups and plastic straws, cups, and cutlery, and adopting the use of environmentally-friendly cleaning products, soaps and dishwashing liquids. Making recycling bins readily available was also supported by Assembly.

Assembly asked congregations to report their progress in annual reports to presbytery.

Making the Church's voice heard

Assembly agreed to several recommendations aimed at resourcing the Church to speak out on social issues, including encouraging the Moderator to form close working relationships with the heads of other organisations with a social voice, and to be alert to the possibility of issuing joint or complementary statements on issues of the day.

Presbyterian Women also added its voice to the call for the Church to more fully engage with social justice issues.

They asked, and General Assembly agreed, to support and encourage presbyteries to institute an agile process to facilitate participation in civil democracy through submissions on public issues.

Mission Enterprise Fund contributions

Assembly approved changes that address an anomaly in the exemption clause for contribution to the Mission Enterprise Fund.

The revised wording clarifies that manse sale proceeds used to fund a new worship centre do qualify for the exemption, and vice versa. Under previous rules, this wasn't possible.

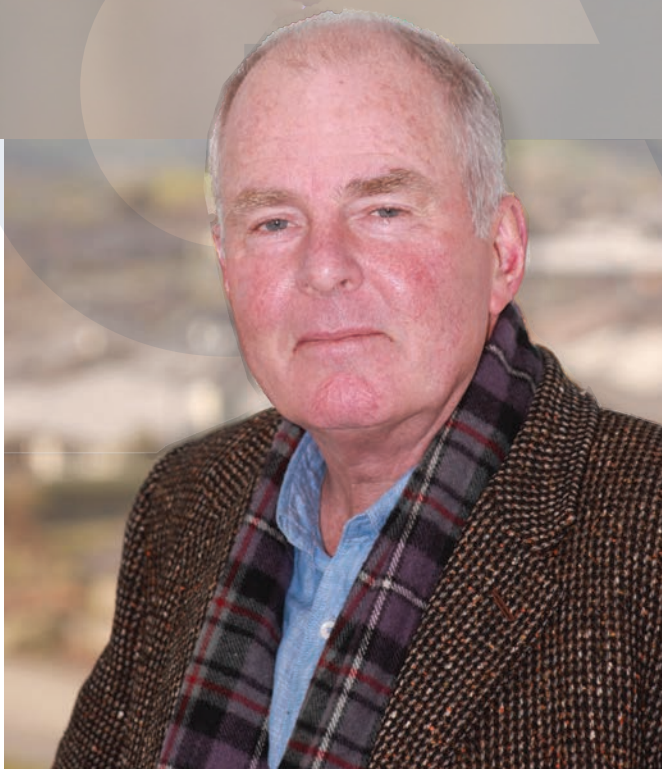
Assembly noted that some parishes have been unfairly disadvantaged by the inequity of the original wording and recommended to PressGo that it make grants to parishes, in line with the spirit and intent of the revised exemption clause. Parishes must apply by 31 May 2019 if they believe they are eligible.

Further study rejected

Assembly decided against asking presbyteries to facilitate the purchase, distribution and study of the book *Changing our Minds* by evangelical ethics professor, David Gushee.

Speakers reminded commissioners that the Church has been studying and debating issues of sexuality for 27 years, and that since 1991 the Church has not wavered in its "decision that marriage is between a man and woman".

Assembly made these and many other decisions at General Assembly 2018. Full details of all Assembly decisions are available on the take home information page of the Church's website www.presbyterian.org.nz. Videos and images of keynote addresses and other speakers are also available for download.



Rev Hamish Galloway is the Church's new Moderator designate.

Moderator designate announced at GA18

On Saturday 6 October at the 2018 General Assembly in Christchurch, the Rev Hamish Galloway was announced as the Moderator designate of the Church. He will take up the role of Moderator in late 2020.

Hamish is senior minister at Hope Presbyterian in Christchurch. Prior to this, for 21 years he was chaplain at St Andrew's College, the venue of this year's General Assembly.

The announcement in his home city provided a special opportunity for a variety of generations of family, friends, colleagues and church family to be present for his incoming address to the Assembly.

In acknowledging his whanau who joined him on stage he said: "I do not stand here alone, but surrounded by people in my family and people of this Presbyterian Church that have nurtured me for a lifetime. In particular, there is the support of my whanau today – not all could be here, but it is a blessing to have this lovely group of family, friends and colleagues with me... I love the representation of the generations in my whanau. They tell a story that is important to who we are and what we can become".

Born in Timaru, Hamish studied at the University of Canterbury. After graduating in 1979 with a Bachelor of Laws, he worked as a law clerk and solicitor in Christchurch. He then studied at the Presbyterian Theological Hall from 1981, completing his training in 1983.

Hamish ministered at St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Timaru from 1983 until 1988.

From 1989 to 2010, he served at St Andrew's College, Christchurch, as Head of Religious Education and chaplain, and then as Head of Pastoral Care and chaplain.

He studied through Massey University for a Master of Business Studies, graduating in 1999.

Hamish was called to Hope Presbyterian Church, Christchurch, in 2011.

He has spent time studying and working overseas: in 1989, he was minister at Lake Cowichan United Church, Vancouver Island; in 1999 he was chaplain at Scots College in Sydney for six months. In 2009, he was minister at Bromley Methodist Church, London.

Hamish has served the Church in a variety of roles, including as moderator of the Christchurch Presbytery, clerk of the South Canterbury Presbytery, two separate terms on the Council of Assembly, as co-convenor of the Facilitation Committee, a member of the Doctrine Committee, and as the 2004 General Assembly co-ordinator.

Hamish says he will bring to the role of Moderator, "A vibrant and passionate love of God and leadership, and strategic thinking skills honed over years of ministry in different contexts".

"My range of ministry experience in parish and chaplaincy, in a variety of countries and denominations, provides a base that will helpfully inform my time as leader."

Hamish plans to focus on a number of areas during his Moderatorship, including, "Being pastorally attentive to the wide diversity of people in the Church."

"A particularly important focus for me will be encouraging the Church to steward resources effectively and wisely to empower the next generation of the Church. It is an urgent task for the older generations. Hangaa e te Atua he whakapaparanga mo nga wa e heke mai nei - Build O God a generation for the times that are coming.

"I love the sections in our national strategic plans that talk about releasing our resources for mission for new generations of church. I want to be part of a Church that does that in generous, strategic and mission-empowering ways. And I will do my very best to lead in a way that enables and encourages this to happen."

Download a copy of the Moderator designate address from the Church's website and watch the full video of the Moderator designate's address to the General Assembly on the Church's Vimeo channel.

Angela Singer [Spanz](#)



National Church staff take on new direction

Three of the four members of the new national Core Leadership Team (CLT) who will lead national Church staff: (left to right) Sandra Kennerley, Rev Wayne Matheson and Gordon Fitch.

Two new directors have been appointed to the Church's national staff and the Assembly Executive Secretary role has been revised after a review of national Church operations led by the Council of Assembly.

Sandra Kennerley, who was appointed as the Church's finance manager in April 2018, is the new director shared services. Gordon Fitch, who has worked for Presbyterian Youth Ministry for eight and a half years as youth manager, has been appointed new director resourcing.

Both roles report to the Rev Wayne Matheson, Assembly Executive Secretary (AES), as will the director of leadership – an appointment to be made in 2019. Together, the four roles will form a new national Core Leadership Team (CLT) to lead national Church staff.

Wayne says, "There is excitement and enthusiasm for these appointments and the quality of those appointed".

The two director roles were advertised to the Church's current national staff and following short listing of candidates and interviews, Sandra and Gordon were appointed in September.

The new appointments, Wayne says, will create "greater team cohesion and a wider collaboration as we seek to serve the Church".

During the review, a theme for change began to emerge. "We saw the need to build a collaborative, agile and integrated national staff service team, working together to assist the General Assembly, presbyteries and parishes in outworking

the mission of the Church. The existing model did not reflect this," Wayne says.

Wayne adds that the Council supported the reshaping of the AES role after considering a number of reports, suggestions and recommendations concerning the position "The changes made will ensure that it is more manageable moving forward," he says.

The role previously had 12 staff reporting directly, and this has now been reduced to the three directors of the CLT. The AES will lead this team while continuing to be the Clerk of Assembly, working closely with the Council of Assembly, supporting Assembly committees, managing ecumenical and multicultural relationships, and maintaining relationships with presbyteries.

Sandra Kennerley, Director Shared Services, will have six staff report to her. She will lead and manage a team that oversees: general administration, accounting, finance, investment, risk management and compliance, insurance, HR, communications, information technology, health and safety, charities administration, organisation of and support for the General Assembly, and Sandra will also provide administrative support to the Church's judicial processes. She will continue as finance manager.

Taking on the new role is for Sandra, "A huge opportunity to know every aspect of the Church. My experience is in finance and although I've never managed such a diverse range of roles, I'm well placed to grow my skills. I'm looking forward to it," she says. "I'm also looking forward to

building a very collaborative supportive environment and freeing up the AES to focus on his role."

Gordon Fitch, Director Resourcing, will have five staff report to him. He will lead and manage inspiring and empowering the mission focus of the General Assembly, presbyteries and parishes – including work with children, youth, Global Mission and strategic mission planning. He will remain youth manager.

The role is to Gordon an "exciting opportunity to help the team – the leaders of our children and youth, Global Mission, Church schools, and the PressGo mission catalyst – work together and be effective in how they communicate with each other and the Church," Gordon says.

"It's how we've worked in Presbyterian Youth Ministry – we've achieved so much more as a team by working with other departments in the Church. I'm looking forward to no longer having departments with separate strategic planning and separate initiatives; we are going to find ways to work in alignment and support each other in our shared goals."

Before working for the Presbyterian Church, Gordon worked for 12 years in youth ministry for two churches in the UK and the USA. "At each of those churches I was running youth ministry across three separate parishes so I have experience with bringing together a range of people at different locations to reach consensus."

"In the short term, I see success for the new resourcing team being the team working with a shared strategy, providing presbyteries and congregations with consistent advice, resources, events and projects.

"Big picture, as a Church we need to wrestle with our identity, what does it mean to be a Kiwi Church? How do we all express our bi-cultural and multicultural commitments? How do we live out our mission to make Jesus known?"

Angela Singer [Spanz](#)

KHANDALLAH MAKES PLACE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

When a child is baptised, the congregation promises to raise the child in a Christian community says Rev Ryhan Prasad, minister of The Village Presbyterian Church in Khandallah.

The baptism of two young women into the faith at Khandallah Church at Easter was the fruit of carefully nurtured seeds of change.

When Rev Ryhan Prasad became minister of The Village Presbyterian Church in Khandallah six years ago, his son was the only child in what was an ageing congregation.

"Like many churches we needed to reach out to new families and young people," says Ryhan, "to be kids' friendly."

Session clerk Roy Ferguson says his church's willingness to change was the fundamental ingredient in backing their young minister's call to action.

"They've been willing to come with us on a journey," Roy reflects, "and along the way we've been careful to retain the good things we had, the Presbyterian qualities of care and community. Our services now have less order and more noise but all the joy that children bring."

Music is what first drew newcomers Lucy and Daniel Woollaston to the church with their two girls.

"Mum and I were at the supermarket and we saw the Mainly Music flag over the road," says Lucy. "She said, 'Let's go over'."

Esther and Mirriam are now regulars at the Thursday morning Mainly Music sessions run by children and families' ministry worker Nikki Tyacke, and for Lucy - now expecting a third child - the church has become an important source of community while Daniel is at work.

Sunday services begin with song and children's time. The songs are accompanied by sign language and the peace of Christ is shared in te reo, which Nikki says the kids are learning

to make the church a welcoming place for everyone.

The church's vision for its Sunday School is a place where kids look forward to coming.

"My husband has memories of being forced to go," says Nikki. "I want it to be their place, where they belong and have purpose. Music is also great outreach, sharing the good news without pushing it," she adds.

Lucy and Daniel find their anchor in Ryhan's sermons. "They're fabulous," says Lucy. "He doesn't shy away from deep and scary topics such as racism or suicide, but they're spoken with grace and love."

"Presbyterians have traditionally been good preachers who teach what it means to know God in the context of people's lives," says Ryhan. "As German theologian Karl Barth says, 'preach with the bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other'."

In early 2016, Khandallah Village Church also began hosting a cross-parish Youth Ministry with Ngaio and Wadestown parishes.

"It was born of necessity," says Youth Ministry worker Brett Reid. "None of the three congregations had enough young people to go it alone."

The national Presbyterian Youth Ministry manager Gordon Fitch says many churches can only afford part-time positions. "The advantages of combining resources into a full-time job are you're more likely to get someone qualified, experienced and committed," he explains.

Volunteers from each parish ensure the Friday evening sessions are securely planted in all three churches.

"I think the collaboration helps embody what the church is as a body of Christ - open to everyone and freely given," Brett reflects.

Being youth-led was the vital component in making it work, though.

"Our young people created the culture and decided how they wanted to run it, which sits well within the Presbyterian tradition of disseminating power and decision-making, and growing leaders organically," says Brett. "We make space for the kids to step up into their God-given potential and embody the capacity to serve without having to meet specific criteria."

That space includes a 'God Time' at the end of the evening, where young people can bring the questions they're wrestling with in their lives.

"Young people are searching for authentic experience and here on a Friday night they can share their baggage and make mistakes and find out it's okay," explains Brett.

The group is also built on everybody's strengths. "I'm practical, the group is creative and together we're holistically beautiful," Brett says.

Ryhan is a former youth worker and Brett's description is an apt one for the church as a whole, he says.

"When a child is baptised, the congregation promises to raise the child in a Christian community. At Village we embrace the beautiful truth that it takes a village to raise a child or guide a young person. It's in our DNA as Presbyterians."

Jade Reidy [Spanz](#)

Old church, new Cheviot centre

Spirited efforts by Cheviot's Presbyterians have prevented an old stone church building from being sold into private hands. It has instead become a vibrant community centre.

The story of how Knox Presbyterian Church building became the Cheviot Knox Community Centre was celebrated at the centre's official opening on 9 September, timed to coincide with the town's annual Spring Festival.

Knox Presbyterian Church was built in the early 1950s, replacing the old churches that had been there since the 1890s. It soon became a much-loved landmark, and both the church and the slightly younger hall served the community well until falling congregation numbers prompted a heart-wrenching decision. The church building would have to be sold.

Its ageing congregation made the church unsustainable, and in May 2010, advisories were sent to locals outlining two options – either the church could merge with the Kowai (Amberley/Sefton) parish, or it would have to close. A meeting held several months later gave a clear mandate for the Cheviot/Kowai merge.

Rev Nancy-Jean Whitehead, minister of the Kowai-Cheviot Presbyterian Church said it soon became apparent that even with those measures in place, the church couldn't continue.

"Meetings were held with the Alpine Presbytery Executive Officer, and the Property and Finance Convenor to find a way forward," she says. "This led to Presbytery being asked for permission to sell the church and the hall building. Permission was received from the Presbyterian Church Property Trustees in May 2017.

"There were a number of people interested in purchasing the property to convert into a house," Nancy-Jean adds. "However, the local community was not happy with this – as a result the Cheviot Knox



Pictured at September's opening of the Cheviot Knox Community Centre – before the old fundraising sign – are Cheviot Knox Community Trustees, from left, Vince Daly, Nick Harris, John Wright, Jane Maxwell and Debbie Anderson.

Community Trust was formed to try and raise funds to purchase the buildings for community use."

Trust chairperson, Jane Maxwell, said she believed the church and hall was "too good an asset to lose".

"Three of us – Nick Harris, John Wright and myself – took it to the next level and after consultation with the Presbyterian Church Property Trustees, came up with a price."

An agreement was reached on a purchase price of \$250,000, one that reflected the community's initial input into the church. The Trust sought to raise \$285,000, knowing it would have to cover the cost of repairs and maintenance, and of setting up the Trust. Also agreed was that the church would remain available for the congregation to use for twice-monthly services. It was considered a good outcome for both parties, and a settlement date was set for 1 September, 2018.

The fundraising campaign had to be "short and sharp" says Jane, whose experience in fundraising for St John several years earlier proved invaluable. The bulk of the money came from external funders, and included a \$100,000 grant from New Zealand Lotteries, \$50,000 from the Sutherland Self-Help Trust, \$40,000 from the Rata Foundation, and \$55,000 from two private donors.

The balance was funded locally, and a campaign launched where people could

'buy a brick' for \$75 – the price kept modest in recognition of several preceding tough economic years. Commemorative bricks have since been laid in the shape of a Celtic cross outside the new centre as a symbol of the community's involvement.

Judy Grigor, a lifelong Cheviot congregation member, is delighted at the outcome. "I've been a member of parish council, session and a regular worship leader. We are extremely grateful to the Trust for their work to keep the buildings in the community."

A service to mark the end of an era for the Knox Presbyterian Church held a week before the centre's official opening was seen as a positive affirmation that welcomed in a new era for both worshippers and community.

At the 9 September official opening of the Cheviot Knox Community Centre, Hurunui Mayor and Presbyterian elder Winton Dalley described the centre as a special building in a village which is a visitor destination.

The community centre will be used regularly by a range of groups and organisations and will be hired out as a venue for weddings and other events. The vestry is rented out as office space.

"We have to be a little bit commercial in order to be community," says Jane. "My generation has secured it; it's now up to the next generation to continue to use it."

Viv Posselt Spanz

KINDNESS MADE CONTAGIOUS IN AUCKLAND'S CBD

Often it is the smallest acts of kindness that touch the human heart the most. This was abundantly clear at Splice ministry's Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Day event in Auckland on 1 September.

That first official day of spring saw volunteers hand out 5000 Little Pots of Kindness (honey, in this instance) to passers-by in the city's Queen Street. The gesture, done amid an outpouring of magnanimity and messages of kindness, was intended to inspire each recipient to pass the bonhomie on to others.

And it did. In something akin to a Mexican wave of goodwill, those tiny pots of honey distributed on 1 September became the catalyst for more random acts of kindness in the Auckland CBD throughout September.

"Kindness is contagious," says Mik Smellie, leader of the RAK campaign and ardent city centre enthusiast. "If we start the ball rolling, it instigates the next round of kindness... and so the ripples spread."

Explaining the campaign, he adds: "Kindness is something we do for each other without really thinking about it. RAK Day is to get people thinking about it a bit more... about the possibility that elevating the levels of kindness in the community can make life more enjoyable. People get as much fun from giving kindness as they do from receiving it."



Splice team leader and chaplain at large Jill Kayser, left, with Splice community connector Sandy Ritchie, right, and a woman who so loved her RAK Day pot of honey that she serenaded the Splice team with a song.

Splice launched the RAK campaign in Auckland in 2016; it is now a 1 September fixture. Jill Kayser, chaplain at large and Splice team leader, says kindness sits well with the ministry's values of compassion, courage, and community, and the RAK campaign "creates opportunities for us not to just promote kindness in the city centre, but to collaborate with other stakeholders to build a neighbourhood of kindness and caring in our city centre".

With the little honey pots at the heart of RAK Day – which were again donated by the Pimm family of Opotiki's Hikutaia Honey – the 2018 campaign attracted wide support. Auckland Council got behind it with a donation of \$5000, and encouraged by Heart of the City, New World Metro came on board with in-store and other offers, both to swell the kindness coffers and help the city's needy on a longer-term basis. The Auckland Street Choir flash-mobbed crowds at the Victoria Street intersection on the day itself, while 11 "cafes of kindness" offered random coffees and accompanying kindness cards.

This year, Splice team members (aka splicers) also worked on hoardings mounted outside the Auckland City Library for several weeks; they became the landing pad for written quotes around kindness, while thousands on social media viewed videos of the campaign. Each day throughout kindness week Mik dressed as a pink panther-zebra-cross called Geoff and shared gestures of kindness through the streets. He described Geoff as an envoy of kindness and posted daily videos of his activities onto the Splice website.

The promotion of kindness is at the heart of the ministry's efforts to connect the 55,000 people now living in Auckland's city centre. Many lead isolated lives in high-rise apartment blocks, and it was a challenge, Mik said, to find ways to combat the "tyranny of the electronic door" and get information on neighbourhood activities to those needing it.

The same rationale was behind the founding of Splice ministry in 2013 by Rev John MacDonald, a Presbyterian minister who was called to the then newly-developed role of chaplain at large, an initiative of St James Presbyterian Church and Methodist Mission Northern. He identified a need for authentic community and connection in the city centre.

Jill Kayser, who formally headed up the Church's Kids Friendly ministry and is now minister at Aotea St James, is well placed to advance those values. She says Splice's aim to create a neighbourhood of belonging in Auckland's CBD also sees it play an advocacy role, one which seeks to influence decision-makers and progress social justice. "Kindness fits perfectly with our values, and we believe our RAK campaign gets people talking and thinking about kindness."

Jill sees no reason why similar campaigns couldn't be run elsewhere. "Just do it," she suggests. "Wouldn't it be great if Christians were known for their kindness, and invited others to be kind, too?"

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)



INDIAN COMMUNITY WELCOMED TO CHURCH



Mairangi and Castor Bays Presbyterian Church minister, Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph, and Rev Raju George guide children attending a Hindi language service in the re-enactment of a biblical verse.

A mission outreach to the Indian community on Auckland's North Shore has resulted from an initiative planned by the Mairangi and Castor Bays Presbyterian Church.

In little under a year, the church has increased support for its twice-monthly Hindi language services and paved the way for greater community connection across different religious groups.

Those attending the services are mainly Indian Christians, but several Hindu families and one Muslim family also attend. All share a fellowship meal afterwards in a spirit of community and fellowship not tied to any one faith. Some segments of the services are in English, which also helps with language familiarity.

"This is about making meaningful contact with others in our community," explains Mairangi's minister, Rev Dr Tokerau Joseph. "If those coming to the services are encouraged by Christianity, that's great. If they are finding their sense of community through shared meals or pastoral care, that is also great. This is a learning curve for them, and for our parish."

The cross-cultural relationship building would be happening without the efforts of one of Mairangi and Castor Bays Presbyterian's congregation, Rev Raju George. A fluent Hindi speaker himself, Raju was ordained a minister in Delhi and is currently in New Zealand on a working visa, accompanied by his wife Roopali and daughter Angelica.

Prompted by an awareness that many Auckland-based Indians found their

limited English to be a barrier to worship, he approached Mairangi's parish clerk Stewart Milne and the minister at the time, Rev Karel Lorier, with the idea that offering services in Hindi could be one way to reach out to their nearest Indian community – those living on the North Shore.

The idea aligned well with the church's mission pan, revised in 2017 to find ways to make the congregation more reflective of the ethnic mix in its community, and was a good fit with Tokerau's doctoral thesis on how to integrate different cultures in churches. The aim, says Stewart, was not only to offer worship and fellowship to the Hindi-speaking community, but also to make the ministry of the church relevant to the growing multicultural and multi-lingual reality of the city.

Further research determined there was, at that stage, no other Hindi-speaking service offered on the North Shore. They also sought advice from the national Church office and were put in touch with PressGo Catalyst Lisa Wells, who helped refine their focus and assisted in putting together a project budget.

PressGo agreed to match Mairangi's financial input and granted the church about half the project's total costs of \$15,760, covering pulpit supply for Raju and meeting food costs for supplies that are not donated for the after-service Indian meals prepared by Raju and Roopali.

Lisa says their application was successful first because the plan showed good discernment, it was a great project with some "out-of-the box thinking", and they

took the advice given. "They have, as they said in their plan, a 'do-it-ourselves' attitude, and were very committed to the project."

Raju has a one-year agreement with the church to take the services, which are supervised by Tokerau. The situation will be reviewed by parish council early next year, but hopes are high that the initiative will continue.

"When Raju first raised it, we thought it was something our church could do in terms of mission," says Tokerau. "We wanted to make it happen and are now on this journey. It started towards the end of last year and has gained momentum ... we are seeing a very encouraging response."

"The North Shore is an increasingly diverse community. It is important that we as a parish reflect that, but it is also about trying to empower this desire for community integration that we share with Raju."

Around 24 adults and 12 children attend the Hindi language services. Information is shared at those occasions about Mairangi's other services and other church-related activities.

Stewart says: "While there has been some participation by our Indian friends in our other church activities, we are keen to see this increase as we build community and meet pastoral needs. There are common problems that all migrant communities face and we want them to know we are here for them, irrespective of their religious adherence."

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)



Resurrection comes from blood

Night prayer is a way to complete the day and enter the quietness of the night. My night prayer this year has included poetry by Maori writer, Robert Sullivan. Rather than encourage sleep, a recent poem, "Waka 99", jolted me wide-awake.

The poem invites a pondering of theology matters, given the four-fold use of the word "resurrection". As a theologian and Christian minister, I am curious whenever anyone uses resurrection, especially someone from outside the church.

The poem locates resurrection in relation to the past. It begins by asking if the ancient waka, the vessel by which Maui fished up Aotearoa, could be resurrected. If so, where might this ancient waka emerge from?

A museum?

The mountains?

The Maui story reborn?

I was so excited, I read "Waka 99" to my family. Not once, but twice.

I also shared it with a recent church meeting. Knox Presbyterian, Dunedin, have been reforming their AGM. They gather not in straight rows on a Sunday, but around food, in the evening, seated in a semi-circle so people can see each other.

I was asked to be an after-dinner AGM mint, to provide some outside input, between the informality of their eating and the formality of their meeting. Given their AGM commitment to reforming, the "Waka 99" poem seemed a good place with which to begin. After all, what should the Christian belief in resurrection mean in the light of budgets and business, proposals and points of order? Is an AGM about maintaining a museum, pointing to the mountain top moments from their past?

The "Waka 99" poem responds to these questions, not with a three-fold amen, but with a five-fold repetition of the phrase "touched the veins" and a final rhetorical flourish:

"The resurrection will come out of their blood."¹

The poem offers a contemporary narration of whakapapa. Resurrection is located in relation to the bloodlines of human ancestry. It understands identity as an inclusive weaving, the past not as museum or monument, but as humans carrying forward the story that forms them.

Being Presbyterian, I followed my "Waka 99" reading by reaching for my Bible.

¹ Robert Sullivan, *Star Waka*, Auckland University Press, 1999.

What are the Bible passages that deal both with the past, with resurrection and with human identity reconceived in relation to blood?

An obvious Scripture is the Emmaus Road. Four times in Luke 24, the phrase "as it happened" is used to reference the past. In addition, the four Eucharistic verbs from the Last Supper are rehearsed, as Jesus took bread, blessed, broke and gave it (Luke 24:30). Only then, once the Passover sacrifice had been remembered, were their eyes opened. Hearts began to burn and weary legs returned the disciples some twelve kilometres to Jerusalem.

They arrive with good news. The resurrection is now no longer the stuff of museum, mountain or myth. Instead, - now - the life of Christ is the life force of their story, the mauri of their Christianity. As disciples, they are now looking for the ways that Jesus might be made known, recognised in the ordinary sacramental acts of welcoming a stranger and sharing hospitality.

"Waka 99" has awoken me. First, it has reformed my night prayer. I now process my day, pondering those moments when Christ was becoming more known in the everyday of walking and talking. Second, it is reforming my approach to budgets and business. Now I seek for signs of Christ made visible. Such is resurrection from blood in the Emmaus story: a carrying forward of the Jesus story as it is reforming us.

- Rev Dr Steve Taylor, Principal of the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership.

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Spanz

Spanz publication frequency to reduce in 2019

Council of Assembly advises that as part of its policy of a balanced operational budget, resource allocated to SPANZ has been reduced for the year ended 30 June 2019. This will mean a reduction from four editions to three in 2019 using the current model.

Richard McLean –
Council of Assembly Convenor

The next edition of SPANZ will be published in May 2019.

SPANZ will not be published autumn 2019 and winter 2019.



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Cook Islands congregation has new home



Rev Robert Robati-Mani and his wife Marina outside the new Porirua home for the Cook Islands Presbyterian Church.

Wellington members of the Cook Islands Presbyterian Church celebrated the commissioning of their new building on 22 September 2018, marking the end of more than a year spent searching for a permanent home.

The church has moved into the Porirua building that was formerly used by St Martin's Presbyterian Church.

The shift signified a new beginning for a building that needed a bit of a makeover, and a much longed-for new start for the Cook Islands Presbyterian Church (CIPC).

According to CIPC minister Rev Robert Robati-Mani, his congregation felt as though they had been "in limbo" for some time. They had been using St Oswald's Church in Newlands one day a week for a while when word came that the landlord, Johnsonville Uniting Parish, planned to sell the building.

"We wanted to buy it, but the price was out of our reach," says Robert. "So, we sat in limbo. Where was I going to take the people of this parish? We needed to find a home in which to worship because where we were was going to be sold. We found temporary worship space at Horouta Marae. Praise God for them – they offered their home to us while we searched for a permanent home."

In the meantime, Presbytery Central had "inherited" the St Martin's building after falling congregation membership meant it was no longer used.

Rev Peter MacKenzie, Executive Secretary, Central Presbytery said ideas were sought to ensure that the buildings could continue to be used by the wider Church in some way. After exploring various options and taking into account the needs of CIPC and the building itself, Presbytery decided to strengthen and insulate the building and provide the required access.

"When it was realised that the Newlands premises used by CIPC were no longer going to be available, Presbytery Central supported them in finding a new place to call home," he says. "It was God's providence that Presbytery had a church that could be used."

The decision also had a sense of "coming home" for the Presbyterian Church itself. Peter says a commitment made by Presbytery some years ago to support a Cook Islands ministry had resulted in Wellington Presbytery, as it was then called, assisting with the formation of CIPC and the appointment of their first minister, Rev Toko Ine.

"Presbytery Central affirms the place of cultural congregations within the wider sphere of the Church," he says. "This is not a new thing, and it is not the final challenge. We continue to grapple with how to make connections with Pasifika and Asian cultures which give strength and autonomy to their ministries."

"And from a Presbytery view, the use of the building by CIPC allows the legacy of those who founded St Martin's to continue in the form of a ministry to the community of Porirua and to Cook Islanders in the Wellington region."

Robert says it had not been the CIPC's original vision to relocate to Porirua: at one stage, they had considered trying to purchase land and build a new church – something on which they had sought advice from PressGo.

"It was in this consultation that St Martin's Church was mentioned... and the rest is history, a very good history for us!"

"Our members come from all over the wider Wellington area, although the majority are from Porirua. The move to Porirua was more about finding a place to worship," he says, expressing deep gratitude to the Church and to Presbytery Central's journey of faith in helping CIPC resettle in the old St Martin's church.

Robert said he and his wife Marina never dreamed they would find themselves in a situation where members of the parish they were shepherding would one day have nowhere to go and worship.

He is certain God's hand was in the move.

"This is work in progress, and God has taken this parish and located it in Porirua. The call to be in this area is God's call. We are just settling in and are yet to seek in prayer the next chapter of our lives."

Viv Posselt Spanz

NZ GYMNAST'S FAITH IN SPORT

Susanna Denby is a former New Zealand representative in rhythmic gymnastics and an intern at Papakura East Presbyterian Church. The lessons she learnt in her sport help her in ministry.

"It gave me joy because it was something I loved. It gave me discipline and life skills," Susanna says of her gymnastics career, but she could be talking about her Christian faith, which was with her all the way.

Now 18, and having given up gymnastics because of physical injuries, she is studying at Carey Baptist College and is an intern at Papakura East Presbyterian Church.

She says her faith was cemented on her travels as an international competitor – including to Singapore aged 13, to America when she was 14, and to Eastern Europe the following year.

"I felt my faith grew on these trips because I was the only Christian. Some girls were keen to hear while others mocked, saying I was a goodie-two shoes. It would sometimes get to me, but it wasn't too much to handle. I had enough support around to get me through it – my parents, my siblings and my church family."

Susanna is the eighth of nine children and grew up in Ngaruawahia. She first saw rhythmic gymnasts competing at the 2008 Olympic Games on television. "I fell in love with it, and asked Mum if I could do it. I was in a small club in Hamilton from age 10. After about six months, the coach told me that I had the ability to compete internationally. She said I had the flexibility, worked extremely hard, was easy to work with and was committed. You have to be physically and mentally strong. There's a lot of mental discipline – having to prepare yourself and what you eat."

Once she became fully committed to the sport, around age 12, so were her parents. "They were extremely supportive." She was home-schooled by her mother.

Her parents had been brought up in the Salvation Army, but attended a Presbyterian church when Susanna was a young child. After the family moved to Auckland when Susanna was 13, they went to Papakura East Presbyterian Church – across the road from their house.

Susanna made the decision to get into ministry about a year ago. "It just suddenly dawned on me. The offer of an internship showed up in the church newsletter the week I was praying about it. I went to interviews and the church offered me an internship, and I felt it was right.

Last year Susanna Denby was in the New Zealand team that won third place in the Australian nationals, but her rhythmic gymnastics career ended shortly after due to injury.

Youth minister Abby Fullemann made the process easy. "She supported me through it, giving me advice and all the information I needed. I made the decision very quickly."

"I knew I had a calling – in a way. I have always loved talking about God, sharing my faith with others and helping people through hard times with it," says Susanna.

Last year she was in the New Zealand team that won third place in the Australian nationals, but her rhythmic gymnastics career ended shortly after.

"I broke my foot, and persevered through training after it was broken. I got the hard word from the foot specialist that I should not continue, as my feet could not keep up. I had pushed too hard; it was stress. The bone had fragmented – into little pieces.

"It still hurts today. I have to have surgery, but have been rejected by ACC, so will have to go through the public system and have a long wait or pay to be seen privately for a shorter wait."

Susanna says she felt a pride in representing New Zealand, but also the responsibility that went with that. "There was definitely a weight to it. You wear a team tracksuit and as you walk around you are representing your country. I felt the weight of that pride, for sure. You had to be aware of your actions because you knew people would be judging them."

During her competitive career, fellow parishioners made their support for her clear – in tangible ways. "Lots of them would walk up to me with an envelope with a donation inside, hand it to me and say, 'Best of luck!'"

Susanna still remains involved in the sport; while finishing her first year of studies for ministry, she still coaches the five to 12-year-old girls in Counties-Manukau gymnastics.

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)



SMALL OP SHOP HUGE IN COMMUNITY



Kawakawa Bay Presbyterian Church op shop committee, from left: Helen Carter, Gaywyne Rook, Jeanette Taylor, Doreen Nelson and Trish Simmonds (front). Absent - Ruth Johnston and Keryl Pye.

It began, as these things often do, with a good idea.

Kawakawa Bay Presbyterian Church member Lorraine Richmond was trying to find a home for her excess clothing and shoes. The problem was there was no op-shop in the tiny Kawakawa Bay community, an hour south of Auckland.

So Lorraine got together with a few other women from the church and started Worn Again.

Fast forward 17 years and Worn Again is a thriving hub that each year donates to local charities and needy residents. Over the years, it has raised around \$70,000, which has been used to support local communities and activities.

Helen Carter, secretary of the Kawakawa Bay Presbyterian Church, says that the small enterprise has grown into a key part of the small community of around 1,300 people.

"We only have a small space and don't have much room for storage but we receive donations of clothes, shoes, books and bric-a-brac almost every day, and almost every cent we make goes to the local community," says Helen.

Worn Again is based in a double garage behind The Cottage, which houses the offices of Kawakawa Bay Presbyterian Church. Helen says the church gives them the space for free and covers all their costs.

"That means our overheads are very low. The only things we need to buy are storage bins."

Although a fair number of Aucklanders

pass through en-route to the area's many baches, most of the customers are locals.

"There's a definite need for low-cost items in this community, particularly at Orere Point, which has a number of beneficiaries and families in need." Most items retail for \$1 or \$2, with larger coats attracting the highest \$5 price tag.

Worn Again is staffed by 13 volunteers, who each donate three hours or so a month to the shop, which is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Around one-third of those are church members, with the rest drawn from the local community.

A seven-person committee meets once a month to consider how to distribute the month's sale proceeds. Donations range from \$50 to \$200 and are given to a diverse range of organisations and individuals, including the Kawakawa Bay Orere Health Clinic, the local volunteer fire brigade and coastguard, St John's Ambulance, the Cancer Society and Westpac Rescue Helicopter, as well as the local school and kindergarten.

"Sometimes people ask us for help, but we also work with organisations that have personally touched our lives, such as the Cancer Society or Westpac Rescue Helicopter, because we're pretty isolated out here and we sometimes need to call on the helicopter's services."

But that's not all the op-shop helps. Every winter, Worn Again supports a programme providing free winter pyjamas for school and kindy students. They also provide a gift basket for new mothers in the community, which contains brand new clothes, including locally hand-made knitted booties

and hats, as well as a blanket, toy and children's Bible.

"It's a little welcome to the community from the church," says Helen.

Locals have also benefited from Worn Again's success. One local student, for example, received financial support to get to the Gold Coast for a rowing championship, while a number of local girls have been supported at the world cheerleading championships in Florida, Hawaii and Las Vegas.

"We also help to send a couple of local kids to a Christian Camp in Auckland every year."

Worn Again has often been called on to assist families in urgent need with clothes and household goods and what they can't sell or don't have room to store is often donated to charitable groups in South Auckland including Women's Refuge, Salvation Army, City Mission, Papakura Whanau Centre and the Red Cross.

"We recognise the need outside our community and are happy to help wherever we can."

Although they've never received any unusual donations, Helen says there was one occasion when donations of items were dropped off at volunteer Brenda Legg's house and Brenda mistakenly sold her husband's brand-new boots.

"She thought they were part of the donation, so sold them for \$2! Fortunately, she knew the man who bought them so she managed to get them back for her husband, which was lucky!"

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

Winter dinner draws community together

A mid-winter community dinner will become an annual event in Southland

Lumsden-Balfour-Kingston Presbyterian Church's second mid-winter community dinner attracted one-third more diners than last year.

The dinner, held in late July, was an opportunity to invite the community to gather and meet the church community. About 180 people attended the dinner, 60 more than last year.

"It is a way to get people together and a way for the church to serve the community," says Rev Mike Kirkby-Sing. "Everyone was welcome to come along."

For Mike, a major feature of the event is that he did not have to organise it! "This was something the people in the church wanted to do. I didn't have to do anything – I just gave a brief talk. Our church members are active in organising regular events. We do something new every fifth Sunday, sometimes an outing to another town, including hiring a venue."

Of the 180 attendees, about 50 are regular churchgoers, most others came from the community. A family from Sri Lanka, who work on a local dairy farm, attended – and as a result one member is doing Bible study with Mike. "They want to know about the Christian faith. So that is a positive result."

Church members gifted meat and made salads for the dinner. The menu consisted

of soups and breads for starters, meat and vegetables for the main course and pavlova, apple pie and ice cream for dessert.

Entertainment included skits, songs, poems and readings, crowd-interactive activities and shared stories. Church elder Jonny Elder was the MC. "One of the highlights was a couple of our youth, Taylor Elder with Henry Cowie on guitar, who performed a couple of songs. A Riversdale group did skits that related to the Gospel. It was all local people having a go."

The event was free. People were asked to register if they planned to attend, so that the planning group could get a sense of how many people to cater for. Attendees came from Riversdale, Castle Rock and Mossburn as well as Lumsden, Balfour and Kingston and other districts further afield.

This was Mike's first mid-winter community dinner as he was still at Rotorua District Presbyterian Church, where he did his internship, when the first was held last year.

The deep south is a rural context and the people are really lovely, says Mike. "Mid-winter can be a bit grim, especially in Southland. It is a good time to get people on the farms together. I'm not from a farming background, so I do my best to keep up with the farming lingo!"

Mike is keen to see the dinner become an annual event. "Our church is the main Christian presence in northern Southland. The dinner is a good chance to connect with people. It's all about building trust in a community."

"Next term we are starting Mainly Music, the pre-school music and movement programme. That is another ministry to mainly non-church families – building a bridge from our church to communities out there. Otherwise the church would not register."



Rev Mike Kirkby-Sing with two of his three children – Nathanael and Adele.

"We have been looking at our vision and who we are as a church. There used to be churches in every little village, but because of economic change in the region, Lumsden-Balfour-Kingston is an amalgamation of parishes and congregations. So we have more buildings than we need and many need to be upgraded."

"We are thinking about how we can use our buildings. That will be part of our ministry. They can enhance connections: we can use them to host people or hire out space," says Mike.

For now the church will be building on a dinner that was clearly a great success – with a full hall, plenty of food and entertainment, and stories featuring in the local newspapers.

"The team has already started planning for next year. Once you do something a couple of times, you develop a reputation, so we are thinking about how to do things better next year," says Mike.

Jane Tolerton Spanz



E Karanga Ana A Taranaki
Putu Noa I Te Whenua



Knox Church
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APPLICATIONS CLOSE DECEMBER 7TH

CLIMATE CHANGE AND MODERN-DAY SLAVERY CONCERN PACIFIC CHURCHES

GLOBAL
FREEDOM
NETWORK



In signing the Religious Leaders' Joint Declaration Against Modern Slavery, members of the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) joined with 71 other leaders from various faith traditions.

The dislocation of Pacific peoples through migration, and the call to end “modern-day slavery” were discussed at the recent Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) General Assembly in Auckland.

The gathering was attended by almost 200 delegates representing 38 Pacific churches. Held at the Lesieli Tonga Auditorium in Mangere from 26 October to 4 November, the Assembly was hosted by Auckland-based Methodist communities of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. It also marked the first time Pacific churches had hosted an event of this magnitude outside the islands.

Delegates convened under the theme Singing the Lord's Song in A Strange Land, taken from Psalm 137:4 for the way it spoke to the struggle faced by many in the Pacific. Assembly delegates discussed reasons for Pacific migration, including climate change and employment opportunities, and the growing exploitation and mistreatment of Pacific migrant workers in a form of modern-day slavery.

Rev Karima Fai'ai of Manukau Pacific Islanders Presbyterian Church was one of four Presbyterian delegates who attended. He said a key outcome was the signing of a declaration against modern slavery that calls for better treatment of migrant workers and the increased scrutiny of seasonal worker programmes.

“This was attended by some Pacific community leaders in Auckland, and the keynote address was delivered by Chris Evans of the Walk Free Foundation in Australia. The declaration was signed by representatives of PCC member churches.”

Chris told delegates that according to the 2018 Global Slavery Index, modern-slavery affected 15,000 men, women and children in Australia, and 3,000 in New Zealand, with high-risk industries in the Pacific including fisheries, construction, agriculture, hospitality and domestic services. Many Pasifika people try to improve their circumstances by migrating, but often face exploitation by unscrupulous subcontractors and agents, he said.

The PCC is an ecumenical body of Pacific-based churches, formed in 1961 in Samoa. As the organisation's governing body, the General Assembly is held every five years. In 1967, New Zealand joined the ranks of Pacific members when Te Aka Puaho was formally invited to join PCC, making the Presbyterian Church the only New Zealand denomination affiliated to PCC.

The Presbyterian Church's Moderator, Rt Rev Fakaofu Kaio and Assembly Executive Secretary, Rev Wayne Matheson and University of Otago Maori chaplain and former Te Aka Puaho moderator, Rev Wayne Te Kaawa also attended.

Fakaofu said the theme of the event struck a chord with Pacific Islanders facing pressures in their new home countries.

“Over the past 70 or so years, Pacific migration has increased. They go for education and employment opportunities; they go because growing population at home means fewer jobs. When they arrive in new countries, they struggle with new cultures as well as having to make enough to meet their own needs and send money home.”

He says PCC member churches are working hard to deal with this and other

issues. Climate change is creating more frequent natural weather events, and Pacific islands rely more than ever on the kindness of major foreign powers, including New Zealand, to provide aid.

Also raised was the need for better working relationships between leading regional ecumenical institutions to more efficiently seek funding opportunities.

PCC Moderator, Rev Dr Tavita Havea, called on the three main institutions – PCC, the Pacific Theological College, and the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools – to collaborate more effectively and share different aspects of their work if they didn't want to risk funding drying up.

Rev Wayne Te Kaawa has worked with the PCC for over a decade and was instrumental in bringing the 2018 General Assembly to Auckland. He says the PCC is an important voice of freedom and justice for Pacific peoples, and suggests that the Presbyterian Church could be more outspoken and active on the issues raised.

Wayne attended at the invitation of Te Aka Puaho moderator Marina Rakuraku, who could not be there. Wayne says that the Presbyterian Church has much to offer as its bicultural partnership between Te Aka Puaho and other church courts work together with the mission of God.

“In affirming the Church to be cross-cultural, the Church is also affirming that the Christian Gospel creates community across cultures.”

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)



A time of firsts: teaching English in Myanmar

Petra Malcolm is the first Presbyterian missionary to serve in the Chin region of Myanmar.

Petra became interested in Myanmar because her mother worked with refugees in Nelson. At Victoria University Petra wrote essays and research papers about the country.

Now she is there, the first Presbyterian Church missionary to serve in the Chin region. She is also the first teacher from an English-speaking country to work in the town of Mindat; there are no other westerners there. Other teachers from various denominations have stayed for a few weeks in the town where Petra expects to be for a year.

She is teaching English at a school run by the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, which is attended by students who are Christian, Buddhist and Animist.

Her accommodation is in a church office while a girls' hostel is being built.

"I've got my own bed and mosquito net. I shower outside with a bucket of water. Luckily I have a western-style toilet with a key. I have to walk about 100m to get to it," She eats with the students in the school dining hall.

Petra attended St John's Presbyterian Church while she was a student in Wellington, and went to Myanmar with a group of Presbyterian young people in 2011.

She had been teaching geography and social studies in Auckland for three-and-a-half years when she decided to seek a change. "You tend to rely on the

same teaching methods after a while, so I thought that by going part way round the world I would be challenged," she says.

She thought of going to teach in an international school where she would be paid. "But then I realised that I wanted to make more of a difference. I see service to others and bringing life to communities as a huge part of Christianity."

When she contacted Global Mission co-ordinator Phil King in the school holidays, he said there were opportunities in Tuvalu, Samoa and Myanmar.

"I didn't know what to expect at all," says Petra. "I didn't know the age of the students, what I would be teaching or whether there would be a curriculum to follow. So I just turned up and got told when I got here.

"The first two weeks I was trying to figure out what they knew and what they needed to know – which was quite different! They have got relatively okay vocabulary, but when it comes to listening to someone from an English-speaking nation, they struggle. A lot of the students are quite shy; they are embarrassed to try to speak English. Writing is difficult for them because a reliance on rote learning means they are not encouraged to construct or create the English language," says Petra.

Her students are in Standard 9 and 10 and aged 15-16. The older ones are sitting the all-important matriculation exams, and she has one class of 54 students including those repeating the exam as well as those

about to sit it for the first time. They have another English teacher: "So it's my job to build up their language capability so they can go beyond the simple sentences they have learnt by rote."

Petra's younger class has a government textbook to work through. "It's quite complex and requires a relatively high level of English," she says.

At university, Petra studied how to teach German. "The difference is that teaching German you know the students' first language and the target language, but here I only know the target language. But it is possible!"

She is just starting to teach one-and-a-half hour night classes six days a week to adults – which Petra believes is more daunting than teaching teenagers. And she herself is learning Burmese.

Petra is not paid, though she has a \$2000 grant from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar provides accommodation and food. "All I am spending money on is data for my cell phone. There is no wifi," she says.

She plans to stay in Mindat for a year, but she can only get a 70-day business visa, so she will have to leave the country about every second month and apply to re-enter.

"That's fine," says Petra. "I'll go and see another part of South East Asia."

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)



Petra Malcolm teaches English to students who are Christian, Buddhist and Animist at a Presbyterian Church of Myanmar school in the town of Mindat, Chin region of Myanmar.

Faith strengthened through cultural experience

Bubble tea, blistering heat and a stronger connection to God are just some of the takeaways three young Aucklanders had from a recent two-week trip to Taiwan.

Thomas Goldfinch (16), Grace Mamea (20) and 23-year-old John Liang were selected as part of the I Love Taiwan (ILT) cross-cultural exchange that brings 16 to 34-year-olds from across the globe to Taiwan.

"In their applications, John, Grace and Thomas all showed a strong commitment to their faith, and learning about, and contributing to, our cross-cultural mission partnerships.

"The fact that they all come from a different ethnic background also sent a strong message about who we are in Aotearoa today. John is Chinese, Grace is Samoan and Thomas is a European New Zealander. They were good ambassadors for the increasingly cross-cultural context in which we live," says Rev Phil King, Global Mission Co-ordinator, who selected this year's participants.

It was the first time Thomas, from St Heliers Presbyterian Church, had been so far from home.

"But this trip was one of the most memorable and incredible of my life," says Thomas who was billeted in New Taipei City. "The church I worked for was on the fifth floor of an apartment building. I taught the kids English songs and games, as well as stories about Christ, and how to be good people in their everyday lives."

He says the experience strengthened his relationship with Christ. "From this, I now feel a much stronger belonging to my local church in New Zealand. It also opened up my mind to the world, which has made me want to travel more."



Thomas Goldfinch, Grace Mamea and John Liang took part in an I Love Taiwan (ILT) cross-cultural exchange. They taught local children English songs and games, as well as stories about Christ.

For Grace Mamea, personal tragedy meant the trip almost didn't happen. A week before the 1 June departure, her mother passed away.

"It was a challenging time for me and I was tossing up whether I should go or stay with my family," says Grace who currently attends West Auckland's Church Unlimited. "With prayer and help from my family, it was decided I should go as applying for this trip was one of the last things Mum and I did together."

Grace says the trip had special significance for her because her mother had previously been to Taiwan with a missionary group. "That made me even more determined to go."

Grace spent time at two churches: one in the city, the other in the mountains. She also enjoyed the local cuisine and shopped so much, she had to buy an extra suitcase. The highlight of her trip was finding out her mother had preached at the Presbyterian Bible College she stayed at.

The third attendee, John Laing from St Heliers Presbyterian Church, says he's always been passionate about intercultural youth work. "ILT was the perfect platform for me to learn more about the Taiwanese culture while also sharing Kiwi culture with the local communities," says John who is currently studying economics and finance at Auckland University.

John served at a church of the indigenous Bunun people in a rural, mountainous part of Taiwan, and helped lead services

and youth events at summer camps, as well as assisting with activities for the elderly and travelling with the church's youth group.

The trio received some coaching on what to expect before they left. Ming Xie, co-ordinator of children and family missions at St Heliers, who arrived from Taiwan a year ago, met with the trio three times before they flew to Taiwan.

"I talked to them about practical considerations, such as what they should bring with them," says Ming. "Along with summer clothes, because Taiwan can be terribly hot at that time of the year, I also advised them to take a small gift that's representative of New Zealand to their hosts because that is culturally appropriate. I know they took New Zealand wine, chocolates and small bone carvings as gifts to their host families."

Ming also encouraged Grace, Thomas and John to try the local cuisine. "The food in Taiwan is amazing so I told them to try everything, especially the bubble tea which was invented in Taiwan, and stinky tofu which is an acquired taste!"

Ming, who has previously completed missions in Myanmar and India, says he was pleased this year's attendees got so much out of the experience, and would encourage others to apply next year.

"God is everywhere, but it's good to be able to experience God in different cultural contexts. Missions are inspiring not only in your own life, but also in your relationship with God."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz



STUDENTS LEARN JOY OF SERVICE

A heartwarming service trip to Vanuatu has left an indelible mark on 20 Saint Kentigern Year 8 students who visited the Pacific island with their parents.

The seven-day trip in July was a first for the Saint Kentigern students involved - 13 from the boys' school and seven from the girls' school. Each accompanied by a parent and with four staff in tow, the students soaked up the local NiVan culture while working across three different sites.

They helped paint containers and install outdoor tables for a café used as a source of income for the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu (PCV). They also did work at two schools outside Port Vila, built an incinerator at Macses School, installed playground equipment, created soccer goal posts using downpipe, and provided desks and chairs for the school's new classrooms. They built another incinerator at Etas School, installed outdoor playground equipment and galvanised football posts there, and helped swell the school's resources.

Each of those commitments brought opportunities to engage with the community. One particular highlight for them was the distribution of supplies transported in a shipping container, from school stationery and sports equipment, to toys, furniture, clothes, medical supplies and even nappies.

Students penned their thoughts at the end of the trip. One of them, Kate Thibaud, described it as a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and added: "I will never forget the looks on the children's faces when we gave them a bag of clothes each ... they clung to them as if they'd never let go. One little barefoot boy didn't want to choose a pair of shoes for himself from those we were handing out, he chose a pair for his dad instead."



Saint Kentigern students getting stuck into their work during their service trip to Vanuatu.

Kate noted how poorly resourced the schools were when compared to those in New Zealand. She wrote of the joy felt by everyone on the day the goods were distributed, when shelves were stacked with books and stationery, toys spread out on the tables. "Even though the children didn't have school that day, they came running in with the biggest smiles imaginable, screaming with laughter."

Fellow students Jamie Mora and Sammy Hart wrote about how much they had learned about the way many other people lived. There were many 'wow' moments, they said, all of which left them knowing they had made a difference and impacted children's lives. "Just looking at the kids' huge grins even when we hadn't done anything yet ... it showed how lucky we are, and that these kids are super-grateful," they wrote.

The service trip was the culmination of six months of planning led in the main by Saint Kentigern chaplain, the Rev Reuben Hardie, and supported by the Saint Kentigern Trust Board and both boys' and girls' school principals, Peter Cassie and Juliet Small.

"Our students are expected to undertake service at home, at school and, as they get into their intermediate years, in the community," explains Reuben, who has organised service trips to the Pacific since 2015. "It is our belief that service is one of the ways that faith makes sense

for our students as they can experience the difference helping others can make."

Saint Kentigern students regularly help at the Presbyterian Foodbank in Auckland, he says, and assist with other Presbyterian Support Northern initiatives and at numerous different schools.

The July trip was supported by the Church's Global Mission co-ordinator, the Rev Phil King, with Vanuatu-based Global Mission volunteers, Gloria and Neville Jones guiding Reuben to the projects in most need.

Funds were raised through initiatives that included shoe shine days at the schools, a movie fundraiser, a silent auction of items donated by members of the school community, and the sale of boxes of eco soap. Additional help from school supporters and the wider community meant organisers were able to fill the 20ft shipping container with a range of materials needed for the projects, including five tonnes of cement, as well as donated items for distribution.

"Our students worked alongside their parents, mixing cement, digging holes, painting ... they also spent time reading and playing with the children, weaving flax and so on," Reuben says. "The students who attend these trips grow in character and perspective. They learn some invaluable life lessons."

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)

BE THE LIFELINE AT CHRISTMAS



CWS, ACT Alliance-Paul Jeffrey

The Gospel challenges us to care for people who need food, water and shelter, and stand alongside those who seek justice. The call to reach out to others is no less strong than it was in 1945 when the first Christmas Appeal was launched. Working together, we have helped hundreds of thousands of people meet their most urgent needs, escape violence and create a better life for themselves and their families. We cannot ignore their pleas for help and longing for justice in our world broken by violence and greed.

Christian World Service invites you to join the lifeline of hope this Christmas. Your support will give people the strength and resources to rebuild their lives and protect their communities from harm. Our partners are embedded in the local community and don't give up. They inspire people with a vision of a fairer world and help them respond to climate change and economic policies that undermine people's lives. They can reach deep into the most vulnerable communities and will leave no one behind.

Two years ago Aimee (not her real name) and her family lost their home and crops when Hurricane Matthew hit the southwest of Haiti. They had worked hard for everything they had, so facing the devastation was not easy. Winds had whipped off roofs and ripped out corn and other crops. Fallen trees and flooding caused more damage. The people were

left dazed and in shock after three days of frightening weather.

Once the storm had blown through, little was left behind. Resilient, they salvaged what they could, finding a little food and some wood that would help provide shelter. They shared what they had with their neighbours, but were often hungry. Days later, the first emergency supplies arrived.

Before the storm, ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) had been working in the village where Aimee's family lived. They knew the community well and what they might need. As well as emergency supplies, local members distributed tools and seeds, and offered training for the families. Some families, including Aimee's, received a donkey, enabling them to collect water from a faraway stream.

In rural Haiti, a donkey or horse is a sign of prosperity. Without one, or the money to hire such transport, everything must be carried up the country's rugged hills on people's backs.

In countries this poor, there is no government help available. CWS local partner ICKL (Institut Culturel Karl Léveque) has been working with some communities to find a way forward. In every case, the number one priority is their children. The parents put their meagre financial resources into running a school. With CWS and other help, some have established a bakery or set up a grain mill to subsidise costs, but it is not enough. CWS support is critical to keep their children in school.

For the third year in a row, the number of hungry people in the world rose – now 821 million people, or one in nine. According to the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation), about 80 percent of the world's poorest people live in rural areas. A number of CWS partners train small farmers in agro-ecological farming. A large-scale study involving over 286 projects in 57 developing countries found sustainable agriculture increased the average crop by 79 per cent on small farms.

In Haiti, nearly 60 per cent of the population live on less than US\$2 a day, but this is not because the farmers do not work hard. Haiti may be poor, but it also one of the most unequal countries on the planet.

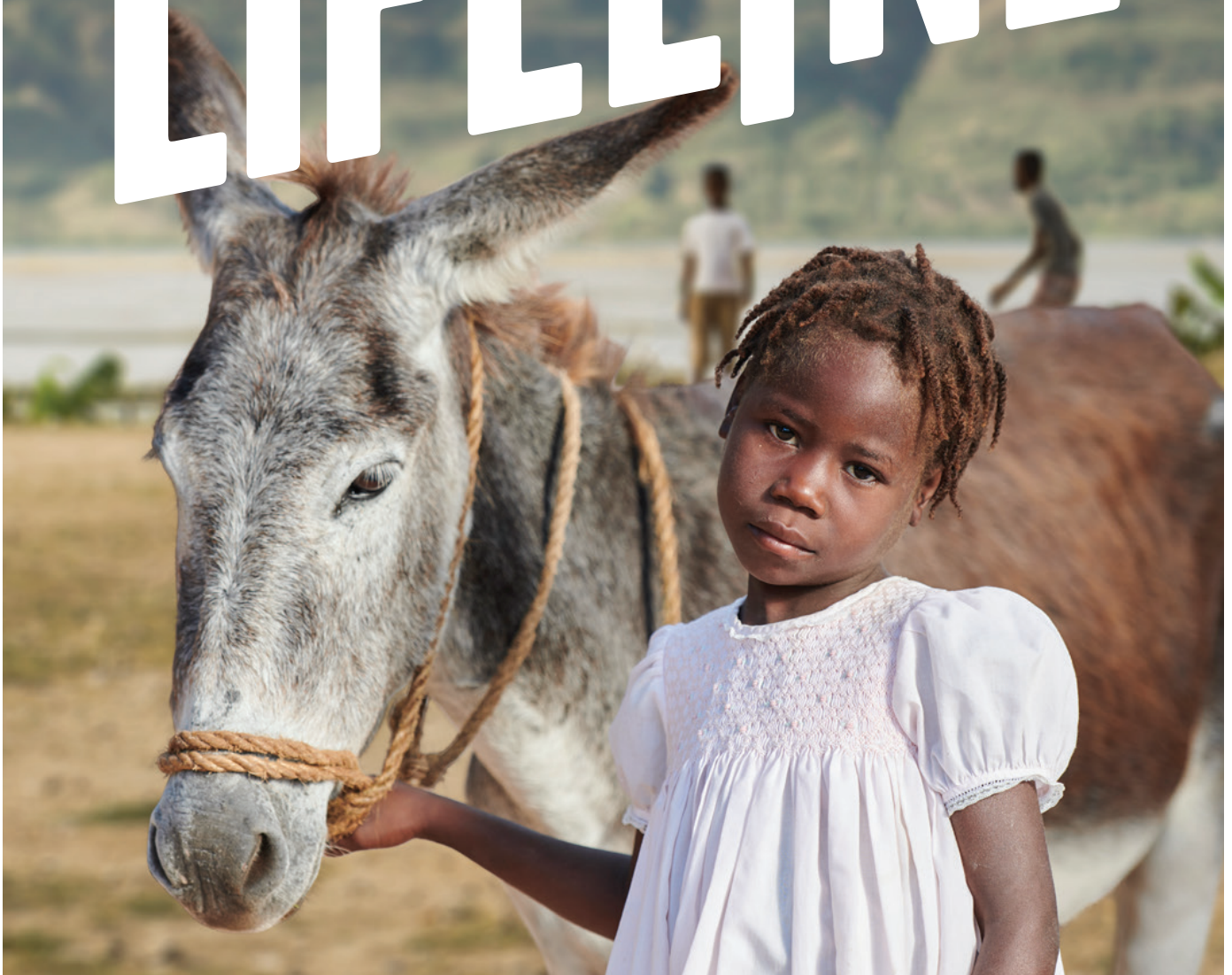
We can no longer ignore the great harm done by economic inequality. CWS, churches and other faith communities are offering practical help and comfort to those who are denied basic human rights, advocating with governments and standing up for justice.

This year's appeal uses five of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals to explore how donations support this agenda to transform our world.

Please support the 2018 Christmas Appeal. Be the Lifeline. Leave no one behind!

Worship resources prepared by Rev Dr Susan Jones, Rev Clare Lind and Tawa Union, and stories are available: <http://christmasappeal.org.nz/>

Be the LIFELINE



DONATE TODAY christmasappeal.org.nz



REV. DENNIS MOORE
1930–1999

Dennis Moore passed away nearly 20 years ago. This year, he is helping put six young people through tertiary education.

Thanks to Dennis's **deep commitment to young people in need and his gift to Presbyterian Support**, his memory and generosity will live on forever.

Throughout his life, Dennis always sought opportunities to serve people in need in his community, particularly young people.



When he died in 1999, Dennis included Presbyterian Support in his Will. That caring bequest has created a permanent legacy. Each year, the Dennis Moore scholarship fund helps local youth further their education.



With a small amount of planning now, **you can have a big impact.**

Presbyterian Support staff members are happy to provide bequest language to include Presbyterian Support in your Will, or to talk with you or your financial manager about planned giving options.

To establish your legacy, please contact a staff member in your region:

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EAST COAST: Sylvie Gibbins. philanthropy@psec.org.nz. (06) 877 8193

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Thankyou

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