

# Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

AUTUMN 2017, ISSUE 68



Rescuing food  
for families

[www.presbyterian.org.nz](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz)

## COMMENT: DAWN ACKROYD

**It has been an honour and a privilege to have been the seventh principal of St Oran's College. My 12 years and three terms have been most rewarding. A school of special character like St Oran's was not new to me: I had also been assistant principal at St Mary's Diocesan in Stratford, Taranaki.**

By the mid-1950s Queen Margaret College, the only Presbyterian school for girls in Wellington, was over-crowded with a huge waiting list and could not accept more pupils. The chairman of the Board of Governors of Queen Margaret, Dr O. C. Mazengarb, is thought to have approached the Wellington Presbytery with the idea of founding a similar college in Lower Hutt.

In 1957 official approval from the Presbytery was gained and St Oran's opened with 21 pupils on 4 February 1959.

In a recent presentation, the Rev Sharon Ross-Ensor, director of the Presbyterian Church Schools Resource Office, shared the main reason for establishing Presbyterian schools:

"It was the failure of the Bible in Schools campaign in 1914 which aimed to amend the 1877 Education Act to include Bible knowledge as a compulsory core subject in the curriculum.

"Its failure to gain traction within the legislation was more a resistance to religious sectarianism - Anglican vs Presbyterianism - than it was to a resistance to having any religious instruction at all... and there was a general feeling that Sunday Schools would provide religious knowledge while the state could handle all other aspects of knowledge.

"The effect was the establishment of church schools in the same vein as the Catholic school system," explained Sharon.

This was of interest to me as I was under the assumption that Presbyterian schools were established from an overriding

**"I was under the assumption that Presbyterian schools were established from an overriding sense of mission"**

sense of mission from the denomination as a whole.

The founders' of St Oran's College expressed a desire to provide an affordable, holistic education which included providing religious instruction into the Christian faith and Presbyterian tradition.

So, why do parents choose a Presbyterian school? There are a variety of reasons: parents talk of the Christian values, family atmosphere, pastoral care, high standards, expectations, holistic education, excellent results and service opportunities. However, the same could be said for any state school - the fundamental difference is that our schools are about helping our students engage with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is our main difference - it underpins all that we do, and is summed up in our schools' motto "Nisi Dominus Frustra" - Without the Lord in Vain.

As principal I believe I have a responsibility to actively promote and foster our point of difference. We are fortunate that we are located nearby to, and have a close association with our local church, which assists with that.

The landscape of secondary education in New Zealand is changing. I believe that one of the biggest challenges that all schools' face is the wellbeing of its students. Wellbeing and academic performance go hand-in-hand. Levels of



Dawn Ackroyd

anxiety are on the rise among teenagers, caused in part by the pressures of social media and the qualification system NCEA - where students are continually tested throughout the year over a period of three years. To address this challenge many schools have a wellbeing strategy as part of their schools' strategic plan.

As part of our health programme we use "haurou" wellbeing model. There are four strands: taha tinana - physical wellbeing; taha hinaga - mental and emotional wellbeing; taha wharau - social wellbeing; and taha wairua - spiritual wellbeing.

We are fortunate that as a school of special character we can embrace spiritual wellbeing, it provides us as a school and individuals a sense of meaning and connectedness. Our special character can be a foundation to help students build resilience against the pressures they face, especially in today's society which is becoming increasingly secular.

*Dawn Ackroyd was the principal of St Oran's College in Lower Hutt for 12 years. In February 2017 she took up the mantle of principal at Napier Girls' High School, Hawke's Bay, where prior to St Oran's College she was deputy principal for five years.*



# Spanz

Presbyterian Church of  
Aotearoa New Zealand

AUTUMN 2017, Issue 68

## Who we are

*Spanz* is published quarterly by the  
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa  
New Zealand,  
PO Box 9049, Wellington, New Zealand

## Editor

Angela Singer  
angela@presbyterian.org.nz  
Ph 04 381-8284

## Advertising

Jose Reader  
spanzadvertising@presbyterian.org.nz

## Subscriptions

Katrina Graham  
katrina@presbyterian.org.nz  
Ph 04 381-8283

ISSN 1175 5202 (print)

ISSN 1179 3473 (online)

## Next issue

Winter 2017  
Advertising deadline  
21 May 2017

## Design

Tangerine

## Printing

Service Printers

## Copyright

The contents of *Spanz* may not be  
reproduced without permission of  
the publisher. Opinions expressed  
in *Spanz* are not necessarily those  
of the Presbyterian Church of  
Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Cover Photograph

iStock

## MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

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

# How shall we make a start?



**It's not hard to find advice on starting the New Year on the web these days. There are blogs and web pages devoted to it. Some of it is good. Some is simply another marketing ploy to get us hooked into yet another series of daily, or at least weekly, emails peddling stuff. No doubt some of it is worthwhile, but I find time and again in the church that the two things that really set me up for a good start are:**

- + A decent rest over summer, at least two weeks doing something entirely different and refreshing.
- + A sense of God being present in my life.

I shouldn't think I need to expand on the first point but certainly the second is worth considering further. The key to the Christian understanding of salvation isn't to be found in our action but in the action of Christ applied to our life. This means, in the first instance, a deep and

abiding sense that Christ understands us and is our advocate. It means knowing that despite ourselves and the deep inconsistencies of our life God still loves us.

When I begin the year with this conviction firmly established in my mind and in my heart, I find that it does two things to me.

Firstly, it enables me to move from being critical towards others to being their advocate – to apply the grace which has been and is being applied to my life to theirs. As I do this I find those around me growing in their ability to trust me and to truly be themselves and this is extremely important in any organisation.

Secondly, I find that Christ's advocacy calls me forward into the unknown, into the place of faith, of courage and of hope, and it does so because I have the sense of a foundation which will never leave me even if things don't work out the way I'd like them to. In other words, I am encouraged to experiment, to try new things, to dream great dreams and to risk failure because I know that my future is not determined so much by my 'success' as it is by God's eternal 'yes' in Christ.

To this end I try to set apart time to hear God's word to me and to know God's encouraging command, for in these things I find life; that sense of abundance which is promised to those who seek God.

What is more, I ask God for a life-goal which will call me forward and challenge me and help me. A year without a challenge is a year without faith, for faith will always challenge us if it is truly of God.

Sit down now and ask God to help you understand how much God loves you and how much you mean to God. I think you may be surprised.

# Churches rescue food for families

**Did you know that half the food New Zealanders' throw out each year is still edible and adds up to a whopping \$563 per household?**

**Food retailers and suppliers also throw out food that is perfectly edible, but not sellable; food that looks and tastes good but is a day old or past its "sell-by" date.**

**To feed struggling families and save surplus food from being dumped in landfills, a growing group of charities and community organisations around the country are working together. We look at how Presbyterian churches north and south are sourcing and distributing rescued food to help their communities.**

## Mahurangi Presbyterian

Mahurangi Presbyterian Church parish manager Roger MacKay oversees the distribution of food collected by the burgeoning Food Rescue Service in Warkworth, which after about six months of operation is already being heralded a huge success.

Approached by Lions and Rotary organisations to help distribute surplus food to struggling families, the service collected more than 300kg of food on one day alone a couple of months ago and handled more than five tonnes of food during its first eight weeks of operation.

Drawing on eight years' experience helping manage Warkworth Christian Foodlink, a network of Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic churches providing up to 280 boxes of food a year to needy families, Roger says the new food rescue service has, "taken on a life of its own".

The Warkworth initiative is modelled on Kaibosh, started in Wellington as a home-based food rescue service in 2008,

Roger Mackay of Mahurangi Presbyterian holds a food box being filled by: (from left) Daphne Cocker, Carol Cable, Ron Buckton, Jenny Trotter, Jean Moss, Davina and Bonnie Monds.

which has grown into a seven-day-a-week operation involving more than 120 volunteers delivering 10,000kg of surplus food a month.

Food sourced mostly from the local New World and Countdown supermarkets, includes bread, buns, rolls, cakes and occasionally potatoes, bananas, lettuces, avocados and baked beans.

Volunteers collect the surplus food and pick up leftover produce from the weekend farmers markets in Matakana and Mangawhai. The food is brought back to a rent-free base in the disused heritage-listed Warkworth Court House, where it is weighed and packaged before being delivered to Mahurangi Presbyterian Church for distribution to community welfare organisations.

Food is also donated to the Combined Churches of Wellsford which stage a weekly community dinner, dubbed "Papa's Kitchen", feeding about 100 people at each sitting.

Around a dozen community groups distribute the food – which would otherwise go to piggeries or landfills – to 100 to 150 families weekly, some living as far north as Kaiwaka, Oruawharo, Te Hana and Wellsford.

Roger says it is inspiring to see how much the extra food means to people battling to feed their families.

"A family with seven children and not much to live on collected a food box and one of the children couldn't believe it, saying, 'is all that food just for us?'"

Grandparents who are primary caregivers for their grandchildren receive less



financial help from government agencies than foster parents, he says.

"Some are finding it really tough. Food was shared recently with one such family and the grandparents were completely overcome by the love and generosity shown."

A young mother going through a tough time was also moved when she received a food box, saying, "I didn't know there was help like this in the community".

With only two or three volunteers organising the distribution of the food, Roger describes the service as, 'work in progress'. "I had no idea it would grow so fast," he says and is hoping to get another volunteer to take over managing the distribution.

## St Columba Botany

Steve Farrelly, an elder at St Columba Presbyterian Church in Botany, is general manager of the Breakfast Club in South Auckland. Begun in 2010 as a small breakfast supply service for children going to school hungry, it has ballooned into a network offering food and more.

"We are currently receiving food from New World Eastridge, Southmall and Pak 'n' Save, Ormiston, (about 60 banana boxes a week), as well as from KiwiHarvest and South Auckland Christian Food Bank. We receive bulk products from Saint





Kentigern College and a major importer provides about three tonnes of rice a year," says Steve

Steve says individuals also donate.

"Well-heeled families from higher decile schools with carloads full of clothes and food for South Auckland families in need," he says.

Boxes of food are delivered to food banks at primary schools in the area including Clendon Park School, Glenn Innes and Glenn Taylor primary schools and St Pius X Catholic School.

"One hundred per cent of the food we receive we hand on to others. We spend every day delivering food not sold that day or the day before. We could get 30 pies one day, 40 or 50 packets of bacon the next, as well as bakery.

Steve says that social workers and principals identify families' needs – including food hampers – and they source it.

Recently he had picked up a load of donated frozen food when he had a call from a doctor in Panmure saying he had a family desperate for food.

"Within 10 minutes we had a polystyrene container full of food at the surgery," he says.

Steve's Christmas Club feeds about 500 people each year. With New World

the main sponsor, he sets up a "supermarket" at Glen Innes School where 100 families are invited to pick up food for Christmas, including a ham each.

He is now supporting Women's Refuge in Whakatane and is about to provide food for a charity in Taumaranui, Hamilton and Te Ararua Gisborne.

## Leith Valley Presbyterian

Leith Valley Presbyterian Church in Dunedin started collecting excess food from supermarkets in September last year and now provides boxes of food for about 15 families.

Church member Bronwyn Daley says she and about four other volunteers run the service.

"It is not just lower class families. There are families who have a nice car, kids well presented, Dad's at work – they just need a bit extra to carry the load, make every tight week not so difficult.

"Many of these families do not want to reach out for help as they know there are others in far worse situations," she says.

Working alongside FoodShare, the volunteers have found it a great way of reaching out to the community and meeting people they would not ordinarily meet.

With more help and resources, "we could easily be delivering to many more families to help them get through the week," she says.

## Kaikorai Presbyterian

Also in Dunedin, Kaikorai Presbyterian Church did not have to look for food to rescue; they were contacted by a local New World supermarket about a year ago and offered surplus food. They accepted the offer and now distribute to 23 households each week.

Church manager Olive Lewis, who runs the service with the help of five church volunteers, says there are definitely people struggling. The church has recently employed a social worker to co-ordinate with families to discover if there are other unmet needs.

"It's nice to be involved in the community. That is what churches should be about – meeting the needs of the community, that's what we are trying to do. It is a shame people have to come in and get food, but that is a reality of life," she says.

## Brockville Community Church

The Rev Andrew Scott of Dunedin's Brockville Community Church says for two years the local Dunedin FoodShare has been dropping off food for the church to distribute to about 25 households every week on a rotational basis.

"We have an extensive list. Families stay on for six weeks then rotate off. This is a lower socio-economic area and the need will always be bigger than we can meet. While many people come to the church to pick up the food, others will not have a bar of it. The people we are working with have been ground into the dirt for a very long time," he says.

Believing education is a big part of the answer, he is planning to get a full commercial kitchen up and running to provide cooking classes.

"Frequently people will pick up a vegetable and ask what it is. A lot of these people are from 3rd and 4th generation single parent families with no significant education. There mere fact they are managing to exist day-to-day is quite startling," he says.

Andrew is working on establishing a medical centre with the possibility of getting a public health nurse on board to educate people about health.



FoodShare staff and volunteers rescue and distribute food to over 65 social agencies.

Other irons in the fire include support for a “very cool” scheme which enables people to build their own homes, and supporting the development of a furniture factory to boost employment in the area.

## FoodShare

FoodShare, which assists Brockville and Leith Valley with rescued food, was begun in Dunedin in 2012 by Deborah Manning. She began the service by collecting and delivering food from her car.

In the first month of operation she delivered 364kg of food, the equivalent of 1000 meals, to Dunedin’s charities. Now FoodShare collects surplus food from a growing list of providers, distributing about 71,000 meals each month. They also have a branch, KiwiHarvest, in Auckland.

Deborah says she had an “a-ha” moment about four years ago when she read two newspaper articles on one page – one

about a man being charged for “dumpster diving”, taking food from a rubbish dumpster, the other about child poverty.

“It was about giving back to the community. Not only helping feed the community but also reducing food waste. I was aware there was food insecurity and decided to give up my job as a lawyer and set up a business model based on collecting and distributing food.

“Food insecurity has absolutely been growing. People don’t have access to nutritious food for many reasons. There is a melting pot of issues. We have a responsibility that food fulfils its natural purpose and is not thrown away,” she says.

Deborah started by picking up surplus food from a Wishbone store at the Dunedin Hospital and delivering it to Presbyterian Support. As FoodShare grew she donated food to other agencies and food banks including churches.

Now FoodShare collects produce from 50 sources including supermarkets, manufacturers, wholesalers, growers, catered functions and the New Zealand Navy. They deliver to over 65 social agencies that provide food support for people as far away as Oamaru, Invercargill and Alexandra.

With more than 150 volunteers providing 4000 volunteer hours a year, they also have seven part-time staff. KiwiHarvest has the same number of staff.

Deborah says, “There is so much more we could do but at the end of the day you need funding to run the food chillers and vans and pay the drivers. We can turn \$1 into several meals. Financial backing means we can make a difference in the community, providing good nutrition.”

There is very little fresh food going out in food parcels, she says, unless there is an organisation dedicated to collecting it and giving it to agencies.

“Food support is not just about providing people with free food – it’s about understanding why people are food insecure and what other help they need.”

Plans for the future include rolling out educational programmes. A food skills programme is currently being developed with Otago University’s nutritional department, to be launched this year to teach people different ways of cooking.

The programmes, funded by grants from the Southern District Health Board and Mercy Charitable Trust’s Outreach programme will be run at social agency bases.

“We can’t have strong communities if we don’t have strong healthy individuals,” she says.

Kay Blundell Spanz

## — KOINONIA KIWISAVER SCHEME —



The ethical KiwiSaver  
scheme for Christians

## A scheme run by Christians for Christians

[www.koinonia.org.nz](http://www.koinonia.org.nz)

0508 738 473 | [info@koinonia.org.nz](mailto:info@koinonia.org.nz)

Contact us for a copy of the Product Disclosure Statement

The New Zealand Anglican Church Pension Board is the issuer  
and Trustee of the Koinonia KiwiSaver Scheme



# NEW MODERATOR FOR TE AKA PUAHO

**Rina (Marina) Rakuraku is the new Moderator of Te Aka Puaho.**

"I think it is time for a new pathway now," says 65-year-old Rina.

She was planning to keep teaching at Te Kura o Te Paroa in Whakatane for a couple more years, and turned down the Moderator role.

So many parishioners pushed her that she decided to take it on.

"Believe me I prayed hard about it," she says. "I was anxious because I know the person I am. I don't mince words and I am not diplomatic. You have to be diplomatic."

She has had a role model in terms of diplomacy as she has been the caregiver for her uncle, former Moderator, the Very Reverend Tame Takao, for about 40 years.

Her uncle had a hand in her decision to take the role on.

"I believe in the Lord moving in strange ways," says Rina. "Things kept happening that seemed to turn me towards it. I felt pulled this way. I spoke with my uncle, and he said, 'You know what to do.'"

"I do know the job I have taken on is hard," she adds.

Rina comes from Tuhoe, Ngati Porou and Kahungunu – as well as Scottish, English and Spanish roots. "I was brought up Tuhoe Māori, but I know about my other side," she says

Her great-grandparents brought her up while her parents and grandparents were also in close contact. "I was lucky to have so many parents who cared for me."

Church was central to her grandparents' lives and they were closely involved in Ohope Marae. "Church has played a part in my life since the day I was born. I grew up knowing there was a God. When I was nine, Reverend Ben Tucker came to visit and asked my great-grandmother if he could take me to Bible studies in Waimana."



Rina Rakuraku, new Moderator of Te Aka Puaho, does not mince words and isn't afraid to muck in and met the grass roots people.

Rina refused to go to Turakina Māori Girls' College or to training college in Auckland because she did not want to leave her great-grandmother.

She married and had five children but left her marriage. "I was working the graveyard shift, 5pm to 5am at Wattie's, so I could be home for the children during the day, and we just grew apart. The children came through all right. They are all working, and so are my grandchildren." She has four great-granddaughters.

Rina went on a mission to America with her uncle for two years from 1999, mainly looking at churches in indigenous communities. She studied at Cook's Theological Hall in Phoenix, Arizona while there.

She saw that some churches were thriving, particularly the evangelical churches, and others declining. "There has been a decline in the conservative churches. A lot of churches, including the black churches, are rocking in the aisles, bursting at the seams. I can't put a finger on what the x-factor is."

"We have to find different ways of promoting the good word again. We have to reach the younger children. If we don't, there is no future for the church. It's pretty dicey."

Rina says she will spend her first year trying to put her finger on "the x-factor" that is needed to bring people to the Church.

"That's my strategic plan. I have said I'm not going anywhere for the first year. I will be focussing on the parishes – visiting them, talking to them before I can think of helping them. I need to know the pulse of the people, what's happening with them. Many families are in jeopardy. They barely make ends meet. If a child is hungry, he or she does not want to listen. I have to make sure they are paying their rent, first."

The basics have to be covered first, she says, with the understanding that "the best thing for you is free".

She has seen half a dozen Te Aka Puaho Moderators before her. "I watched Rev Warren Foster and his wife Rerekau. They were not afraid to do dishes. That's how they met the grass roots people. They mucked in. That's how I am too."

Rina was installed as Moderator at Ohope Marae on Saturday 4 February – a shrewd move, publicity-shy Rina says, "Because they'll all be at Waitangi!"

Jane Tolerton Spanz

# Presbyterians support quake shaken communities



A house was moved off its foundations during the quake. The occupants were shaken but otherwise uninjured. Pic: GNS Science

**Shortly after the clock ticked over to Monday 14 November, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked the upper South Island and lower North Island. Centered around 15 kilometres north-east of Culverden and 60km south-west of Kaikoura at a depth of approximately 15km, New Zealand's second largest quake created widespread damage across the region and tragically took two lives.**

At the time the Church's Moderator, the Rt Rev Richard Dawson, was busy organising the General Assembly which was due to take place in Dunedin two days later.

"In the days following the quakes, it soon became apparent that around 10-12 people wouldn't be able to attend the Assembly because of the quake, particularly those in the Marlborough and North Canterbury regions," says Richard.

"Ministers and lay people in the regions were reporting damage and we were seeing reports on TV. It was clear the affected communities were facing levels of unprecedented stress because of the disruption and needed our help."

That's what motivated Richard to start an appeal at General Assembly, which raised \$8000 on the Saturday.

"We understood the needs were great and so we wanted to give all our parishes and people a chance to contribute."

As of 10 January, the appeal had raised \$27,642 and Richard says he is delighted by how generous people have been. The funds, he adds, have specifically been used to support Presbyterian and uniting churches in the affected quake zone.

"We have four parishes within the hardest hit area – Hurunui, Amuri, Cooperating covering Culverden, Rotherham and Waiau, St Paul's Presbyterian in Kaikoura and, further north, the Awatere-Flaxbourne parish. Add to this the Blenheim parishes of St Andrews and Wairau (St Ninians) who also had a significant shake, as well as the damage to the Wellington CBD, and it was clear that support was needed."

Two days after General Assembly finished, Richard visited affected parishes. Although bad weather prevented him from flying into Kaikoura, he spent time with Kaikoura Presbyterian minister, the Rev Alistair McNaughton, as well as the moderator of the Alpine Presbytery, Rev David Coster, and Rev Colin Price, the new local ordained minister covering the Amuri Cooperating Parish.

Richard admits he was shocked by what he saw in the days following the severe quake. "The ground had moved throughout this area by an amazing amount.

"The church at Waiau was so severely damaged by the quake that it will likely need to be pulled down."

Richard was particularly struck by the way in which Presbyterians rolled up their sleeves and "got stuck in".

"Our people did a marvelous job in a tough situation. Not only were they dealing with broken buildings, they were also dealing with people suffering from post-traumatic stress. Those affected needed – and still need – our support and care."

Rev Alistair McNaughton knows that better than most. The minister of St Paul's Presbyterian Kaikoura was at the epicentre of the November quake and continuing aftershocks and says almost everyone in Kaikoura and the surrounding areas was affected.

"Some people were literally thrown out of bed and smashed against the wall, or across the room, it was so severe," says Alistair.

Others lost their houses and livelihoods. "One of our parishioners who lost her son in the Christchurch quakes moved up here and now her daughter has lost her house in this quake. The impact on people and the region has been immense."

But Alistair says the quakes galvanized people into action. "Immediately afterwards, I spent two or three hours driving around the area doing pastoral visits of our most vulnerable parishioners to make sure they were okay."

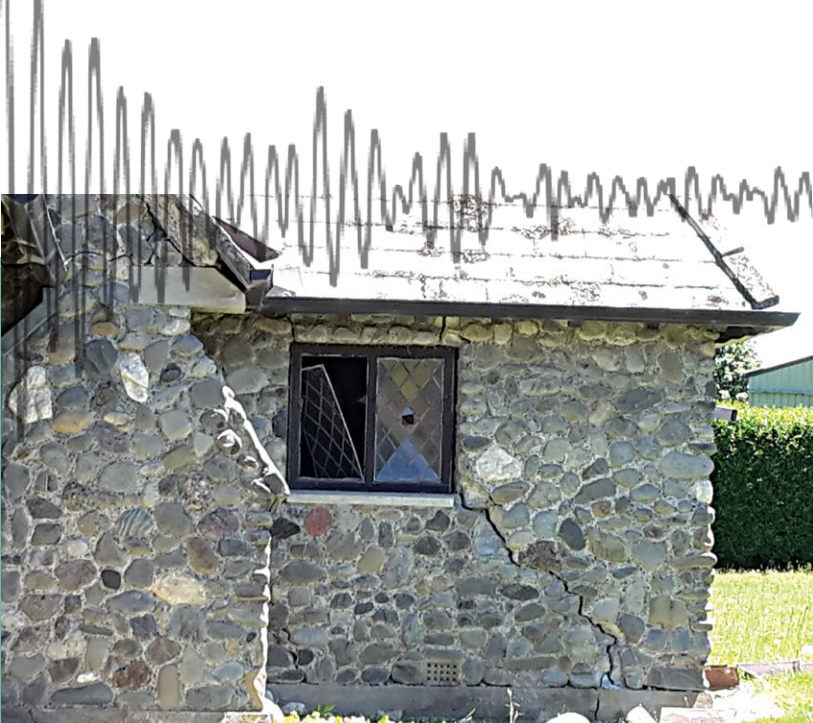
And then Alistair and his wife Catherine opened the manse to accommodate an overflow of people from the local marae, where more than 800 tourists and locals were being housed.

"We had between 50-100 people using the facilities of the manse and the house during the day and night. Many were even sleeping between the pews in church!"

He was overwhelmed by the support from locals and further afield. "Food was helicoptered in and people would just stop by and drop off food and blankets. It was amazing the way it happened."

With anecdotal reports of some having to leave Kaikoura, Alistair says he is uncertain of the region's future. "We'll





The church at Waiau was so severely damaged by the quake that it will likely need to be pulled down.

## DONATIONS

### DONATIONS TO THE UPPER SOUTH ISLAND

#### EARTHQUAKE APPEAL CAN BE MADE BY DEPOSIT TO:

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand,  
BNZ Willis Street: 02 0500 0086963 000  
(add reference "Quake16" and your name and email  
Katrina Graham, katrina@presbyterian.org.nz for a receipt).

#### SPECIAL OFFERINGS CAN BE SENT TO:

Upper South Island Earthquake Appeal,  
PO Box 9049, Te Aro,  
Wellington 6141.

#### MAKE CHEQUES OUT TO:

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand,  
"Upper South Island Earthquake Appeal" Fund.

just have to wait and see. There are so many people who have been badly affected, from their houses being ruined to being unable to get to work because roads have been closed. For example, the drive from Clarence to Kaikoura used to take half an hour – now it takes about 10 hours."

And although the quake was terrifying, Alistair says it was a "wonderful opportunity to share Christ's love in the town".

"We were able to show love and compassion to the local community and tourists. I'm still getting emails from around the world saying thank you for supporting us and the other day a box of goodies arrived from Australia from tourists we'd helped."

Rev Nancy-Jean Whitehead, minister at Waikari Parish and Kowai-Cheviot Parish says her three parishes (Amberley, Waikari and Cheviot) which extend over roughly 150km, were more fortunate than others.

"Amberley and Waikari had very little damage, but Cheviot wasn't so lucky because of the road closures," says Nancy-Jean.

The Christchurch-Picton road (SH1) runs through Cheviot and it is a popular spot for travellers stopping off for meals or shopping. "But because traffic was diverted inland some shops really felt the loss of trade."

Nancy-Jean says she is supporting calls for Christchurch parishioners to travel to Cheviot for the day to support local businesses, and is also getting behind the Methodist Church's plan to bring a busload of parishioners from Christchurch to Cheviot for a meal.

"The people in Cheviot need our support and I would encourage anyone passing that way to pop in and have a meal or visit the gallery."

The only damage sustained by the churches in her area was the Cheviot church bell, which fell onto the floor of the bell tower. And while Nancy-Jean is thankful her parishioners escaped injury, many of them are still a "bit nervy".

But that hasn't stopped them from getting stuck in and helping others. "Rural communities have always just got on and done it. People know their neighbours and they all don't wait for Wellington to tell them what to do, they do whatever needs to be done."

Rev David Coster, moderator of the Alpine Presbytery, says the November quakes have come on the back of almost three years of drought.

"So the impact has been significant on the lives and economies of particularly the Amuri, Hurunui and Kaikoura districts. Some areas have become isolated because of road blockages and intermittent communications, especially with Kaikoura," says David.

"Barry Ayers, the presbytery executive officer, and I have been keeping in touch with either a visit or phone call to the ministers. When Richard was in the Alpine Presbytery we spent two days trying to fly to Kaikoura but our attempts were thwarted by the weather. Barry and I were finally able to meet with Rev Alistair McNaughton and Catherine McNaughton when they managed to fly to Christchurch for a few days."

David says that the Alpine Presbytery had good learnings from the Christchurch

earthquakes. These included providing financial support to Kaikoura, to enable Alistair and Catherine to have a break, plus support for an interim minister.

Looking to the future, David says in March, a group from the Alpine Presbytery will travel to Kaikoura to meet with Alistair and the office bearers to give consideration to the future of one of their buildings. The presbytery council will give careful consideration to what ongoing support will be needed in the future.

"I have been encouraged by members from Christchurch parishes going through to Cheviot. This provides support for local businesses cut off."

David also thanked those who had given so generously to people affected by the earthquakes. "I can assure you that the Alpine Presbytery will wisely and compassionately distribute your gifts. Thank you also for your ongoing prayerful support."

Rev Colin Price from the Amuri Cooperating Parish says his parish was badly affected by the November quakes.

"We lost the Waiau Church and the Culverden church was previously closed due to its earthquake prone-status," says Colin. "The homes and livelihoods of some in the Waiau area were also affected due to infrastructural damage so there are, and continue to be, cumulative effects on the mental health of individuals. It is a challenging time and we appreciate prayer support as we seek to discern the way ahead."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz



As a White Ribbon Ambassador the Very Rev Ray Coster will focus on the problem of family violence.

## Former Moderator new White Ribbon Ambassador

**Very Rev Ray Coster was highly gratified to be nominated by three women Church leaders to join men around the world calling for an end to family violence.**

"The Presbyterian Church wants to be part of standing up for women and against violence. I was asked if I would consider being appointed a White Ribbon Ambassador, and I said, 'Absolutely!'" says Ray.

Ray retired in August last year from 40 years as a parish minister. He was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church from 2012 to 2014. He is currently on the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and he sees the Ambassador role as a part of his pilgrimage of justice and peace.

Ray is now focussing on the problem of family violence in New Zealand, but having helped parishioners with marital stress and family violence issues over the years, he plans to have a particular focus on Presbyterian parishes.

"New Zealand Police attend 114,000 cases of family violence a year. That is about one every five minutes, but according to the Wellington police, 75 per cent of cases are not reported. That is very frightening.

"That's why I think that we as a Church need to stand up and speak out. I want to join the men from all parts of the world saying that it's our issue, that we have to stop the violence and break the silence.

"I want to help the men of the Church, men who profess to follow Jesus. My role will not be limited to them, but that will

be my specialty. I hope churches will invite me to share with them in men's groups and those for teenage boys. I would like to sit down with them and work through some of the issues of attitudes to women because it's not just about the violence, it is a matter of what is behind that.

"If we have a healthy attitude to people, we are not violent. I don't want men to feel worse than they do; I want to help them to change. One of Christ's messages is that we can help people to change.

"I grew up being mentored by a father who said that a true man would never be violent towards a woman, and I have never experienced violence. I realise I am in a very privileged position.

"I have always liked mentoring younger people in general and ministers in particular. When you have a bit of experience in life, there are lessons you have learnt."

Ray says he does not want to "fold up my shoes and stop walking. That's not my idea of retirement. I have changed my focus from parish-based to humanity-serving. It is still Christian-based. I am a Christian minister and I am proud to be one".

"I don't think the Church is innocent in this. We ask at a marriage ceremony, 'Who gives this woman...?' as if a woman is a chattel being passed on from one person to another. Jesus Christ treated a woman as a person, with dignity. I would love to be able to go round the churches and challenge some of the attitudes of

how we treat women, and see if we can treat women with the respect that Jesus did. Then there would be a lot less family violence because the underlying attitude is the cause of the surface issues – the attitude that women are not as important as men. That's the particular focus I want to take as an Ambassador."

Jane Tolerton [Spanz](#)

## White Ribbon at General Assembly 2016

Last year's Assembly coincided with November White Ribbon month, a time when many churches take part in events aimed at educating about how to prevent and stop violence against women.

As part of Moderator Rt Rev Richard Dawson's and Presbyterian Support Otago's "Serve the City" project, Commissioners and delegates were encouraged to participate in three White Ribbon events.

On Thursday 17 November at Knox Church and First Church, Commissioners joined with the public in tying white ribbons to the churches fence railings. On Friday 18 November a white ribbon installation was created by Commissioners under the Otago University Clock Tower, spelling out the word HOPE.

See more about White Ribbon NZ, [whiteribbon.org.nz/](http://whiteribbon.org.nz/)



# Island Bay garden grows community

**It started life as a memorial garden but now a narrow strip of land on the southern side of Island Bay Presbyterian Church in Wellington is being transformed into a play area for local children.**

Island Bay minister Rev Nathan Parry says the play area will fill a gap in the community, as no such facilities exist north of the Island Bay shops.

“It will be a place for people of the wider community, not just the church community, to play or sit and eat their ice-cream.”

Nathan says the garden has had a varied history, being developed in the 1960s as The Lady Nordmeyer Garden of Memories. Lady Nordmeyer was the wife of Rev Sir Arnold Nordmeyer who was not only an elder in the Island Bay church, but also a Labour MP, best known for helping to create New Zealand’s social welfare system. Back in the ‘60s, Lady Nordmeyer designed the garden and many roses were planted in memory of the deceased but, given the garden’s shady location and its exposure to southerlies and salt spray, not many of them thrived.

“How do churches make the most of resources they already have like this strip of land? About 10 years ago we included a veggie garden which was pretty successful in producing food for those who needed it, but the woman who oversaw it eventually moved away,” Nathan says.

The space housed a chicken run for a few years, and the two chickens became “local celebrities”, beloved by local children. But when one died and the other was given away, the strip of land needed a new purpose.

Fast-forward to 2013 and the church received a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the near-by Newtown St James’ church. “The bulk of that went to resource missional positions but, along with other grants, some was allocated to needed building upgrades including property planning. The rest was dedicated to doing something with the former rose garden.”

That included replacing the old brick fence, which was in danger of falling over. It also allowed for the addition of raised veggie beds, swings and slides and a gate onto the street.

A fun addition has been an old wooden boat, bought on Trade Me, which has been anchored in the former sunken garden area for kids to play in.

Nathan says the church is planning a blessing of the boat ceremony to officially open the garden.

“As part of the annual Island Bay Festival, they have a blessing of the boats in the harbour, so we thought it would be good to have our own during the Festival.”



The outreach focus of Island Bay Presbyterian Church community minister Rev Bruce Hamill includes the residents of council flats in the nearby suburb of Berhampore.

The space will be christened The Nordmeyer Garden (“In memory of those parishioners who left such a mark on our church and on New Zealand”) and Nathan hopes the garden will be enjoyed not only by the church’s congregation and children’s groups but also by those who use the church hall and the wider Island Bay community “as a symbol of the welcome and hospitality of God”.

It’s not just the play area that benefited from the sale of the Newtown church. Nathan says most of the funds were allocated to employ a half-time community minister, Rev Bruce Hamill, for the next five years.

Bruce and his wife Jan left full-time positions in Dunedin to move to Wellington six months ago to take up this calling.

“Much of Bruce’s focus has been on Berhampore’s Wellington City Council and Housing New Zealand flats and helping people who live there. Berhampore now has no English-language church and is a 15 minute walk from our church doors, so it’s good for us to shift our outreach focus from beyond just Island Bay to up the road.”

One of the key initiatives Bruce has been working on is a veggie co-op, in conjunction with the Miramar Anglican Church. This will offer subsidised weekly fresh fruit and vegetable deliveries to residents of the Berhampore flats.

Also planned is a weekly shared lunch with these residents and congregation members to help build a sense of community. “The Church will provide soup and Kaibosh, New Zealand’s first food rescue organisation, will also provide healthy, nutritious food for these lunches,” says Nathan.

Sharon Stephenson Spanz



At the opening service of General Assembly, new Moderator the Rt Rev Richard Dawson, gave a sermon on the theme of hope. Richard is wearing the Moderator's ceremonial cloak – Te Korowai Tapu.



Overseas guests to Assembly were, from the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, Rev Allen Nafuki, General Secretary and Mr Jonathan, Secretary of the Church's Education Authority; Uniting Church of Australia, Craig Mitchell, National Director – Formation, Education and Discipleship, National Assembly; Presbyterian Church of Korea, Moderator designate, Rev Dr Sung Hee Lee; Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, Rev Dr Cheon Min Heui, Executive Secretary, Ecumenical Relations Department. Pictured, from left, are Global Mission coordinator Rev Phil King; Rev Allen Nafuki; Moderator Rt Rev Richard Dawson; Rev Dr Cheon Min Heui; and Craig Mitchell.

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016 : ROUND UP

## Last year General Assembly was held from 15 to 19 November in Dunedin.

Assembly began on Tuesday evening at Knox Church with an apology, made on behalf of the Church by Council of Assembly, to Te Aka Puaho.

The apology – for the unintended consequence of changing the model of representation at Assembly without consultation – was graciously accepted by Te Aka Puaho. The change had the impact of significantly reducing Te Aka Puaho representation at Assembly, and General Assembly resolved that TAP could return to previous representation levels, with immediate effect.

General Assembly then installed the new Moderator, the Rt Rev Richard Dawson, who in his inaugural sermon spoke of the Christian community as a beacon of hope for the world.

During Assembly it was acknowledged that some Commissioners were unable to attend because of the recent Kaikoura earthquake. The plight of those affected was felt: a Moderator's appeal was announced and Assembly extended its commiserations to parishes in affected areas.

## Earthquake policy to remain unchanged

Among the proposals considered by Assembly, was one asking the Church Property Trustees (CPT) to consider reducing the level of compliance with the New Building Standard from 67 percent to 34 percent for all church buildings.

There was lengthy discussion on the matter, and Assembly did not support the proposal.

CPT advised during debate that the current policy already provides flexibility to upgrade to below 67 percent, and some parishes have sought and received permission to do so.

CPT deputy chairperson, Margaret Galt, acknowledged that the timeframe for compliance in the existing policy is onerous and likely to be reviewed.

## Social justice to the fore at Assembly

Assembly asked that a work group be established to enhance the Church's social voice. Assembly also agreed to adopt the Justice in Action "We Say Yes" statement, which was presented by Council of Assembly, on behalf of PresCare (the joint initiative between ourselves and Presbyterian Support).

The statement has been shared with all parishes and partner churches.

Additionally, Assembly supported in principle, the Church seeking full membership of the National Dialogue for Christian Unity group.

## Beneficiary Fund to change

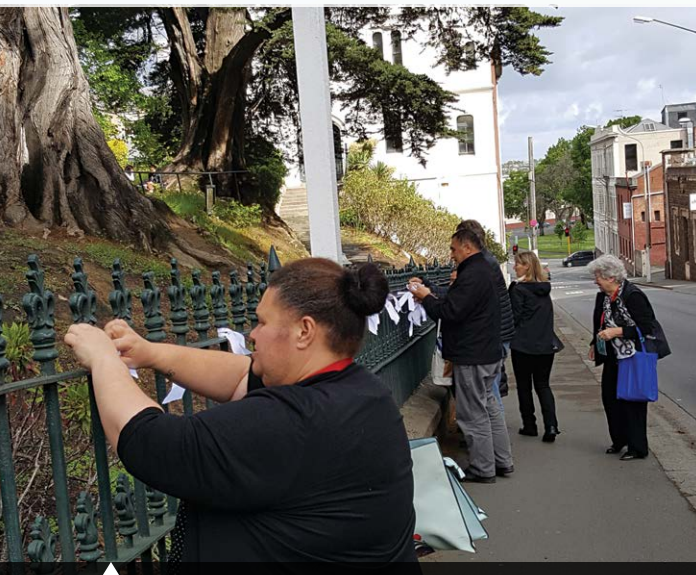
Assembly agreed to establish a more sustainable and equitable retirement programme that values and provides for all church leaders.

Among the changes agreed to by Assembly, was a decision to close the defined benefits section of the Beneficiary Fund, which will result in a one-off payment to current members of that section of the scheme.

Assembly also approved a recommendation to reduce Assembly Assessment to reflect removal of the Beneficiary Fund charge. It is anticipated that new levy would be effective from 1 July 2017.

In related decisions, Assembly agreed to various changes to the ministerial support package and changes to the Beneficiary Fund's structure and governance. Assembly also encouraged parishes to contribute to all employees' Kiwisaver accounts at a rate of not less than five percent.





Commissioners, delegates and the public were encouraged to mark White Ribbon month by tying white ribbons to church fence railings at Knox Church and First Church as part of the Moderator's and Presbyterian Support Otago's Serve the City projects.



Commissioners gathered in St Davids Theatre, University of Otago, for the first morning session of the Assembly.



The installation of the Moderator included the laying on of hands by past Moderators: among those gathered around Rt Rev Richard Dawson are Very Rev Bruce Hansen, Very Rev Alister Rae, Very Rev Pamela Tankersley, Very Rev Dr Graham Redding and Very Rev Peter Cheyne.

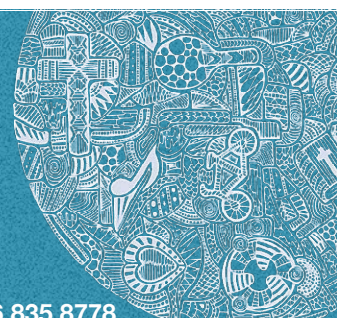


The evening opening service of General Assembly 2016 was held at Knox Church, Dunedin on Tuesday 15 November 2016.

St Andrews CHB is a community church in Waipukurau, passionate about journeying alongside people in growing their relationship with Jesus. We are a congregation reaching a range of different age groups, as well as having a commitment to local and overseas mission. We are looking for an innovative leader to foster and strengthen our team ministries. If you are a Nationally ordained Presbyterian Minister (or a minister of another denomination willing to work within the Presbyterian framework) and you feel that God might be calling you to St. Andrews, please contact the convenor of our Ministry Settlement Board, Maurice Craig.

**IS GOD CALLING YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**  
ST ANDREWS CENTRAL HAWKES BAY

06 835 8778,  
[mauriceandkay@extra.co.nz](mailto:mauriceandkay@extra.co.nz)





## Changes for Local Ordained Ministers

General Assembly approved regulatory changes that will allow local ordained ministers to serve outside a parish context, which wasn't possible under previous rules.

In other changes, Assembly agreed to strengthen the ministerial support package for local ordained ministers by requiring congregations to contribute to their LOM's nominated KiwiSaver account at a rate of not less than 5 percent.

## Moderator's role to be reviewed

Assembly asked that a task group be established to review the nature, scope and requirements of the Moderator's role, especially in relation to the resourcing of presbyteries. Presbyteries are to be consulted in this process and the task group will report to Assembly in 2018.

## Marriage

Following consideration by church councils and presbyteries under the special legislative procedure, General Assembly approved changes to the Book of Order relating to ministers and

marriage. The 2014 General Assembly decision that ministers may only conduct marriages between a man and woman was confirmed. Voting on the matter was taken by secret ballot, and the rule, which was adopted ad interim in 2014, will now formally be adopted into the Book of Order.

## No national mission week

A proposal to hold a national mission week that would occur in the years between Assemblies failed to find favour with Assembly.

## Other matters

Assembly took the step of affirming the importance of small faith communities in the life of the Church and wider community.

Assembly also affirmed the importance of ongoing support for tertiary chaplaincy.

Presbyteries and congregations were encouraged to share in the Interchurch Bioethics Council roadshow and invite this to their region.

Assembly also supported and encouraged Presbyterian Women national and international projects, and outreach within congregations and presbyteries

## Moderator-designate announced

The Very Rev Andrew Norton of Auckland is the Moderator-designate of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. It is the first time that the Church has re-elected a former Moderator to this role.

## Serve the City projects

During General Assembly, Commissioners made the Church's presence in Dunedin visible by taking a break from business to serve the community.

Moderator, the Rt Rev Richard Dawson, partnered with Presbyterian Support Otago in organising a number of projects for Commissioners to participate in including: painting a mural at Bayfield High School; spring cleaning Green Island Community Hall; painting Plunket rooms; and White Ribbon installations at two churches and the Otago University lawn.

A full summary of all General Assembly decisions and other information from Assembly including keynote addresses, video and sermons are available at [www.presbyterian.org.nz](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz)

Jose Reader Spanz



**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
IN A CHANGING WORLD**

## SCRIPTURE UNION NZ'S CONFERENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LEADERS

INVERCARGILL

27 MAY

AUCKLAND

10 JUNE

WELLINGTON

24 JUNE

To register or for more information visit

[www.sunz.org.nz/way2go](http://www.sunz.org.nz/way2go)





# Reconciliation: priority for Presbyterians in Korea

Christianity in Korea has been nourished with a strong social conscience since it took root on the peninsula some 200 years ago. The mass uprising against, and impeachment of, President Park Geun-hye in December 2016 gives Rev Dr Min Heui Cheon from the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) renewed hope that God's will for reconciliation with North Korea, and for social justice and religious tolerance, is at work.

Rev Min Heui, PROK's executive secretary of ecumenical relations, travels the world in her role managing 34 partnerships with churches around the world and around 65 ecumenical co-workers in 29 countries. An Old Testament scholar with a PhD in theology and ancient Greek, Rev Min Heui is anything but dry and dusty. She charmed General Assembly and those at the service for graduating ordinands in Dunedin last November with her engaging warmth, humour and passion for peace.

Min Heui asserts that, although South Korea's president Ms Park is being charged with allegedly conspiring to extort money and favours from companies, the central issue for people in the republic remains the longstanding tension with the north.

Under the Sunshine Policy of previous progressive governments, dialogue began with the north, with what Min Heui describes as "a heart for unification", but Ms Park announced a closing down of relations after she was elected in 2013. "The relationship became hostile and went backwards," she says. "The demonstrations we have just witnessed were amazing. We thought people had become more self-centred and didn't care, but God clearly wants us to reconcile."

Churches in the south have launched a campaign calling for a negotiated peace treaty with North Korea to replace the armistice that was reached in 1953. Every Monday evening, the PROK, holds a candlelight prayer service for peace and reconciliation.

"There are families who live on different sides of the border and cannot see each other. They miss each other and have no chance to return home, which is a basic human instinct," Min Heui says. "We also try to send food through the North Korean Christian Federation, because they are suffering, and wanted to plant fruit trees so people could at least eat fruit but the UN forbade it because of the sanctions."

One of the key reasons for establishing so many international partnerships is to reduce the feeling of being alone in their struggle.

"New Zealand's support means a lot to us. You were the only country that said no to US nuclear weapons. You could play an important role in the future, as you have the right spirit of



Rev Dr Min Heui Cheon was in Dunedin to attend and address the General Assembly.

compassion and prayer. If legal visits between North and South Korea are possible in the future we would like a Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand presence," Min Heui requests.

A quarter of the general population in the republic is Christian. Min Heui says that during the military dictatorships that began in the 1950s and included the current president's father, Park Chung-hee, religious freedom was curbed, sermons were monitored and church pastors arrested.

"You never knew who would be gone the next day. Other denominations didn't want to get involved and remained quiet but we felt a need to speak truth in the darkness. The government didn't like us speaking out but still they needed a critical voice. Instead of being political we tried to be prophetic. We advocated for democracy."

Despite achieving that goal in the late 1980s, church membership in Korea is continuing to decline due to low birth rates and secularisation. PROK has 300,000 active members, which is a modest-sized church in Korean terms. Min Heui says efforts are being made to reform the Church and to make it more progressive and relevant to a new generation. For example, PROK was among the first denominations to ordain women.

"We have a long way to go on gender justice and leadership by women but I really feel my work is respected," says Min Heui.

The Church also prioritises ecological issues, helping migrant workers, reaching out to pregnant women and offering childcare support. It has a mission focus that aims to respect other cultures and to co-develop programmes.

Jade Reidy Spanz



## Religion and politics: Learning with Wiremu Tamihana

*Religion and politics don't mix. It's like mixing ice cream and manure, says Tony Campolo.*

Over the holidays I read *The Great War for New Zealand* by Vincent O'Malley. It's a brilliant book – meticulous in research, clear in argument, attractive in presentation. The fast facts are sobering:

- War in the Waikato brought more British troops to New Zealand than were available for the defence of England.
- WWI killed around 1.7 per cent of the NZ population. Yet in the Waikato War, 4 per cent of Māori died, including alarmingly high numbers of Māori women and children.
- Some forty years after the war, 3,549 Māori remained landless through land confiscation.

The Great War documents how Māori mixed religion and politics. In 1861, faced with increased conflict and the settlers' lust for land, Waikato Māori were presented with an ultimatum: you can retain your land, but only for as long as you are strong enough to keep it.

In response, Māori leader Wiremu Tamihana pointed to the kings in Russia, France and Tahiti. If these kings were not required to submit to Britain's Queen, should Māori? Tamihana then turns to religion, noting the "...only connexion with you is through Christ," and quoting Ephesians 2:13 (KJV), "In Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ".

Given this scripture, Tamihana asked the British Crown to respect the Māori King, appointed by "God our maker". For Tamihana, religion and politics clearly mix. Christ brings people together, God the maker judges all leaders for the behaviours that result.

Tamihana clarifies his understanding of religion and politics in a later exchange:

*"Placing two sticks in the ground he declared that one was the Māori King and the other the Governor. Across both he placed a third stick, representing the law of God and the Queen. Finally, he traced on the ground a circle around both sticks, [saying] 'That circle is the Queen, the fence to protect them all'" (O'Malley, 143).*

Again, we see the mixing of religion and politics. Again, God is the judge. This allows for differences, provides protection for all peoples and makes leaders accountable under God.

Reading Tamihana's theology of religion and politics three things stand out.

First, the creative way in which religion and politics are mixed. Christians often turn to the kings of Israel, the two-sided coin in Matthew 22:15-22 or Romans 13:1-7. Tamihana's use of Ephesians creatively

points to ways that religion mixed with politics can preserve difference and ensure justice.

Second, the reading reversal. In Ephesians, those who are once far off are the Gentiles, whom God acts to redeem. For Tamihana, those who are once far off are the English, now "made nigh" by the blood of Christ. This connects Māori with Israel. It means those who arrive in New Zealand are brought by God. As such, their actions and ultimatums are judged by the character of Christ.

Third, the power of scripture translated. Ephesians had been translated into Te Reo by 1835, the entire New Testament by 1837. Translation allows Māori to read scripture for themselves. This resulted in Tamihana, in 1861, challenging colonising behaviour from the scriptures the English brought with them. Such is the power when people are encouraged to read for themselves in their own language.

As 2017 begins, our talkback is full of active discussion concerning race, identity and politics. In the months ahead, we face the New Zealand general election, the reality of Brexit and a new President of the United States. Tamihana offers much wisdom. Religion and politics mix best when they appreciate difference; look to Christ in bridging between diverse groups and consider all peoples accountable to the character of Christ.

– Rev Dr Steve Taylor, principal Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Dunedin.



Laidlaw College seeks to graduate people of character and integrity as they become teachers, counsellors, pastors, theologians and leaders for churches, missions and society more widely.

Study in Henderson, Manukau, Christchurch or by distance learning.

Full-time and part-time options available.

Find out more at [www.laidlaw.ac.nz](http://www.laidlaw.ac.nz)



ENCOUNTER LOVE EQUIP LEAD

www.laidlaw.ac.nz | info@laidlaw.ac.nz | 0800 999 777






LAILAW COLLEGE

TE HAKAHAKA AMONGA KAIHAKA





# ST ANDREW'S GERALDINE

**We seek a Full Time Minister to lead our staff team and Elders in fulfilling our mission in the rural town of Geraldine (close to Ashburton and the gateway to the MacKenzie Country and Southern Lakes District region) and surrounding districts.**

We are a lively, Bible believing and creative group of people with a range of different age groups, and two congregations in Traditional and Contemporary Worship styles.

If you feel that God might be calling you to St Andrew's Geraldine, please contact:

**Murray Talbot**

**Convenor**

**Ministry Settlement Board**

**P:** 03 344 1039

**E:** murray.talbot@hopechurch.net.nz

LUMSDEN | BALFOUR | KINGSTON

## Presbyterian Parish

Situated in Northern Southland, the gateway to Queenstown and Fiordland, are seeking the person who senses God's call to serve and help lead this dynamic rural parish into the next stage of its ministry and mission.

turning  
vision  
into  
action

We are a Parish that:

Loves the Lord and enjoys contemporary expressions of worship.

Has a strong sense of community; old and young, men and women.

Is committed to discipleship and nurture based on God's Word.

Seeks opportunities to minister to the wider community and beyond.

Loves working together as a team.

For expressions of interest and the Parish Profile please contact : [keith@calvin.org.nz](mailto:keith@calvin.org.nz)

## St. Columba's Presbyterian Church, Havelock North

has a ministry vacancy, due to retirement, for a full-time, nationally ordained Minister.

### We are seeking a Minister

- who can provide a challenging, spiritually extending and encouraging ministry.
- whose approach is progressive and who is able to offer an informed perspective on theological inquiry. She or he needs to be self-confident and able to accommodate the range of theologies present within the congregation.
- who is able to offer an encouraging and permission-giving style of leadership, presenting opportunities for people to contribute and participate.
- who is able to engage comfortably with people of all ages, stages, backgrounds and ethnicities.

We are a thinking, doing congregation, a community of faith and reason, characterised by a modern approach to Christian theology and biblical interpretation. We are able to offer a strong effective support team. There is a genuine sense of community, experienced through fellowship, friendliness, a feeling of belonging, caring for and sharing with each other.

**Together we can do whatever we can dream – this is an exciting opportunity.**

To explore a calling, including obtaining a copy of a profile of our congregation, please contact:

**Rev. Warren Fortune, Convenor,  
Ministry Settlement Board.**

**Phone: 06 8731136 Ex 7019**

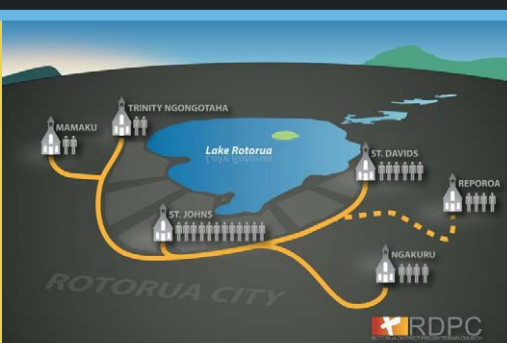
**Email: fortune.w.b@lindisfarne.school.nz**

## Rotorua District Presbyterian Churches (RDPC) / Exciting / Innovative / Mission Focussed

An exciting opportunity to join a dynamic team in a ground breaking innovative expression of ministry in a growing multi-cultural community.

Rotorua District Presbyterian Church (RDPC) is looking for a Minister who has a passion for Jesus and developing and growing a church to realistically serve and reach the community.

**If you are interested and want more information, please contact the**



**Ministry Settlement Board Convenor:**  
Rev Jim Wallace wallacej31@gmail.com.  
Enclose your CV. or Ministry Profile.

## EVERMORE BOOKS

Specialists in Second hand Christian Books

**Christian books bought and sold**  
**EVERMORE BOOKS LTD**  
9 Ellis Ave, Mt Roskill  
Auckland 1041



[www.evermorebooks.co.nz](http://www.evermorebooks.co.nz)

**EMAIL: cbooks@xtra.co.nz**

### OPENING HOURS

**MON: 10:00 - 5:00**

**TUES - FRI: 9:30 - 5:30**

**SAT: 10:00 - 5:00**

**PHONE: 09 626 2256**

**Open everyday except Sunday and public holidays**

# YOUTH LEADERS

## TRANSFORMING YOUNG LIVES

### Steps taken to guide young church-goers down a path of leadership with service have netted surprising blessings.

Those youngsters touched by the national Transformers initiative say they have grown in their faith, become more confident, and discovered a real joy in serving others.

The language they use reflects their demographic as young millennials, with conversations referencing “awesome” excitement and a deepening belief that this is somewhere where they truly belong.

Perhaps more surprising than the participants’ natural exuberance is the deep satisfaction that Transformers’ founders have in knowing what a difference the programme is making in so many young lives, both in and out of church.

Transformers is an initiative of Kids Friendly. It started in 2009, primarily to reverse the trend that saw young people leaving the Church as they approached their teens. Transformers set out to develop them as young leaders for both church and community through instilling servant leadership principles.

The format sees youngsters aged 10 to 13 enter the programme as Leaders in Training, or LITs. Their first link with the Transformers community is as attendees at a RUYL (Raising Up Young Leaders) camp at which the youngsters, supported by mentors, “catch the vision” of what it means to be a servant leader.

With Christian faith at the heart of camp activities, the youngsters hone their communication and leadership skills, embrace their differences, develop their gifts and offer service to others. They then return to their churches as productive leaders ready to tackle servant opportunities within their communities.

The concept is based on the premise that as young people transition through pre-teenage developmental changes, a faith-driven steadying hand might prevent them from drifting away from church. Transformers’ shines a spotlight on their purpose and gifts, nurtures their abilities and encourages them to use their strengths within their churches and communities, explains Transformers founder and Kids Friendly national coach Jill Kayser.

Once engaged with the process, the LITs move on to become junior leaders once they turn 14 or 15, then senior leaders at age 16 and over.

So, what was born out of a move to prevent the loss of youngsters from Presbyterian churches has developed into a successful leadership training initiative that has far exceeded initial expectations. And the kids love it!

Twelve-year-old advanced LIT Vivian Pettigrove, whose mother Kaila Pettigrove is the Kids Friendly coach at Auckland’s Somervell Presbyterian Church, said she couldn’t wait to go to her first Transformers camp after hearing about it through both her mum and her older sister Sophia.

“I had to wait for two years... when I was finally the right age, I was so excited. The camp fulfilled every hope that I had had about it, and I had a wonderful time. I have now been to camp four times in a row and I’m still not tired of it.”

Vivian is particularly partial to the songs, always accompanied by “enthusiastic actions”, and says Transformers has helped her connect with God and discover her faith again.

“I would definitely recommend going,” she says.

Older sister Sophia has been going to camps for the past five years and says she has “enjoyed every element” of Transformers.



Supporting one another at a Transformers camp are, from left, Kids Friendly coach Kaila Pettigrove, Transformers founder and Kids Friendly national coach Jill Kayser, Kids Friendly office manager Sonia Wyngaard, and Messy Church’s Lucy Moore.

“I have especially liked getting to know new people from other churches, and learning how to lead but serve others at the same time.”

“Although I won’t be able to continue going to Transformers camps after we move, I will continue using the training I have acquired on these camps, and throughout activities related to Transformers, during the year in my everyday life.”

Another advanced LIT, 13-year-old David Laxton, is a fan of the workshops which are designed and delivered on camp by the newly-minted LITs.

“I have always liked the idea of leadership, but it was this camp that taught me how to lead. It has given me the impetus to take the leadership role. I have taken things from Transformers that I don’t think I would have got anywhere else.”

David’s sister Joanna, who at 15 is a senior leader, has been involved with Transformers for five years.

“I went to Sunday School and moved through to Transformers. The first time I went, I loved it. I kept going back to the camps, and learned more every time. Then I went through as a junior leader, which meant I could apply what I had learned and pass it on to the younger members coming through.”

Joanna said that she has become a more committed Christian and has learned how to work with people who were younger than her, and those who had come from different places and had different experiences.





Youngsters gathered at Transformers camp, Ngaruawahia.

"I have found it very satisfying – making that connection with them, and seeing them develop. I would love to stay with Transformers for as long as I can. I really enjoy feeling like I know what I am doing there. It makes me feel very comfortable."

Madison Hales, 11, says Transformer camps have helped her do leadership activities in her church. She says she is more confident in church and away from it, and wants to keep going to the camps as often as she can.

Her mum Kerry says Madison is "bubbly and excited" following the camps, and says she has seen youngsters "transform" from shy girls into amazing young women of God.

Jill says the programme's success has meant that where there was once a dearth of young leaders in the church, there are now many more eager to take on that responsibility.

"We have a very specific culture at Transformers. What started out as something of a pilot project has grown to become so much more than we anticipated.

"This is very different to leadership training in secular terms. We don't hand-pick our young leaders. We believe anyone can become a leader. The person who isn't great at sport, those who might be bullied in secular programmes absolutely thrive through this initiative. They have completely risen up through Transformers."

Jill describes Jennie McCullough from Knox Church Waitara as her own mentor.

She explained how Jennie had successfully reversed the trend which saw youngsters leave their church from aged 10 to around 12. Her leadership camps instilled a desire in young people to serve, and provided the tools to do so.

"Jennie's methods were so successful, she had teenagers coming out of her ears," Jill laughed. "I found that truly inspirational."

Before meeting up with Jennie, Jill had been in a coaching meeting with Christchurch's St James Presbyterian Church minister, the Rev Glen Livingstone, where she heard how their ministry to community kids was at risk because they could not find leaders. Jill asked why they didn't train the youngsters to become leaders, thereby keeping them in situ to train the younger parishioners.

"They said they didn't know how to, and asked if I would teach them," she said. "That is what set me on the path to finding out about training young leaders, and it is what led me to meeting up with Jennie."

The successful template Jennie used to inspire the kids was based on the stories of Moses and Joshua. But Jill wanted to use Jesus as the inspiration for her group.

She had read a story in *Time* magazine that talked about Jesus being the greatest leader to have ever lived because he truly walked the talk – he was the ultimate servant leader.

"I was inspired to use him and stories about him to motivate young people... so we developed Transformers – Raising Up Young Leaders."

The camp is what Jill calls the catalytic event – it is where the youngsters learn more about Jesus and his leadership and how he teaches love and service. They unpack five Jesus stories in creative and interactive ways that inform a code of conduct that the kids commit to.

Almost all the LITs are keen to attend camp each year, although the initial concept had them attending only one. But the clamour to return has grown, as has the call around Transformers generally.

"At first, we simply acknowledged that there was a need. I wondered if this could work, and thought we should give it a try. But it has evolved into something very special, something that just keeps on growing."

Church leaders see it as a missional opportunity for young leaders.

Jennie is on record as having described Transformers as "the most truly intergenerational and intercultural event in our Church".

"It is just amazing to see all ages, stages and cultures worship together, learn together, serve together, pray together, sing together and play together... a microcosm of what I believe our churches should look like," says Jill.

Viv Posselt [Spanz](#)



# School chapel welcomes Village Church

**In much the same way that it takes a village to raise a child, it also takes a village to make a chapel.**

Just ask Christchurch's Village Presbyterian Church, which recently started using St Andrew's College's new centennial chapel for their 10.00am Sunday service.

Officially opened on 25 October 2016, the \$10 million chapel will serve not only the college, but also the Village Church, which was formed three years ago after the Canterbury earthquakes damaged the church buildings at both St Giles in Papanui and St Stephen's in Bryndwr.

"Both our worship spaces were unable to be used after the earthquakes so instead we used our church halls for worship," says one of the Village Church's ministers, Rev Martin Stewart.

Every second Sunday for the past few years, the Village Church also held a combined service in the chapel of Christchurch's Lamb and Hayward Funeral Home. This year, that was moved to every Sunday. "It was great of them to let us use their chapel but it wasn't ideal in terms of us connecting with the community," says Martin.

The rector of St Andrew's, Christine Leighton, says the college also lost its 1955 war memorial chapel in the quakes.

"About three years ago when it became clear that we couldn't rebuild our chapel, we started making plans to build a new one that could be timed to celebrate our centenary in 2017. We also started having conversations about how we could maximise the space and how we could share it with the community."

Those conversations included Martin, who already had a relationship with



The St Andrew's College Centennial Chapel opened in October 2016.

St Andrew's through guest preaching and assisting with community services, confirmations and baptisms, says Christine.

"Martin was having the same type of conversations with his church so it seemed fitting that we worked together."

It was agreed that The Village Church's congregation would use the St Andrew's centennial chapel for their 10am Sunday service.

Martin says The Village Church was excited by the opportunity to use the chapel. "Strategically, it allows us to be a part of the school community and the wider community, which is what we're all about. That's why it was never really an option for us to simply fix our own churches and carry on. Instead, we are really trying to reconnect with the community and being in St Andrew's for worship helps us do this."

Another reason for using centennial chapel is the space it affords users.

"It seats 700 and has been designed in a semi-circle formation that feels intimate, no matter where you are sitting. And with that much space, it will allow us to welcome many more people to our church community," says Martin.

In the beginning, not everyone was 100 percent on board with the idea of sharing the space with St Andrew's. Martin admits some of the congregation are "people whose worship has been

experienced around certain buildings, such as churches".

"So it was a slightly different proposition to share someone else's space. But they came to understand that this is the future of our church and of course they want that future to be as inclusive of the community as possible," adds Martin.

Although it's taken some time and effort to get there, Christine says she is thrilled with the chapel and excited about the many and various ways it can be used.

"It's early days yet but there is already so much interest from the community about how we can come together to use the chapel. St Andrew's is a busy school and of course we have to meet our needs in regards to the thrice-weekly services, as well as religious education classes and discussion groups, but we are happy to have others use it at other times."

In fact, a request for a funeral and a wedding were received at the opening ceremony.

"The acoustics are also really very good so I can imagine it being used for musical events and choirs. Of course, the chapel was designed with worship in mind, so that is our primary consideration, but if we are to reach out to our school and wider community in the way we want to, then it makes absolute sense to open it up to different uses."

Sharon Stephenson **Spanz**



# First graduates of PYM Internship

The Presbyterian Church's move to upskill youth ministry workers has been described as having the potential to be "transformative" within the Church.

All four graduates of the Presbyterian Youth Ministry's (PYM) inaugural three-year internship programme have expressed high praise for the training provided.

Jasmin Vanderwerff, Josh Dunne, Lizzie Menlove and Conrad Demmocks believe their future is brighter because of the programme, and share the conviction that the internship offers a sound platform from which to progress a long-term career working with youth.

PYM's national director Matt Chamberlin explains how the PYM Internship resulted from a collaboration between PYM, the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML), local churches and formal learning providers – currently Auckland's Laidlaw College and Carey Baptist College, and the University of Otago.

"The PYM Internship trains and develops young leaders to be practical theologians in their work and ministry with young people and the wider faith community. Its primary goal is ministry formation and training in the context of supervised ministry experience."

As well as attaining a formal learning qualification, interns are also awarded a certificate in Presbyterian Youth Ministry, which is a Church-based award.

Matt describes the internship as a sign of the Presbyterian Church's commitment to youth ministry and the training of youth workers, and says it recognises the importance of having well-trained practical theologians dedicated to working with young people.

"Our Church desperately needs theologically-trained, skilled youth workers who are committed to professional development and who see their ministry in vocational terms. It is our hope and prayer that the PYM Internship will see a new wave and generation of such youth workers



At Dunedin's Knox Church after their graduation ceremony are PYM Internship graduates (from left) Conrad Demmocks, Jasmin Vanderwerff, Lizzie Menlove and Josh Dunne

and ministers taking up positions of leadership in our churches."

Mapping a career path along exactly those lines is a common thread running through all four graduates.

Jasmin Vanderwerff left the country within days of graduating to do mission work in Mexico, and says the applied format of the training gave her the confidence to take the trip on.

"I can't believe how much I have grown. I would never have attempted this type of trip without having done something like this. It has set me up really well."

Warkworth's Josh Dunne has long worked with church youth while pursuing a variety of secular occupations. While overseas he realised how much he missed working with young people and on his return started making enquiries about how he could build that into a career.

The internship was a clear frontrunner, one that Josh says took him away from a "life of drudgery".

"I am considering going into ordained ministry. The internship has equipped me with what I need to do that."

"It is a really good scheme, and a smart move on the part of the Presbyterian Church. If you get more people trained at this level working in youth ministry, it could be quite transformative."

The internship training model integrates theological learning and a ministry context that Matt says provides "a

richness that cannot be achieved in the classroom alone".

Participants complete formal learning through the elected training provider, and do internship-based learning through their youth ministries within the church. An additional "community" aspect sees them link up through Skype, attend retreats and complete block courses and set learning goals.

"We also did focussed study around what it means to be Presbyterian," says Matt. "The interns are trained to be involved in a youth ministry setting, and work towards a recognised qualification at the appropriate level for their needs and ability."

Those going through Laidlaw worked towards either a Bachelor of Theology, or a Bachelor of Ministry degree.

South Islander Lizzie Menlove took on the internship after a mentor suggested she consider it as a means of advancing her calling to enter youth ministry full-time.

"I found it empowering, and would recommend it to anyone wanting a career in the Church."

In looking at options for doing a theology degree, Blenheim-based Conrad Demmocks has no regrets about being directed to the PYM Internship. He found it more than fulfilled his needs and says he is now keen to pursue a master's degree.

Viv Posselt Spanz

# Students record church schools song



Students from Presbyterian schools gathered at Scots College, Wellington in September last year for the first official recording of the inspiring song, "Pioneers of Hope".

**About 30 students from nine Presbyterian schools around the country felt like rock stars for a day when they made the first recording of "Pioneers of Hope", a song composed to celebrate the centenaries of Presbyterian schools throughout New Zealand.**

Students from St Cuthbert's, St Kentigern Boys' and Girls' schools in Auckland, Rangi Ruru and St Andrew's colleges in Christchurch and Queen Margaret, St Oran's and Solway colleges in the Wellington region gathered at Scots College in September last year for the first official recording of the inspiring song.

"Pioneers of Hope" was written by the Church's Auckland-based worship, music and arts enabler, the Rev Malcolm Gordon, who aimed to compose a new song that was, "timeless, fresh and newly invigorating".

Malcolm wanted to link today's Presbyterian school students with church members who had done extraordinary things in the past, like the missionaries who built schools, churches and hospitals.

"Even the founders [of this country] were building on something. They looked like they were starting from scratch but were rich in tradition from Scotland, England, and other countries, where churches, schools and hospitals were built.

"When people cheerily remind us the Church is in decline we could easily become introspective and insular, but there is something deep in our story about having a bigger vision of what God is all about."

He says the opening line of the song, "We are a people of courage who have not shied away from the call," is a simple, bold statement, "about the way we are going to exist in this world. There is a heritage of wisdom and shrewdness in the Presbyterian Church and also one of courage and a commitment to do the right thing.

"The message of the song is aspirational. We long to be a people of courage, we long for a world full of justice." He hoped the words being sung would help create that reality.

"In a way we are all invited into a pioneering way of thinking – what is the gift, the creation, the addition I can offer this world that won't exist if I don't make it? We all carry God's image, we all have something to offer the world that cannot be found anywhere else."

Describing the day of the recording as spectacular, he says the choral version of the song showed off the students', "amazing ability to sing in this way", and the rendition of the pop anthem version of the song recorded at the end of the day was the highlight.

"They lifted their heads, their eyes were bright, body language energetic. They could have just slumped but they sang their hearts out and sounded fantastic. They nailed it. I was really proud of them. Then they rushed off to the airport like real rock stars," he says.

Usually he writes a song and sends it away for someone else to make the arrangement before it is sung in church. This time it was a, "wonderful collaborative effort".

Recording could be quite unforgiving, he says, "we had to make sure we were really nailing it. They were a great bunch of singers and were very patient. I was impressed as much by their silence required during the recording process as by their singing".

Saint Kentigern Boys' School student Jack Webber said when the students arrived they were asked to rate from 1 to 10 how excited they were to be there.

"There were lots of 10s, a couple of 9s, and one girl got really ambitious and put in an 11," he says.

The recording was a new experience for the students.

"It was really fascinating to see how the recording process worked. They talked to us about different concepts like sound absorption and explained the importance of the microphones being in exactly the right position.

"The trickiest thing was staying silent while the soundtrack played over so they could remove it from the original recording and have just our voices left.

"Overall it was a truly awesome experience," he says.

The song was performed by students at the opening service of the Church's General Assembly in November.

Presbyterian Church School's Resource Office director the Rev Sharon Ross Ensor says a video and soundtrack of the recording was made available to schools late last year and is on YouTube [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPBDhQoPTIs>].

Kay Blundell **Spanz**



# Chinese Presbyterians discover their history in Dunedin

**Last year, the young professional group from Auckland Chinese Presbyterian Church took a study trip to Dunedin to explore the history of Chinese Presbyterian mission in New Zealand. Dunedin is home to the oldest Chinese Presbyterian Church and to Knox College, which houses the Presbyterian Research Centre Archives.**

"Even though our young professionals have been part of the church for quite a few years, they had very little knowledge of how the Chinese mission started and why we have a Chinese ministry in New Zealand," says the Auckland Chinese Presbyterian Church minister, the Rev Micah Tang.

"I've only been here for three years, and I was curious about the history of the Church, so I went to seek out more information, and thought it would be very useful for the young people to also find out more about where the church came from and why we are here."

Once in Dunedin, the group headed to Archives, where they attended a lecture about the Chinese ministry and how the Presbyterian Church began its Chinese mission in New Zealand.

The group learned about how, in the mid-1860s, Chinese gold miners were invited to work in mines in Otago which had been abandoned as the gold rush faded. They intended to earn some money and then return home, but that was not how it worked out for most of them. By 1869, more than 1,200 Chinese people were living in Otago and only two of them were women! Most of the miners had little or no English, and their living conditions were poor.

At this stage, the Presbyterian Church saw the potential for evangelism with the growing Chinese community, but this missionary work was not easy because of the language barrier and cultural differences. Presbyterian Alexander Don was sent to China to study Cantonese and learn about the culture. He took many photos and kept a record of his journey. In 1883, back in New Zealand, he opened the Chinese Mission Church, which is now the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church.

"Hearing this history was very exciting and encouraging to our young people," says Micah. "They realised that more than 100 years ago people had committed their money, time and lives to share the good news, at a time when some New Zealanders were anti-Chinese. The Presbyterians were really brave and embraced the Chinese community. It was touching to hear about this."



Auckland Chinese Presbyterian Church's young professional group visited Dunedin to find the "family tree of our church".

"As we looked through the photographs documenting the early Chinese Presbyterian activities, we saw familiar buildings and family members from our church," says Ida Tang, who was part of the group.

"It was like travelling back in time to look at the family tree of our church. Slowly, like a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces started to come together. The history formed the foundation of our learning, uncovering the roots to our church and linking the past with the present."

The group visited the Dunedin Chinese Presbyterian Church. "Our young people were humbled by the devotion and commitment of the youth there," says Micah. "They're fully committed to serving the Chinese student community in Dunedin, and they do a great job reaching out. They have more than 80 students attending regularly."

"In Auckland, we're on a similar journey, and we understand that serving the students can be challenging," adds Ida.

"The pastor shared his church's learnings; it was encouraging to see how much they've grown in the past few years. They have a strong missionary passion to spread God's love. Knowing that students come and go, their aim is to plant the seed, nourish the young souls with solid Christian values, and let the earth sprout the vegetation."

Despite their similarities, the two churches had never had the chance to connect before. "Now we've started to know each other, I hope we can keep the connection going," says Micah. "Hopefully the future is bright!"

The young professionals found their time in Dunedin hugely valuable. "We learned about ourselves and the roots of Chinese Presbyterian church in New Zealand," says Ida. "Comparing the past and present, everything looks different, but really nothing has changed. We're still trying to achieve the same thing, in whatever language and wherever we are."

Kate Davidson [Spanz](#)

# SAFETY WARRANT OF FITNESS PASSES TEST

**New Zealand's 2016 upgrade of health and safety legislation validated much of what the Presbyterian Church was already doing, and spearheaded the development of a pioneering Safety Warrant of Fitness (WOF) course for the Church's youth and children leaders.**

Since launching last year, the initiative has seen about 250 youth and children's workers complete a one-day training course covering health and safety, risk management and ethical practice.

Its success has prompted organisers to work towards handing much of the practical training element over to regional teams in 2017, thereby creating space for those at national level to provide ongoing support and update training material.

Donavan Hartel, youth ministry leader at Auckland's St Columba at Botany, found the course to be beneficial on several levels.

"It really helped me in terms of strategy. I will use it with my leaders and would recommend it 100 percent to anyone working with youth."

Donavan says the spectre of being liable for harm once the new legislation came into force had initially put something of "a damper" on his youth work, and he wondered what could be done to mitigate the risk.

"I went to the workshop very encouraged that here was something that would enable us to provide the best service. For me, that turned a potential negative into a positive."

The new Health and Safety at Work Act came into force on April 4, 2015, making workplace individuals responsible for the health and safety of those working in, or visiting, those environments. The call for a more effective administration of risk management and safety structures sent many organisations into a spin as they rushed to put their house in order.

Through some sensible decision-making, the Presbyterian Church was already part-way there.

Standardised practices around safety and ethics, particularly in relation to the Presbyterian Youth Ministry (PYM), have been in place for about five years, but the new legislation led to a tightening of safety structures.

PYM's national youth director Matt Chamberlin says that in 2015 the PYM focus group acknowledged the need to take health and safety more seriously.



National youth convenor for the Pacific Islands Synod, Naama Ine, is impressed with the PYM safety WOF course.

"PYM branded that initiative as a Safety WOF and worked in partnership with Kids Friendly to package up a day of training for children and youth workers. It came with the expectation that leaders would be Police-checked and that churches would have trained first aiders as part of their teams."

Matt says PYM was already using risk management material from the old Going Deeper course, and after consulting experts in the field, incorporated the Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics for youth workers alongside the Church's existing Code of Ethics and biblical principles.

After an initial pilot, safety WOF courses have taken place in Dunedin, Blenheim, Wellington, Waikanae, Napier, Kerikeri, Rotorua, and twice in both Auckland and Christchurch.

Describing feedback as "very positive", Matt says while attendees might have expected the worst when signing up for training, they were "very pleasantly surprised to experience a day that was interactive, fun and very practical".

Steering the training has been PYM national youth manager Gordon Fitch.

He explained how the course covers maintaining the physical, spiritual, psychological and sexual safety of those entrusted to the church, and emphasised the importance of every youth and children's leader having access to the information.

"All churches know the consequences of not taking safety seriously at this level, and I believe that this course is something of a trail-blazer. It has attracted some interest from other denominations."

Gordon said the commitment is to run the course in each presbytery at least once a year.

Naama Ine, who is the national youth convenor for the Pacific Islands Synod, was so impressed with the course she attended that she wants to see it delivered in all parishes within the Synod.

"Even though I have been in youth leadership for a long time, I found there was plenty new and beneficial material. One of its strengths is that it is flexible enough to be a good fit with churches of all different sizes and cultures."

The Church recommends that every youth and children's leader attend the course. Information on training days in specific areas is available on [pym.org.nz/wof/](http://pym.org.nz/wof/).

Viv Posselt Spanz





## Church helps reunite refugee family

**Wet and windy Wellington is proving a haven from the stress, poverty and persecution they left behind in Myanmar for Chin refugees Olivia and Frank and their families.**

"I am very happy to be here," says Frank, who arrived in Wellington in November with his wife, kids and niece Esther. "I like the kiwi lifestyle and the people here are very kind to us."

The local Miramar Uniting Church has been their home from day one, thanks to his sister Olivia, who arrived in the neighbourhood four years ago and joined the congregation almost immediately.

Since then the church has been working with refugees, providing assistance as needed. They paid medical bills, gave Frank a part-time job, helped with language lessons and even accommodation.

From the start of their journey Frank and his family knew they wanted to be in Miramar, because of Olivia, and that proved a tad tough. "He has a large family, five teenagers plus his niece and Housing New Zealand houses around here aren't big enough," says the Miramar Uniting minister the Rev Dr Paul Prestidge.

Knowing the families were determined to be united Paul and his wife Fiona offered their home, something Frank took up only reluctantly just two weeks before the Refugee Centre in Mangere was to release them.

"Our children are away at university, so a smaller space would do us fine. We felt God called us to do this and within two weeks someone found us a house three minutes from the church," says Paul.

Myanmar is one of the poorest countries on the planet and for the Chin people, who live predominantly in Chin State that borders India, life is even harder as most of them are Christians.



In January 2016 Rev Dr Paul Prestidge and family were joined by, from left, Olivia and Frank for a holiday in Taranaki.

They often face the wrath of government officials, including the military, who use against the Chin people forced labour, arbitrary arrest and detention; torture and mistreatment; restrictions on movement, expression, and religious freedom; abusive military conscription; and extortion and confiscation of property.

While Olivia turned up at church out of the blue, the arrival of Frank and his family had been warmly anticipated for two years. Frank's family was also home to Olivia's daughter Esther, who is deaf. "She was left behind as they were led to believe that Esther's presence would diminish their chances of getting refugee status anywhere," says Paul.

The family lived in Kuala Lumpur for a while, living hand-to-mouth, with Frank doing cheap labour to make ends meet, and they moved around a lot to avoid complications. Living in a single room with so many people isn't easy and Esther's deafness caused additional issues, simply because she can't hear. The family got to Kuala Lumpur from Myanmar by buying plane tickets.

After Christmas, Paul and his wife took the family for a holiday to Taranaki, with kind cooperation from St James' Church New Plymouth, where Paul was the minister a few years ago. "They let us use the church hall as a base. We took

the family to the beach, went fishing and let Frank practice driving on rural roads," he says.

Poverty is the biggest problem facing refugees in New Zealand, says Paul. Olivia's husband has a full-time job in a Wellington cafe and Frank works in the church office.

The siblings' parents and a sister still live in Myanmar and contact with them is sporadic. "The timeframe is different," says Frank, "so we write emails to arrange a time to call, which often cuts out and then we have to arrange another time". Rev Phil King, the Church's global mission coordinator, recently paid a visit to Olivia and Frank's relatives in Myanmar to assure them that all is well with the families in Miramar.

Frank is a qualified and experienced church pastor and the only ordained person among the Chin in New Zealand. He already works as a volunteer pastor among the Chin, many of whom live in Lower Hutt.

Frank is looking for full-time work, and is considering signing up for a bachelor's degree in social work.

"We have no idea what God is working [toward] for the future, but we are very happy to be here," he says.

Janine Baalbergen Spanz



# Stopping gender violence

**Oneyda has worked hard to overcome the violence and poverty of her childhood. Her home in rural Nicaragua was a violent place and she lived in constant fear. Her worries made her anxious and depressed. She felt safer spending time alone rather than with friends. At school, she found it hard to concentrate and worried what she would find when she got home. Her father often lost his temper, hitting out at family members. Their family was not the only one. In their village, like many others, domestic violence, made worse by grueling poverty and Nicaragua's civil war, was very familiar.**

About ten years ago, Christian World Service partner CEPAD (*Consejo de Iglesias Evangelicas Pro-Alianza Denominacional*) began discussions in her village. The Development Committee in Oneyda's village identified poverty and violence as key needs. Oneyda's father took part in an agricultural training programme that introduced new techniques for growing more food from their tiny plot of land. The farmers met regularly with the CEPAD trainer to discuss progress and learn from each other as well as dealing with any issues that arose. He learned to have better control over his temper and was grateful for better production. CEPAD staff paid special attention to her mother, giving her advice and the opportunity to heal from her experiences.

Worried about what was happening to their young people, the community took advantage of a psychosocial training programme CEPAD offered. Many of the young people had psychological and physical scars from the violence at home that was affecting life in the community. This violence was both a cause and a product of their poverty. The community knew that it needed to address violence to improve everybody's well-being.

When she was 15, Oneyda was chosen to be a health promoter as part of the programme. The ten introductory



sessions provided training in counselling, stress management and strategies to stop violence, including learning about the legal protections available. After the initial training, she led a group of 15 young people who met regularly to talk about the difficulties they faced. Leading the sessions forced Oneyda to share some of her own experiences and take control of her own life.

She says CEPAD's work has reduced violence in her village and many others in rural Nicaragua. "I am thankful to CEPAD for these programmes that help young people and families prevent violence in our communities," she says.

CEPAD's pattern of working in a village for 3-5 years has laid a foundation for better outcomes for many people. With decades of experience behind them, CEPAD is able to bring people together to agree on priorities and give them crucial training and support. As well as poverty, the culture of *machismo*, an exaggerated sense of masculinity, contributes to violence in the country. Making sure poor, rural women know they can report violence to a specialised women's department at the municipal police station has been a major improvement according to CEPAD. The Pan-America Health Organisation reports about a third

of Nicaraguan women have experienced violence from their partners and more than 15 percent have been subject to sexual violence.

At 24, Oneyda is married and determined her baby will be safe from violence. Thanks to her own efforts and the crucial support she received during her adolescence, she now has a good job working with a non-governmental organisation specialising in microfinance.

"Being a Latino country, the macho culture affects women both in urban and rural areas. CEPAD emphasises Galatians 3:28 "... there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus," and because of that, women are empowered through workshops that teach them what the Bible says but also what the laws of the country say about equality in gender," says Dámaris Albuquerque, executive director of CEPAD.

Presbyterian Women Aotearoa New Zealand and the Methodist Women's Fellowship are raising funds for this year's special project "Let God's Light Shine". Part of the funds raised will enable CEPAD to extend its psychosocial programme to more communities. Giving people the resources they need to stop gender violence, will save lives and help people escape poverty.

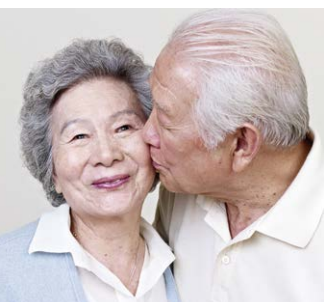


**Thank you for  
your gift of hope**  
to the  
**CWS Christmas Appeal.**



**[www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)**





## Some things make for happier, healthier living, **no matter what your age or ability.**

- A sense of community
- Friends, family, whānau
- Being able to give and receive
- Being able to make decisions for yourself
- And, most of all, practical support when you need it.

At Enliven we work alongside you and your family to achieve these things.

### **Enliven services include:**

- Home based support
- Community based social and day activities
- Retirement living options
- Residential aged care

### **To find out more about Enliven services in your area call our regional offices:**

Upper North Island	0800 365 4836
East Coast	(06) 877 8193
Lower North Island	0800 36 54 83
Upper South Island	(03) 366 5472
South Canterbury	(03) 687 1120
Otago	(03) 477 7115
Southland	(03) 211 8200