



sPanz

Spanning Presbyterians In Aotearoa New Zealand

December 2005, Issue 25

Keeping
Christmas
fresh

What does Christmas bring to mind?

www.presbyterian.org.nz

COMMENT

Comment is a column where guest writers express their opinion on church or social issues

God's future coming toward us

By Diane Gilliam-Weeks

As we stand on the beach this summer watching the waves, we might think about the meaning of 'advent'. In the Christian context, Advent indicates God's future coming toward us – breaking in on us as waves roll in.

In the season of Advent we anticipate and celebrate God's future breaking into the human dimension of time and space in the infant Christ, Emmanuel, God with us.

As Christmas approaches, we remember the story of Jesus' advent carrying God's saving message of Shalom – the saving message of peace with justice, compassion and mercy. The message previously proclaimed by God's long chain of prophets and ignored by humankind.

We remind ourselves that it is this message, this Way, Jesus' Way, and only this way, that will save us and save the Earth.

Though it's appropriate to remember and honour past struggles and triumphs, it's imagining the shape of God's future that excites, energises and motivates us. When we catch a vision of God's future, only then we can better convert our lives, our faith communities and our world to match it.

And so it was, we gathered in Timaru over Labour weekend to celebrate 40 years of ordained women's ministry in the Presbyterian Church.

In visioning the future for the Presbyterian Church we saw the centrality of Christ and his saving message of Shalom outshining any business models of being church. We saw a church motivated to build strong relationships beyond itself. We saw a multicultural priesthood of all believers where relationships, teamwork and community are emphasised over numbers and dollars. We saw a dismantling of traditional powerbases and greater participation in decision making by those who will have to live the future – the young.

We saw a time when nostalgia for the past is no longer projected onto the future. We saw a future that continues to value the collective responsibility and accountability that characterises the Presbyterian style of church government. We caught a vision of a church where we all behaved as though we truly believed all humanity to be made in the image of God. And instead of schism and division we could see greater willingness to unity in diversity and a commitment to respectful dialogue when we disagree – inside the Presbyterian Church, ecumenically, and with those of

other faiths. We wanted to be part of a faith community which is committed to prayerful discernment in every aspect of its life.

As our worship at our gathering to celebrate 40 years of ordained women's ministry finished, we sang Joyce Boyce-Tullman's words to the tune of Danny Boy:

We shall go out with hope of resurrection

We shall go out, from strength to strength go on

We shall go out and tell our stories boldly

Tales of a love that will not let us go

We'll sing out songs of wrongs that can be righted

We'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed

We'll weave a cloth of all the world united

Within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.

We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken

We'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed

We'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer

Vibrating love alive in every heart

We'll share our joy with those who are still weeping

Chant hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief

We'll leap and dance the resurrection story Including all within the circles of our love.

It was our hope that this vision of the future would be received by the Church as our gift for Christmas. sPanz

Bible Society

wishes you a very
happy and
holy Christmas
and God's abundant
Blessing for 2006



BIBLE SOCIETY
the world's largest
Bible mission

Nga Whakatauki Proverbs

Ehara taku i te toa takitahi
Engari, he toa takitini

*My strength is not that of a single
warrior, But that of many
(Huata 1921)*

Who we are

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Cover Photograph

Photograph provided by Project Crimson, which is a charitable conservation trust that aims to protect New Zealand's native Christmas trees - pohutukawa and rata. Photographer: Richard Lucy.

You may notice some changes to the look and content of this edition of sPanz. We hope you like the new look and welcome your comments on any aspect of the magazine.
Editor – Josephine Reader

Amorangi minister numbers to double



Amorangi minister Graeme Hunkin speaking at Te Aka Puaho jubilee celebrations earlier this year.

Te Aka Puaho has accepted a record nine people for Amorangi ministry training this year. Previous years have seen only two or three apply, and there are currently only seven Amorangi nationally.

The director of the training, Rev Wayne Te Kaawa, believes that the success of Te Aka Puaho's fiftieth anniversary celebrations in March helped inspire people towards ministry. Over 200 people attended the celebrations in Ohope, which included special commemorations and reminiscences about the Very Rev J G Laughton and his wife, Horianna.

"People saw that the church was very much still alive and wanted to be part of it," he says.

Amorangi ministry training provides a new level of understanding and responsibility for those already serving in their parish communities. The Amorangi are nominated by their communities, and after a year of part-time training (300 hours in total), they are ordained and can administer the sacraments like other ministers.

Mr Te Kaawa has developed the training programme with advice from the School of Ministry. It includes pastoral theology, systematic theology, Christology, and the theology of ministry. Instead of learning about the European history of the church, Amorangi trainees will learn about

the history of Christianity in Aotearoa New Zealand. They will gain experience within a range of different Christian denominations.

Trainees visit Te Aka Puaho parishes throughout the North Island, and have an intensive five-day training experience at Ruatahuna and Maungapohatu in the remote Urewera ranges.

Amorangi are expected to return to the parish that nominated them and work full-time in ministry. Experience as an Amorangi can also facilitate entry into training for full-time stipend ministry, which can involve being situated in any parish.

While Amorangi have historically received some funding to cover costs such as travel, this has recently been withdrawn due to financial constraints within the church. This makes the high number of applicants even more admirable.

Around 20 people expressed interest in Amorangi ministry this year, but many postponed their involvement, and Mr Te Kaawa believes similar numbers may also apply for the next intake. He hopes the Church will eventually be able to provide more support for Amorangi.

By Heeni Collins *sPanz*

THE AMORANGI TRAINEES ARE:

- Kerry Cameron of Kahungunu - Opotiki parish
- Tumihitai Raerino of Tuwharetoa - Putauaki parish
- Mervyn Hoete of Tuwharetoa - Putauaki parish
- Paora Hunia of Tuwharetoa - Putauaki parish
- Mitchell Jaram of Ngati Awa/Whanau a Apanui - Whakatane parish
- Tamihana Thrupp of Tuhoe - Whakatane parish
- Tukua Tuwairua of Ngai Te Rangi - Heretaunga parish
- Messina Roberts of Tuhoe - Rotorua parish
- Rewi Manihera of Tuhoe - Ruatahuna parish.



Keeping Christmas fresh

What does Christmas bring to mind? For many people, their first associations are crazed shopping marathons and that rush to have everything at work done by 24 December while simultaneously organising a gourmet feast for the following day.

Amanda Wells investigates how parishes around New Zealand are reminding people of the real Christmas message.

The secular associations of the festival have grown so strong that they threaten to obliterate the quiet message of Christ's birth. Every year, our ministers and congregations face the challenge of making the real Christmas news heard.

The Rev Howard Carter of Ahuriri Putorino parish, which has six rural churches in the Napier region, says the demand for traditional elements, like carol services by candlelight, is still strong. "But we're not the only people who like doing that anymore."

Throughout New Zealand, organised carols events have become big business, complete with broadcasting involvement, candle kits and celebrity singers. For example, in 2005 Napier will sport carols not only in the park, but also in the botanical gardens and on the main parade.

This year, Mr Carter says, the local churches have got together to organise a carols event with corporate sponsorship that is expected to attract 10,000 people but will feature a clear Gospel message.

In Christchurch, Hornby Presbyterian Community Church takes a similar tack, organising "Party in the Park", which is usually held the Sunday before Christmas.

The Rev Murray Talbot says the event, which runs from mid afternoon to late evening, usually attracts about 3000 people. Christchurch City Council provides several thousand dollars' worth of sponsorship.

Stalls from community groups are set up around a "village green", children can participate in colouring-in competitions and enjoy a bouncy castle or train rides, and there's free candy floss or afternoon tea.

Mr Talbot says the event is a gift from the church to the community at Christmas. A large team of church volunteers run the event, with organisation commencing about halfway through the year. "Everyone seems to pull together, usually with a buzz."

Though the event has elements of outreach, such as a performance by the church choir, it's more about building relationships with the community, Mr Hornby says.

For many people, attending this type of event may be the closest they come to church during Christmas.

Says Mr Carter: "For most New Zealanders, Christmas is a Hallmark moment."

Nativity plays and carols can seem far removed from both the pressure that Christmas generates and from the tough realities of life.

The Rev Peter Cheyne of Gore's Calvin Presbyterian Church says Christmas has become "a huge communication issue". People are more busy than usual and have less time to hear the church's message among the din of consumer marketing.

People tend to see Christmas as a family time, he says, rather than something involving church or the wider community.

Calvin has a large billboard outside, and experiments with attention-grabbing Christmas messages. One year it was a Christmas tree that changed over the course of four billboards into a cross. Another year, the church took a full page ad in the local newspaper that illustrated Father Christmas kneeling before the Christ-child.

Taking a different tack, last Christmas Napier's Mr Carter held a service reflecting on significant images: the girl burned by napalm in Vietnam, a plane flying into the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001, Chinese tanks in Tiananmen Square, and the Voyager photograph of our solar system.

He says these were an attempt to reconcile the image of the nativity, which has become meaningless to many non-church goers, with contemporary concerns. The reflections were later published in *Hawkes Bay Today*, generating comments that people found them helpful, Mr Carter says.

When working at Rotorua's St John's in the City several years ago, Mr Carter helped the young people devise a service called "10 things I hate about Christmas". It played off the title of a contemporary film and revealed issues like disillusionment with the commercialism of Christmas, the pain of shuttling between different parents or families, and complaints about "cheesy stuff on TV". He says casting the Bible's light on these issues revealed the real nativity scene: one that wasn't about happy families, presents or entertainment.

Giving things away during the most commercial season of the year is another way to make people think twice.

Calvin offers free gift wrapping at The Warehouse, holds a community dinner on Christmas day and is this year planning to pick a street and offer its residents free car washes.

Mr Cheyne says doing something for free helps grab people's attention and makes them wonder at the motivations behind it.

Different teams organise each programme, with many people in the congregation involved. Those helping out on Christmas day give up time with their families to provide transport and serve the traditional Christmas dinner for between 80 and 100 people from the community.

Mr Cheyne says volunteers often end up finding their involvement is the best part of Christmas. "They feel like they've done something significant."

However, running out of energy by the end of the year can be a problem for Christmas outreach programmes, he says.

"We're trying to get people to budget their energy and keep some for this. It's a huge issue." Some ways to do this include taking time out or a holiday before Christmas.

Wellington's Johnsonville Uniting Church will also hold a meal in the church on Christmas day, for those who don't spend the day with family, says the Rev Peter MacKenzie. In previous years, it has been at the MacKenzie's home, but has grown too big.

But the growing range of ways in which our congregations express the meaning of Christmas doesn't mean an abandonment of church services.

In Hornby, a memorial service acknowledges the loss that many people will be feeling at this time of year. Mr Talbot says those attending bring a flower to remember a loved one.

Hornby's Christmas day service attracts large numbers of people on the fringes of the church, he says, with the mes-

sage usually emphasising the hope that Jesus brings.

Traditionally, Calvin has held a service late on Christmas Eve in one of the rural churches. This is well attended, Mr Cheyne says, and past attempts to run more of a family-type service in a neutral location, such as a school hall, haven't been as popular.

Mr Carter says the traditional Christmas services will be held in his rural worship centres but they will be advertised in contemporary ways, such as putting postcards into people's letterboxes.

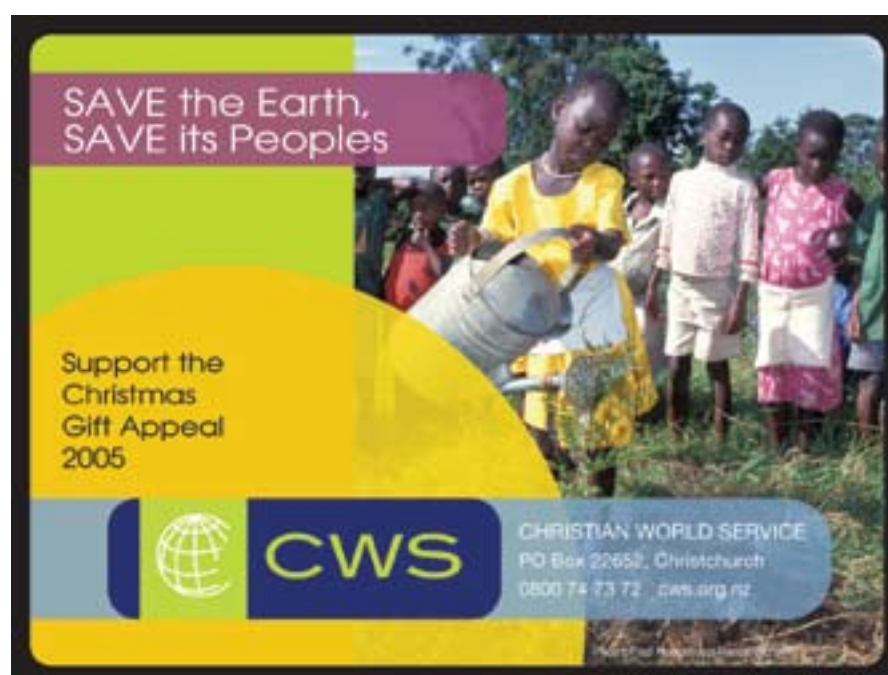
Key messages will be highlighted, he says, such as the Christmas day service being only 45 minutes so that people can easily fit it between family commitments.

Mr McKenzie says that Christmas remains "a balance between tradition and originality".

Johnsonville Union has a large nativity scene with models half life-size. They feature every Christmas, though their location in the church changes every year. And a Christmas tree in the foyer is decorated by the different community groups that use the hall.

Every year Johnsonville strongly supports the CWS Christmas appeal because of its origins in the Uniting movement, Mr McKenzie says.

But he also notes that the church's focus is trying to connect faith with everyday lives, and "for most people, Christmas is not ordinary". sPanz



CD PICKS



Julia Grace

Julia Grace

Julia Grace was lead singer for the now defunct

Auckland-based group Elevator, whose electronica and dance influenced music made them a unique fixture in the New Zealand Christian music scene. Her solo debut follows a similar style to that of her former band, yet has evolved into a more radio-friendly and accessible sound. Musically, Julia Grace mixes tasteful rhythms with gentle organic instrumentation, placing Grace's vocals to the centre of her songs. Her voice is strong and adaptable, able to effortlessly reach high notes in the reflective "Stars" and pound out the more abrasive "Electrical". This debut establishes Julia Grace as a strong force in New Zealand Christian music, and it will be fascinating to follow her progress.



Sigur Ros

Takk

The fourth album from the most famous band to ever emerge from

Reykjavik, Takk (Icelandic for "thank you") continues the group's fascination with dramatic arrangements, lush soundscapes and gorgeous vocal melodies. Sigur Ros could be classified in the same post-rock genre as Radiohead's later work or Mogwai, who also experiment with unconventional sounds and dispense with verse-chorus song structures. But Sigur Ros's distinctive ethereal male vocals and use of orchestration puts them in a category all of their own. Their use of a foreign language directs even more attention to their music, which excels particularly with the majestic "Hoppípolla" and piano-led groove of "Sæglópur". For those with the patience to endure the occasional slow moving passage in order to discover moments of breathtaking beauty, Takk is highly recommended.

By Graham Fyfe

Graham Fyfe is a musician for Knox-St Columba Church, Lower Hutt



Anna Gray answers questions about her work caring for abandoned babies with The Love of Christ Ministries in South Africa.

What does your role at TLC Ministries involve?

The practical care of abandoned babies while they are at our home. This means feeding them, changing their nappies, playing with and cuddling them, and being that giver of love and attention in their lives.

Why did you choose this cause?

It just moves my heart that a baby could be totally disowned by its parents. If I have a spare year of my life to change the lives of a few of these wee kids, then I think I should do that. Working with babies and kids is an area that doesn't take qualifications, just willingness, love, patience and servanthood.

What have you learned about God through your work this year?

That He is a miracle worker who never gives up or grows weary. He makes baby after baby, each so unique, so beautiful and so perfect - despite the fact that we mess them and the world up each time. He's got some purpose and method we can't see.

Where have you seen people making a difference?

In the local and international people giving their time to bring up babies that aren't theirs, in the TLC family, and in the Jarvis family who have sacrificed their whole lives to the vision of this place. They have just seen 500 babies come through their care and be adopted out.

What is the most exciting thing about being involved with this organisation?

The huge blessing of being able to help rescue a beautiful, hope-filled life.

What have been the biggest challenges?

To remember why I'm doing this and to try to make each minute a ministry, through the monotony and the stress of the day-to-day work. Also, after the freedom of New Zealand, the restrictiveness of living in Joburg [Johannesburg] and not being able to leave the property except in a locked car has been challenging.

Who has inspired you to serve overseas?

My family; the Bible; something inside me saying "go and help the rest of the world, rich girl"; Jenny McMahon, an organiser of aid camps in Africa; Mother Theresa and Paul Brand.

Where to from here?

I go to Beautiful Gate Orphanage in Lesotho shortly for six weeks, and then come back to TLC for December and January. Then home to New Zealand in February to continue studying teaching at Otago University. Then who knows.

Do you have any recommended books?

What's So Amazing About Grace? by Philip Yancey. *In the Silence of the Heart* by Mother Theresa.

Where can I find out more about your work?

Um, maybe through the Presbyterian Church website, the Global Mission Gazette, or ask my Mum. [sPanz](#)



Samstock more than just music

Nuciferous was one of the many bands that played Samstock 2005.

Samstock is a music festival. The evidence is overwhelming. There's music, there are bands, there are tents and lo and behold, there are young people. But, scratch the surface and you'll find that beauty is more than skin deep.

This year the Samstock team made a conscious effort to bring a greater depth of meaning to the festival through music and art. Like music, art has the ability to communicate in ways that go beyond vocabulary.

The team came up with two themes: firstly, a series of signs communicating something of how God sees us: "You are beautiful. You are respected. You are fascinating.", and secondly, artwork about perceptions of God.

Organising committee member Gareth Bedford says of the signs, "we wanted to say something about the character of God, but also putting messages that are perhaps a little bit contrary to what people get in everyday in magazines and stuff. The way God sees us comes from His character."

The simple, black and white images were challenging, unconventional, and aimed at communicating God's love for us without resorting to the kind of Christian jargon that can alienate those who need to feel His love the most.

"We had 'You are beautiful' on main stage. A guy told me it was wrong, because the person in the image was beautiful and most of us don't look like that, but I made a point of choosing the most beautiful image I had for that sign. Maybe we don't see ourselves like that, but God sees us as stunning, beautiful, and maybe we need to think about that," says Gareth.

A broad group of people created unique, abstract pieces of art that spoke in a personal way about the artist's perception of God. A point was made of inviting some "non-arty" people to be involved, says Gareth.

"A lot of them [the artists] didn't want to do it, but [Ollie Yeoman] really bought into the idea behind it. [His piece] was two buckets full of sand and a rock. It was about the power of God. Stone can be sheared off a mountain in an instant, or can be turned into sand over a long period of time. Which one is more powerful? They're both powerful in different ways and God's power works in our lives in different ways at different times, but it's always there. I really liked that one."

At this point you may be thinking, "isn't this a review of a music

festival? Why's he banging on about this art stuff? Was the music that bad?" Well, the music was great. The young people had a fantastic time. The festival even failed to lose money. But the point is Samstock isn't simply about making money, or having a good time.

Through creativity, the music, the art, the fun and games and the community generated over the weekend, we are drawn closer to our Creator God. Our hope is that everyone who took part, from the toilet cleaners to the MCs, came along for the ride.

By Rory Grant sPanz

TICKETS ON SALE
OCTOBER 3RD
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 MUSIC FESTIVAL OUTSIDE AMERICA
WWW.PARACHUTEMUSIC.COM
 ((life fm)) World Vision

Kevin Ward explores the impact of societal changes on the traditional local community-based parish model.



Church in a community of fragments

There is now widespread recognition that geographical communities are giving way to networks of interest, so it's becoming less and less viable to have geographically based churches trying to meet the needs of all in the local community with the same menu.

People do not relate to others in the same place as much (often scarcely knowing their neighbours) but to individuals with similar interests from much further afield. Today, there is little overlap in the people we meet in our work, sport, education and other networks and there is little that might indicate we all belong to one community. We experience community in a thousand little fragments.

Increasingly, sociologists talk about community "across space" rather than "within place". This has implications for church because the traditional parish structure is based on the premise that people in same area, across a spectrum of ages, vocations and leisure pursuits do things together. Historically, churches were made up of those who were born into in the local community. However, increasingly people do not identify with those communities anymore. They are mobile and belong to communities of people of their culture, or with similar interests, concerns and preferences. We are communities of choice rather than of birth.

In our diverse, fragmented, network society we need a diverse, fragmented network church that lives within the networks in which people live. There is still a place for some traditional local churches, especially for older less mobile people. But alongside these, we need to develop a whole variety of diverse, culturally and socially specific congregations, which people join from a wider geographical area on the basis of personal preference.

If society now consists of a mosaic of fragments or niches then we must do church in fragments or niches. While maintaining a reduced number of local churches, I believe that we need two basic approaches: firstly, larger churches that have several quite

different congregations in them (research now indicates that most larger churches in the United States are multi-congregational rather than multi-service); secondly, smaller niche churches that have incarnated the Gospel for particular socio-cultural groups, including the following:

- Older (post-55) adults brought up in the Christian tradition to whom traditional style is helpful.
- Baby boomers (early 40s to late 50s) who are churched and often prefer a more charismatic style.
- Baby boomers who have left church but have an increasing interest in spirituality and religious questions. A more reflective and open-ended approach that uses traditions eclectically is helpful.
- Young families who are often a mix of boomers and GenXers. They typically favour a highly active participatory style.
- Young adult GenXers (who are in the mid 20s and often up to the late 30s). Mostly unmarried and without children, they do not relate either to the charismatic or the family-centred styles, preferring their own creativity.
- Today's youth culture who are under 25 and show many differences to the now adult GenXers.
- Other ethnic groups who often have a variety of groups with many of the above issues in them.

While recognising this need for diversity it is also important that we work on ways to express our unity. Cross fertilisation and contribution from different ages and groups is important. Larger churches need to work on ways different congregations can come together at times, and the niche churches need to see themselves as part of a bigger whole as well as sharing together in doing things that are beyond the resources of their own community.

How did we become a community of fragments?

One of biggest social changes of the past 40 years has been the loss of local community. Prior to the 1960s, a substantial part of life took place in local communities. The mainstays of these were married women. Most of them lived within the confines of the local community with their children during the week, and shared it with their husbands during weekends. Married women began entering the workforce in large numbers in the 1960s, and the significance of the local community began to decline. As families bought a second car, shopping, business, entertainment, leisure all began to occur outside the local community. As communities became less significant, so did local community churches, and many people left the church altogether. The flow started in the mid 1960s, and has not yet ended.

Today we live in a world that is often described by the word "post". In *The Postmodern Parish*, Jim Kitchens lists three factors that determine the context of the parish today: post-modernity, post-Christendom and post-denominationalism. To add to the plethora of "posts" I find the most helpful term is yet another post: post-traditional.

What this means is not that we are beyond tradition but we have moved to the place where inherited traditions play less decisive roles in the way we understand and order our lives. If traditions remain important to us, they do so because we *choose* to seek their guidance in the changed and changing contexts in which we live. We often reinterpret and change them in the process. Such responses to tradition are quite different from the kind of

"inevitable taken for granted" way individuals have previously experienced traditions.

This is not to say that traditions are no longer important, but that something significant is happening in the way we relate to them. For increasing numbers of people, traditions no longer carry the authoritative weight they once did. This involves a shift of authority from something "out there" and external to us (scripture, appointed leaders, Book of Order) to authority that resides "in here" – in the self. As a result, we live *reflexively*, not abandoning our traditions but not following them uncritically. It means testing them by our own knowledge and experience as well as in dialogue with other traditions.

As all forms of church are discovering, this has a profound impact on ecclesiology, to the considerable consternation of many. In *Church Dogmatics*, Karl Barth writes:

"... in every age and place its constitution and order have been broadly determined and conditioned by political, economic, and cultural models more or less imperatively forced on it by its situation in world history... It has had and still has to adapt or approximate itself to these in order to maintain itself... in respect of the form of its existence... there is no sacred sociology [of the church]."

There are then no sacred forms of church. There are traditions we should value and we ignore or treat these lightly to our own impoverishment. Yet we must recognise them as human constructions. We need to, again, give full expression to the reformation principle, *ecclesia semper reformanda*, as we develop ecclesiastical practices that are both faithful to our tradition and appropriate to the social and cultural realities of our post-traditional, post-modern and post-Christendom society.

It means we need to recognise the difference between valuing "traditions" and "traditionalism". We need to ask what the essence of this we are trying to live out is, and how we live that out now in our very different context, rather than slavishly adhering to the forms it was in an earlier context. This requires we break with the "but we've always done it this way" mentality that infects so many. [sPanz](#)

The changing face of community

FORCE FOR CHANGE

Traditional and local ↔ Freely chosen and non-local

HOUSEHOLD FRAGMENTATION

Family relations ↔ Extended family links (e.g. second families after divorce)

EFFECTS OF MOBILITY

Neighbours and network of local friends ↔ Dispersed friends

MOBILITY/TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Local organisations ↔ Dispersed communities of interest (e.g. on internet)

IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING

Local workplaces ↔ Non-local workplaces (community of colleagues)

Source: Adapted from The Henley Centre, Planning for Social Change, 1996-97

The changing face of elderly care

Stories of staff strikes, takeovers and closures are creating anxiety for many older people and their families.

Once dominated by religious and charity organisations, elderly care is increasingly the domain of commercial operators.

Australian investors Macquarie Bank and FKP Property have launched a \$340 million takeover bid for New Zealand's biggest retirement village operator, Metlifecare. The Salvation Army has sold its rest homes, as have the Auckland Methodists. Several Presbyterian Support regions have sold their residential facilities, and others are considering their options.

With our aging population, it's easy to assume that rest homes are cash cows for their owners, with ever-increasing demand and profits.

But, in reality, the price that rest homes can charge their residents, whether they are subsidised or pay privately, is capped by the government. This income is increasingly failing to cover costs.

Commercial operators make money by becoming de facto property developers, selling apartments and villas to their inhabitants and then taking another slice of the cake every time they are on-sold.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury chief executive Michael Parker says the issue starts to take on a philosophical dimension. "Do we stay in the sector and become the same as a commercial operator in order to survive?"

He says his region remains in the rest home business because it still sees a need. "We continue to review that on an annual basis."

Three Presbyterian Support regions have sold their residential care facilities. Those regions that remain in the industry – Southland, Otago, South Canterbury, and Central – face difficult operating conditions.

In October, members of the Nurses' Organisation and the Service and Food Workers Union employed by Presbyterian Support Southland, Otago and South Canterbury took strike action.

This strike action is connected to salary increases won by nurses from district health boards earlier in the year, which has put pressure on wages in the rest-home sector.

Members of industry lobby group Health-Care Providers NZ operate a total 22,000



beds out of the 33,000-bed sector, and include religious and charity providers alongside commercial operators. Chief executive Martin Taylor says the biggest immediate danger to the residential care sector is its lack of nurses.

To attract back nurses who have moved to the public sector, the private health sector needs to be funded to the same level as the DHBs so that it can pay the same wages, he says.

Care givers, who do the one-to-one work for residents, are paid only \$9-\$11 an hour and are difficult to attract and retain.

Presbyterian Support South Canterbury's Mr Parker says there is no dispute that staff are underpaid. "But we are limited in what we can actually offer."

Growing compliance costs, electricity, insurance and maintenance add to the strain on purses.

Mr Taylor says the sector's providers continue to deliver high quality care under difficult circumstances. "But if the sector doesn't get sustainable funding, then there will be problems in delivery of care and accessibility."

In early November, a new funding deal was announced for private rest-home operators that offered a 3 percent rise to cover services and a 1 percent rise to cover holiday pay.

But Mr Taylor says this fails to match the sector's inflation rate of 3.4 percent.

A worst-case scenario would see New Zealand replicating the crisis that developed in Australia, where insufficient funding led to a shortage of thousands of beds and a drop in the quality of care. The resulting crisis forced government action.

"People need to be concerned about the way the sector is funded. With the right funding, there will be providers willing to invest and stay in the sector."

Presbyterian Support East Coast announced it would sell its residential elder care facilities earlier this year. In a statement at the time, chief executive Shaun Robinson described the decision as "difficult".

"We are mindful that community relationships at many sites go back up to 50 years.

"However, the government has reneged on its part of the partnership by reducing the value of funding and pushing up costs," he said.

The Presbyterian Support regions that have moved away from rest-home care are providing assistance to the elderly in their own homes, through Community First and Home Support programmes.

By Amanda Wells **sPanz**

Churches must register under Charities Act

One of the most significant implications of the Charities Act is that charitable entities must be registered or risk losing their tax-exempt status.

The legislation came into effect in April 2005 but authorities are still working through the mechanics of how the registration process will be administered. The Charities Commission, established to oversee the Act, is currently seeking feedback from the charities sector about the registration process, which it hopes to have finalised by March 2006.

The commission will then run workshops around New Zealand to help charities understand and prepare for registration (these are tentatively scheduled for April/May next year).

Actual registration is due to begin mid-way through 2006, although it is expected that organisations will have until at least April 2007 to register before their tax status is affected.

One of the questions to be considered by the Presbyterian Church is whether

to register as individual parishes or as a group, such as a presbytery, or under an umbrella national body, says Assembly Executive Secretary the Rev Dr Kerry Enright. Registration requirements mean that there are advantages and disadvantages to each approach, he says.

"For example, advice suggests that if parishes register, this might require all of them to submit a copy of the Book of Order. It seems unlikely that this is what the commission wants, so we need to work through this sort of issue before deciding the best way forward."

Individual or group registration is just one of the issues that a working party between the Church and the Church Property Trustees will be looking at.

Mr Enright recommends that parishes wait on information from the working party before making any decisions about registration.

"There are many potential implications that need to be investigated to ensure that the administrative and compliance costs

to the Church as a whole are minimised," he says.

In the meantime, those who want more information should visit the Charities Commission website at www.charities.govt.nz or call Assembly Office for a copy of A Guide to the Charities Act, which provides useful background information.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

To register, charitable organisations will have to:

- Submit a copy of their rules
- Provide information about their current and proposed charitable activities
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SPANZ 11/05

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sP05

PI Synod to work on strategic plan

Presbyterians with Pacific heritage gathered in Avondale for the annual Pacific Islanders' Synod conference in September.

"Thinking ahead" was the theme of the gathering, where issues and opportunities facing the synod, its congregations, and New Zealand's Pacific Island communities were discussed. Time was also spent looking at what the future focus of the synod should be.

One of the main talking points was the call to develop a strategic plan to guide the synod's work in coming years. Synod clerk the Rev Tafatolu Filemoni says each of the synod's ethnic groupings will contribute to the plan. He says the mechanics of how the plan will be developed is still being worked through.

Giving the synod presbytery-like status so that it could make decisions in some areas, such as sustaining calls to Pacific Island parishes, was also a priority, says Mr Filemoni. This will be the subject of a paper to the 2006 General Assembly.

Those at the gathering also talked about how the synod can develop and strengthen itself to better support the mission and



Around 200 people from all over New Zealand gathered at the Pacific Islanders' Synod's seventh annual conference in September.

ministry of Pacific congregations, says conference organiser Hamish Crooks.

Overall, Mr Crooks felt the gathering was positive.

He says the synod is still on a journey and is struggling with some of the same issues as the rest of the Church, such as "how to be more responsive to youth and how to make the best of the resources we have". **sPanz**

School of Ministry principal resigns

The School of Ministry needs a new principal after the Rev Neville Emslie resigned for personal reasons in October.

Neville has been principal of the School of Ministry since August 2001, and was thanked and farewelled at this year's graduation ceremony.

The Assembly Executive Secretary, the Rev Dr Kerry Enright, says Mr Emslie will be greatly missed because he was a valued member of the service team, a reasoned contributor to national discussions and an engaging communicator of the Church's mission.

"He's been an extremely effective principal who has developed and raised the profile of the School, provided capable leadership, attracted good colleagues, related well to students and the wider Church community, and helped resource congregations and presbyteries."

Deputy principal the Rev Kevin Ward will be acting principal except for the period January to May when the Rev Alister will act as principal during Mr Ward's study leave.

First regional mission advisor appointed

'I'm enjoying it very much,' Bruce Fraser says of his work to advance the mission goals of the Synod of Otago and Southland.

Mr Fraser's role as mission advisor sees him working with congregations and their leaders in Otago and Southland to help them develop a sense of mission, including how church and community can connect.

Since starting in July, Mr Fraser has worked with five parishes in the Southland Presbytery, two in Maitua, and one in North Otago, Clutha and Central Otago.

Asked for an appraisal of his work, Mr Fraser says, "it's early days but the feedback I'm getting is positive.

"There's a growing appreciation of the challenges parishes face."

To help them in mission appraisals, he has developed a 30-point questionnaire covering areas like the parish, its history and how it connects with the community.

"It's not just ticking the boxes. It's a thinking thing and possibly six questions are covered in a two-hour meeting.

"One congregation said, 'they're hard questions but they're the right questions' and that was pleasing.

"We have to do fundamental changing of people's perspective of the world view and [my role is to] help that process," Mr Fraser says.

"My prime concern is to help the followers of Jesus ... discover what God wants of them today."

The mission advisor role is only the second position – the other is that of Synod clerk – that the Synod has fully funded since it was set up in the 1850s. Mr Fraser comes to it with wide parish experience, including working as lay supply in the South Otago parish of Stirling-Kaitangata.

"I went [there] for three months and stayed for five years," he says.

The responsibilities of Synod mission advisor do not include crisis management, which should be addressed by the Presbytery or the minister's supervisor initially; nor do they include formal links with the School of Ministry or other national bodies, as this is one of the tasks of national mission enabler the Rev John Daniel, with whom Mr Fraser has a close liaison.

"It's very much a case of slotting in with what John Daniel does [and] helping parishes work out priorities," Synod Clerk Heather McKenzie says.

"In view of the very new nature of the national mission enabler position, and also the Synod tasks already in progress, it is planned that this regional appointment will initially be until the end of 2006," she says.

By Gillian Vine *sPanz*

Applications for Grants from McNutt Trust invited...

The principal asset of the McNutt Trust is a farm property in central Hawkes Bay. The Estate requires that proceeds from the farm be used to maintain holiday accommodation on the site for Presbyterian Ministers and their families.

For over forty years ministers and their families have enjoyed holidays at the farm.

Another requirement is that from time to time there shall be distributions to benefit 'needy children'. This is a development [by Act of Parliament] from the original wish to benefit orphans and orphanages.

The Trustees will be making a further distribution from the McNutt Trust in February 2006. It is expected that a sum of \$100,000 will be allocated.

Applications are being invited from parishes, Presbyterian Support. Other Presbyterian groups interest in the welfare of needy children may also make application.

The closing date for applications is Friday 13 January 2006. All applications and enquiries are to be addressed to:

**Douglas Langford, Secretary
Church Property Trustees
P O Box 9049
Wellington**

**04 381 8290
email: doug@presbyterian.org.nz**

Reviews

Church Hymnary Fourth Edition

Canterbury Press 2005

The Church Hymnary fourth edition follows on from its predecessor, fondly known as CH3, which was published in 1973.

In the preface, John Bell (of Iona Community fame), the convenor of the committee that selected and prepared its contents, says: "this book has been long in the making. The patience, exasperation, goodwill and determination of many people accompanied it from its inception to its publication."

Thank goodness they persevered, because this is a wonderful resource for worship.

This hymnary contains 825 hymns and songs, and as well as retaining many of the solid and much-loved hymns of our past, there are a significant number of new hymns and songs.

These newer hymns and songs reflect the issues we face in the twenty-first century, such as environmental concern, social need, political involvement and community building. They also address those things that we perhaps have shied away from giving voice to in the church in the past: issues of suffering, injustice, grief, naming

the powers that dominate our society, and the longing for healing.

There is also a significant selection (more than 40) of "multi-cultural and world-church songs". Their inclusion acknowledges the energy and richness they can add to our worship.

A good selection of shorter songs at the back of the book can be used as sung responses in prayers, after Bible readings and as reflective singing.

It is good to see New Zealander Shirley Murray having a significant contribution to this volume, with 22 of her hymns listed in the index. I see other Kiwi authors and composers in there too - as they ought to be!

The first section of this hymn book is devoted to the Psalms. Then the music is ordered "according to aspects of faith and life which closely corresponded to the three persons of the Trinity": the Living God, Life in Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Each of these major sections is divided into aspects of the work and nature of that person of the Trinity as well as our response. As a worship planner, I found this as helpful and logical a way to order a hymnary as any other.

The information about copyright holders for words and music is printed in a tiny font and squeezed into the centre margin

of the book, which makes it extremely difficult to read.

There is an awkward placement of words and music for some songs, with the music for verses, the words for verses and the music for the chorus printed on different pages. This makes it tricky for a keyboard player or guitarist.

It is great to see guitar chords printed with the music where that is appropriate. It is an acknowledgment that the accompaniment to our singing in worship is no longer restricted to an organ.

There is a detailed topical and Biblical reference index as well as the usual "first lines" metrical index, tunes, and authors' index at the back of the hymnary. Unfortunately the topical index only lists the hymn numbers, not first lines as in some other hymnaries, so you have to trawl your way through every hymn listed under a particular topic to find one that fits.

Altogether I think that this is a great collection of the hymns and songs that have our attention in the church at this stage of our history. It has been worth the long wait and will provide a rich resource of music for a good time to come.

The melody and words edition will be available later in the year; the full music version is available now.

Reviewed by Rev Sharon Ensor, Wellington.

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Ellen Charry is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. In 2002 she featured in a cover article of *Time* as one of five new theologians who were changing the face of theology. She is editor of a number of significant theology journals and her most significant book is *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine*.

This will be the topic of this course, focusing on how theology, rather than just being an academic exercise, should function as a pastoral and character forming exercise.

For more information email registrar@knoxcollege.ac.nz or theology@stonebow.otago.ac.nz. The course costs \$500, and a subsidy from the School of \$300 is available for Presbyterian ministers.

Children's understanding of Bible questioned

Initial results from a New Zealand survey that investigated children's understanding of the Bible shows they are lagging behind their contemporaries in the United Kingdom.

Although 84 percent of New Zealand children said they had heard or read passages from the Bible, only 69 percent were able to name five Bible characters correctly compared with 88 percent of UK respondents. When asked to name one story or passage from the Bible, only 54 percent of Kiwi kids were able to do so compared with 91 percent of UK children.

Jill Kayser of the Presbyterian Kids Friendly initiative points to the dramatic reduction in the number of schools welcoming Bible-in-school programmes. She believes this is a significant contributor to Kiwi kids' lack of understanding of the Bible.

"School boards and principals have become hyper-sensitive to offering anything religious or Christian in their school programme for fear of rocking the boat," she says.

The Kids Friendly programme, which aims to encourage and assist churches to intentionally minister to children and families, can recommend resources for Christian families to share the Bible with their children.

Jill believes it is also important for us to take a look at ourselves to help improve our kids' understanding of the Bible. She highlights the Church Life Survey (2004)



A young New Zealander with his copy of Level 27 (the 27 books of the New Testament) at a beach mission.

finding that only 21 percent of members of denominations (excluding Brethren) read the Bible daily.

Commenting on the children's understanding of the Bible survey results, chief

executive of The Bible Society in New Zealand, Colin Reed, says if we wait until "tomorrow" to try and reverse the trend it may be too late.

He says that the overall message of the survey seemed to be that the Bible is important to our children, especially if they have some kind of religious upbringing.

"But," he says, "the survey tells us that the Bible is not something that our children read very much or live their life by.

"It raises some key issues concerning our young people's understanding and acceptance of the Bible that those of us involved in providing and teaching Bible in schools and within churches will have to take very seriously. A Biblically illiterate young generation today is an inevitable forerunner of an increasingly secular society tomorrow."

- The Bible Society in New Zealand, along with the Churches Education Commission, Scripture Union, the Presbyterian Church and Children's Bible Ministries, supported the survey. Thirteen New Zealand schools participated in the survey – nine primary and four secondary – with 419 pupils completing the questionnaire. SPANZ

Executive Director Hamilton based

Due to the pending retirement of the existing Executive Director, OMS International New Zealand is seeking to appoint a new Executive Director in early 2006.

The ideal candidate would have a passion for Christian World Mission, and a sense of God's call to work with a faith mission. Theological training and previous mission or pastoral experience would be valuable, and proven administrative and communications skills vital.

For further information and to apply for this challenging position, please contact the Chairman, OMS International NZ.

OMS International NZ P O Box 24-038 Hamilton
ph: 07-856-8655 email: office@oms.org.nz www.oms.org.nz

"Reaching the Nations for Christ"

OMS International NZ

Presbyterian Kiwis make a difference in Uganda

An experiment in zero-grazing introduced by Christian farmers to some small south-west villages in Uganda is bringing satisfaction to the Kiwis and an improved lifestyle for the Ugandans.

At the beginning of 2004, two Te Awamutu farmers and their wives – Carol and Ross Turner and Rosemary and Vic Clarke – went to Rweishamiro under the auspices of the Africa Inland Mission to initiate a zero grazing project, which is an intensive system that produces a lot of milk from a small amount of land.

They had with them enough money from the combined churches of Te Awamutu to buy eight heifers and ten water wells.

During that time, the New Zealand farmers organised training courses in three small villages and taught around 70 interested local farmers about zero grazing including how to build the required pens and feed and care for the animals.

Towards the end of their time they gave heifers, which were sourced locally, to six farmers who were selected by their communities. The expectation was that they would give the first-born calf to another farmer.

The New Zealanders also left money for ten 6000 litre water tanks. Together with local contributions, this was enough for 21 tanks.

The women, who can now just turn on a tap for clean water, say they are astonished how much extra time they have now that they don't have to walk miles



A local family beside one of the water wells funded by the Kiwi mission project

every day to fetch water, which was often polluted anyway.

When Mr Clarke, Session Clerk of Te Awamutu Presbyterian church, and Mrs Clarke, together with Margaret Garrett, returned to check on progress this year, they were impressed with what they found.

Although one of the heifers had died, the others had produced offspring and were providing their owners with enough milk

for their families and there was plenty left over to sell for cash to buy other household essentials or pay school fees.

The Kiwis ran further seminars and left money for heifers to two new villages.

While the men were busy with the seminars the women were involved in other ways. Mrs Clarke, a registered primary school teacher, taught English in the local school's junior primary classes using songs and rhymes and read stories to children in the playground.

Mrs Clarke and Ms Garrett helped teach Bible stories at a Girls Brigade group and left some teaching aids for the teachers.

The Kiwis also went to Ruharo vocational school to teach the girls to sew some saleable craft items. "We would love to introduce a course in zero grazing," says Mrs Clarke. "Perhaps with a heifer as a prize for the top student."

Mrs Clarke, who is a trained lay preacher, regularly preached in local churches, at school assemblies and at the vocational school.

Another Te Awamutu team is going in 2006 but the Clarks hope to return to Uganda in a couple of years' time.

By Bartha Hill 



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Turakina Maori Girls College marks 100 years

A carved taonga (treasure) in memory of former Maori Synod moderator and past pupil Mona Riini was presented to Turakina Maori Girls College as part of their centenary celebrations in October.

The taonga, incorporating traditional and Christian elements, was presented to the school by Mrs Riini's sister and other Bay of Plenty family members.

"It will be awarded at prizegiving annually, for 'presentation'. Mona was always very particular about how she looked - she always looked immaculate," says Heather Mataamua, chair of the school's board of trustees. The school has also composed a special hymn in memory of Mrs Riini.

The school's centenary reunion began with a powhiri, with over 200 past pupils and staff attending from as far away as London and the Netherlands. A social with cultural entertainment from present pupils was held in the Regent Theatre, Palmerston North.

"The girls performed exceptionally well. I was very pleased," said Mrs Mataamua.

After receiving the Mona Riini taonga, the school's original site at Turakina was visited. The land was bought by a group of new immigrant Scottish Presbyterians from Ngati Apa in the 1840s, and the school was established there by local minister the Rev H.J. Fletcher in 1905.

Speakers at the commemorative ceremony included Ross Fletcher, a grandson of the school's founder and descendants of the



Current students performing for past pupils at celebrations on Saturday evening. Left to right: Shanay More, Sarah Heurea and Ami Hokianga.

school's first principal and matron, Mr and Mrs Hamilton.

The school retained its original name when it shifted to the current site in Marton in 1928. "Mr Loughton said we must bring the name with us so we didn't lose our identity," Mrs Mataamua explains.

Both the Hamilton family and a group called Friends of Turakina School presented centenary quilts to the school as gifts. Both included symbols related to the school's history and philosophy.

Another important centenary artwork was a series of 26 carved and decorated wooden poupou, which were made by present Turakina pupils under the guidance of resident artist Akenchi McFarland. The poupou stand along the school's driveway

and were unveiled at a dawn ceremony on 21 October.

On Saturday evening, the centenary group enjoyed a dinner at the Whanganui Race Course. "While people were eating their first course, our senior kapa haka group performed. And then each year-group got up in decades, performed and talked about the school when they were there," says Mrs Mataamua.

Master of ceremonies for the weekend was former deputy principal and head of Maori studies, Trevor Moeke of Ngati Porou.

Current principal Dawn Mitai-Pehi, her husband Mike Pehi, Te Aka Puaho moderator Millie Te Kaawa and school chaplain Peka Tautau also contributed significantly to the celebrations, which concluded with a church service on Sunday morning. General Assembly Moderator the Rt Rev Garry Marquand, National MP Georgina Te Heuheu (a past pupil), and former principals Robin Patchett and Kay Tipene-Stephenson were among those who attended the celebrations.

A two-strand focus has brought new strength to the school in the past seven years - the use of technology and an emphasis on traditional Maori culture (as well as Christianity). Pupil numbers have grown from 62 in 1998 to the current roll of 148.

A burgeoning seventh form indicates that many pupils now aim towards tertiary education. Technology enables better communication and resource-sharing with other Maori boarding schools, the Ministry of Education and the international community.

By Heeni Collins *sPanz*

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New water wells for Vanuatu village

Using dead coral for builder's mix didn't deter the six-person work party from St Columba Tauranga, which helped Moru villagers build two new water wells earlier this year.

Moru is typical of most Ambrym villages in Vanuatu: no power, no vehicles (not even a wheelbarrow) and no running water. The new wells replaced a cavity in the ground where rain water was captured after it rolled off a few sheets of roofing steel.

The new system uses the church's galvanized steel roof to channel rain water into two 13,000 litre purpose-built wells.

On the first afternoon in Moru, the work party – the Rev Jon Parkes, Bob and Barbara Walls, Dirke and Sam de Vries, and Lars Heyde – spent time looking around. They got to know their hosts, joined in games, unpacked and wondered about using the newly made washroom and pit toilet.

When work began the next day, the cement reinforcing, guttering and spouting donated by St Columba sat alongside piles of dead coral gathered from the seabed, which was to be used as builder's mix. Black sand carried up from the beach and drums of water that had been rolled some distance were also there ready to be used.

Dozens of workers turned up from other villages with an assortment of tools. They dug a large hole (moving about 30 cubic metres of dirt) to make way for the new water storage tanks; trees were cut for boxing; and concrete was mixed with long paddles in dugout canoes.

"As cement ran out, some people were dispatched to carry the 40kg bags from a village that was 4km away! The team work, keenness and getting so much done in the day amazed us," says Mr Walls.



Villagers mixing concrete in a canoe.

After a week of hard work, project completion was marked by a dedication service, speeches, the presentation of gifts and a feast for everyone.

The work party gave stationery, sports goods and used books that had been donated by several Tauranga primary schools to the Senai Primary School, which serves all the villages on South East Ambrym.

"For a school that suffered losses in an earthquake in 2000 and Cyclone Ivy in 2003, these donations made an immense difference," says Mr Walls.

The team has many lasting memories of Moru, explains Mrs Walls: "Mattresses were given up for us, clothes washed by hand for us, playing cards by the light of one lantern and a candle, and most of all the warmth and friendliness of Ni-Vanuatu."

The work party encourages other churches to take up the challenge of meeting a need in Vanuatu. They say Moru is just one village with pressing needs, and more information can be obtained from Roy Pearson, project officer, Presbyterian Church Vanuatu, or the Global Mission Office.

"Without the financial and prayer support of our church, this mission would never have been accomplished. We thank God for his care and protection and give Him the glory," Mr Walls concludes. **sPanz**

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Snapshots

Timaru Herald



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Twenty-six women gathered at St Paul's Presbyterian Church in Timaru recently to mark 40 years of ordained women's ministry. The Rev Wynne Dellow, the first New Zealand woman to be ordained, is pictured here along with others who attended the celebration.

At the official opening of the new St Andrew's Christian Preschool building, youngest current student Areeya Phuakdonkheng is helped to cut the ribbon by Mr Ravin Patel who was a student in the first class of 1975. The opening, 30 years after the preschool started, is a significant part of the centennial celebrations of the St Andrew's Community Presbyterian Church, Otahuhu.

St Timothy's Titahi Bay marked 50 years of service to the people of its community earlier this year. The Rev Chris Nichol (then the Wellington

Presbytery moderator) and Rev Tom Etuata are pictured as they prepare to unveil a commemorative plaque on the first St Timothy's building, which now houses the church's opportunity shop.

Rakaia Presbyterian Church held a special spring flower service in September as a celebration of new beginnings. The service included a ballerina dancing "The Rites of Spring", dramatisation of a Bible story and a church full of spring flowers.

Maori Hill Presbyterian Church (Dunedin) celebrated its centenary on 11 September. The three longest serving members – Joyce Walker, Fred Robinson and Dave Campbell – are pictured cutting the centenary cake.



Sixty years

of action
against poverty

From its early days of sending blackcurrant jam, shoes and bicycles for clergy to post-war Europe, Christian World Service (CWS) has grown into one of New Zealand's leading development and aid agencies with its Christmas Gift Appeal - a church tradition for 60 years.

In December 1945, the National Council of Churches made its first Christmas Appeal for overseas relief – the beginnings of what developed from Inter-Church Aid (ICA) into CWS. The Presbyterian Church was the first to pledge its support.

The original appeals funded relief and reconstruction in Greece, Hungary and other European countries, including transport for clergy, and provision of foodstuffs such as jam and, interestingly, women's shoes. The call for 10,000 pairs of shoes for the Deaconesses of Europe resulted in 35,000 being sent. A generous response but the logistics and costs of shipping such goods from New Zealand were huge. The lesson in appropriate aid was quickly learnt. By the late 1940s the World Council of Churches, whose relief programmes New Zealand churches supported, asked that money not goods be sent, cutting down time and freight costs and making a more useful contribution.

There was also a move to recognise the need in other areas of the globe. In 1949 funds were raised for refugees in Palestine and in 1950 the appeal expanded to Asia, becoming for a while the Christmas Bowl. Some of you may remember putting a coin in the rice bowl at Christmas.

Since 1945 CWS has, on behalf of its member churches including the Presbyterian Church, funded community development and humanitarian aid in nearly 100 countries. From projects for atomic bomb victims in Japan, reforestation in Algeria, education in Laos and Tanzania, earthquake relief in Peru, to the human rights-based livelihood development and empowerment programmes of today, CWS has been committed to finding the most effective ways to respond to poverty and injustice.

More recently, CWS has supported campaigns for a better and more equitable world, including the anti-apartheid movement, the struggle of the East Timorese, peace building in Sudan, the Jubilee debt cancellation campaign, fair trade, and this year working with other agencies to "Make Poverty History".



A CWS Christmas Appeal poster from the early 1970s.

For 60 years, partnership with the churches has been at the core of CWS's work. Not only through the annual Christmas Appeal, but with a presence at conferences, the Association of Presbyterian Women special project, education work with youth ministries, appeals for humanitarian relief and much more.

"CWS is an important part of the history of New Zealand churches, accompanying them as they have sought to respond appropriately to the needs that they see in the world around them," says former director Jill Hawkey (1993-2004).

Another former CWS director, Brian Turner sees CWS as "now probably the predominant ecumenical body in Aotearoa-NZ as well as being a bloody good justice and development agency in its own right".

It has not always been easy. While Brian was director, CWS faced the challenge of securing its special relationship with the churches as other aid agencies from overseas entered the country.

Yet CWS has retained a loyal support base, with people valuing its place as a New Zealand church agency, its ethical approach, and the balance between community development, emergency relief, education and advocacy.

It is these achievements and values that make 60 years an event worth celebrating. "The churches working together have made a significant difference to hundreds of thousands of people," says CWS director Jonathan Fletcher. "However, today's global structures, growing inequalities and ongoing humanitarian disasters, to which the poor remain most vulnerable, mean the churches still need to stand with the poor in keeping with the Biblical principle. CWS is your way of doing this."

Watch out for the "Save the earth, Save its peoples" envelope and poster in your church and continue the tradition of giving hope at Christmas.

By Liz Martyn

Changing the World one step at a time

By Andrew Bell, Global Mission Secretary

The world lost a remarkable person when Rosa Parks (92) died recently. We all know how Rosa became an unlikely civil rights hero, when in 1955 she refused to give her bus seat to a white passenger. Young Baptist minister Martin Luther King responded by inspiring thousands to rise up and ultimately end some racist practices. As a result, Rosa became known as the mother of the Civil Rights movement. She wrote of that day:

"The time had just come when I had been pushed as far as I could stand to be pushed, I suppose. They placed me under arrest. And I wasn't afraid. I don't know why I wasn't, but I didn't feel afraid. I had decided that I would have to know once and for all what rights I had as a human being."

I know all about South African legalised racial segregation and how much courage it takes to defy the rules. Courage is a strange commodity that fuels your heart and enables you to do what you thought was impossible before.

Award winning author Paul Rogat Loeb suggests that we must tear away the popular myth surrounding Rosa's historic actions. He writes: "in the prevailing myth, Parks decides to act almost on a whim, in isolation. She's a virgin to politics, a holy innocent. The lesson seems to be that if any of us suddenly got the urge to do something equally heroic, that would be great. Of course most of us don't, so we wait our entire lives to find the ideal moment."

Loeb points out that Rosa was in fact a veteran of the civil rights movement who grew in stature incrementally over a twelve year period. There had been a similar bus boycott in Montgomery 50 years earlier. Just prior to Parks' defiant stand, a young pregnant woman had also refused to give up her seat, but because she was unmarried, she was considered an unsuitable symbol for the campaign. Loeb suggests however that the traditional stripped-down version turns Parks into an impossible act to follow and so we do nothing in the face of blatant injustice and leave it up to the "heroes" rather than joining the movement for change.

When writing the history of mission we have also picked out stories of the "greats" with which to inspire people. Somehow we seem to forget the thousands of faithful missionaries who went, did the hard yards, returned and didn't even expect to be met at the airport. Some, of course, never returned at all, and others lost loved ones while overseas. However, we still ask the "heroes of faith" to tour the country on deputation tours to tell their stories. Often the unintended result is to leave our congregations feeling breathless, and the next generation then decides that there is no place for them in mission. Surely this isn't the message we want to

give? As Loeb points out, Rosa didn't make a spur-of-the-moment decision to give birth to the civil rights movement. She was but one part of an existing movement for change. There isn't a single missionary who serves alone.

This is the message the Global Mission Office is trying to give people and parishes around the country. We are a mission brokerage that exists to help parishes fulfil their mission dreams. We are not here to do mission on your behalf. Our aim is to encourage ordinary Presbyterians to step out and do what they thought was impossible before. Our unique point of difference is that we work with local churches, enabling them as best we can to achieve their priorities. Jesus said that he would build his church (Matthew 16:18). Why should we try to do anything different? The beauty of Loeb's thesis is that it shows Rosa to be just like us. Like Rosa we too can find the courage to change the world. **sPanz**

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New name for Presbyterian family services

Changing times have led most Presbyterian Support regions to rebrand their child, youth and family services as Family Works.

Underpinning the new name is a philosophy that recognises children flourish when their families/whanau function well.

While there is a different name, the same family-related services, like buddy programmes for disadvantaged young people, counselling services, and parenting and education courses will continue under the new brand, says Jo Lake, Presbyterian Support's national executive officer.

She says the change allows Presbyterian Support to put in place national standards and bring about consistency in service delivery across New Zealand.

"It's also going to be easier and more efficient to attract funding to a national entity, rather than seven regional organisations. This should take some of the pressure off local communities to fund services in their area," says Ms Lake.

The change was also partially made in response to requests from staff and clients



Chris Ferry propagates seedlings in preparation for sale at YouthGrow Garden Centre in Dunedin.

to present a more easily understood face, explains Ms Lake, who says the new name helps allay the perception that clients have to be Presbyterian to use Presbyterian Support's services.

The harakeke (flax bush) was selected as the symbol for the Family Works logo

because it represents a fundamental source of survival and whanau (family) wellbeing. It also includes the words "Presbyterian Support", which builds on the agency's Presbyterian heritage.

"We recognise that the credibility we have comes from local people doing great things over the last 100 years," says Ms Lake.

The new logo and name will be rolled out over the next few months, with Presbyterian Support Otago the first to launch Family Works in mid-October.

Those at its annual meeting received a small flax kete (basket) as chief executive Gillian Bremner set the scene for the Family Works in Otago.

Communications and fundraising director for Presbyterian Support Otago Lisa Wells says a flax bush planting ceremony is planned for later in the year, to build on the foundation laid during the launch.

Aged care, mental health and other Presbyterian Support services are unaffected by the rebranding of the child, youth and family services.

By Josephine Reader

go deeper

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Our name may be changing, but our commitment to our community's children and families is still as strong as it's always been.

Family Works is the new name for the community, child and family services delivered by Presbyterian Support. As each Presbyterian Support region launches Family Works we are building what will ultimately become a nationwide network of organizations working to provide services to children, young people, families and communities across New Zealand.

In adopting "Family Works" as our name we are not abandoning our Presbyterian heritage, or our local strengths as they are both very important to us. Working as a network does however enable us to introduce the Family Works name and philosophy as cost effectively as possible. As well as presenting a more contemporary, approachable and easily understood face, our new name also gives us the opportunity to better communicate and raise awareness of the work that we do, meaning we can actually reach more people who need our help.

In each region Family Works will continue to operate autonomously and adapt services to meet local needs. We will continue to offer the same services we always have - but now we will also be able to expand, grow and share our expertise more widely, adding additional services where necessary and being even more responsive to our local community needs.

The Vision of Family Works is that New Zealand becomes the best place in the world to raise children in flourishing families and communities. We are committed to our vision and we continue to need your help and support in achieving it.



For more information about Family Works please contact Jo Lake, National Executive Officer, Presbyterian Support NZ. Phone: (04) 384 4629 or write to

P O Box 19222, Wellington or email: pss.natcouncil@xtra.co.nz



Yes! I want to support Family Works in my region

- ☐ Northern ☐ East Coast ☐ Central ☐ Upper South Island
☐ South Canterbury ☐ Otago ☐ Southland

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