

sPanz

Spanning Presbyterians In Aotearoa New Zealand

June 2006, Issue 27

“Our building
dilemma:
restoration vs mission

www.presbyterian.org.nz

COMMENT

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

How to reduce the New Zealand prison population

The total number of crimes, across all categories of crime recorded by the New Zealand police, for 2005 is the lowest since 1983.

However, this good news should be tempered with the knowledge that the more serious violence and sex crimes increased sharply during the 1990s and are being maintained at high levels.

Serious violent/sexual offenders constitute about 40 percent of the prison population at any one time and it is the increase in the sentences imposed for these offences that accounts for much of the increase in the prison population.

The Bail Act 2000 provided wider grounds for remanding in custody. Similarly the Sentencing Act 2002 and Parole Act 2002 mean that longer prison sentences are imposed and a greater proportion of sentences are served in prison.

The Department of Corrections 2004/05 Annual Report records that the New Zealand imprisonment rate is 164 per 100,000 of population, which is double the rate that applied in 1980 and well above those countries with which we like to compare ourselves: namely Australia, Canada, England and Wales.

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National Bible

Sunday

July 16



BIBLE SOCIETY

On 11 April 1997 there were 4,988 prisoners. On 18 April 2006 there were 7,662 prisoners - an increase of 54 percent.

Not only have sentences increased generally, but there has also been an increase in those sentenced to very long sentences.

It is no surprise that the Department is making plans for an increase in the number of very elderly prisoners, with all the additional health requirement that entails.

The Department of Corrections estimates that it costs \$161.91 per day for each prisoner. This works out at \$59,097 per year and so the extra prisoners are costing many millions of dollars extra.

The Department's Annual Report also shows that since 2000/01 the expenditure on new prisons and expanding existing prisons has cost over \$378 million, and during the current year expenditure of \$352 million is budgeted; this does not include maintenance of existing prisons.

Are we getting value for money when the re-imprisonment rate is about 29 percent after 12 months and 37 percent after 24 months following release?

If we want to avoid an escalation in prison numbers then it is important that the debate is not dominated by the "get tough on crime" argument and punitive populism.

However, it is important to recognise that the majority of offenders in prison are there for serious offences. Any paper looking at how to reduce the prison population will need to address prevention as well as alternatives to custody in prison and measures that reduce the likelihood of prisoners re-offending and returning to prison after release.

If we want to prevent serious offending, we need to interrupt the trajectory to serious and chronic adult offending by what is really a very small group of male offenders who become multiple recidivist (repeat) offenders.

By John Whitty, National Director New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society

I can do no better than refer readers to the excellent Department of Corrections publication: *"About Time – Turning People Away from a Life of Crime and Reducing Re-offending"* (May 2001).

As well as the preventative measures outlined in this report, there are also alternatives to remanding people in prison. Bail hostels, home detention and electronic monitoring are examples.


Expanding the use of home detention for sentenced offenders is also an alternative to prison. While home detention has come under some criticism, the fact is that home detention is the most effective intervention for both back-end (when someone is released to serve the remainder of their sentence near the end of their prison term) and front-end releases (serving the sentence on home detention from the beginning).

Back-end releases on home detention had a re-imprisonment rate of only 10 percent within 12 months, while the average for all prisoners is 29 percent.

Other alternatives to prison include use of non-prison residential programmes for young offenders (aged 14-17 years) and serious violent and sexual offenders; work schemes; part-time imprisonment; and drug, alcohol and other treatment programmes.

All of these measures could help reduce the New Zealand prison population. Emphasis must also be placed on pre- and post-release programmes to help offenders' reintegration into the community.

I have put forward some ideas on how New Zealand can reduce its burgeoning prison population. NZPARS suggests that the nettle should be clutched and that a high level task force be formed to address this whole question.

- This is an excerpt from John's November 2005 paper "How to reduce the New Zealand Prison Population". The full paper and more general information can be obtained from NZPARS website: www.pars.org.nz. 

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"We did it in two"



The worship centre takes shape part way through day two.

The frame, cladding and roof of Cromwell's new worship centre would have been completed in two days, but the winds blew and rain came and it took three hours of another day.

"We planned to build a church for our community, but the community built a church for us," says Alan Wilkinson, project manager for the 1350m² building.

The Central Otago Presbyterian congregation first realised that they needed a new building when work on the Clyde Dam began and the small town's population swelled. About 15 years ago, Christine Hansen, then a new elder, came to believe that they had to be "doing church" differently. "Jesus called to the fishermen to put their nets down on the other side of the boat," she says. "We needed to do things differently too, and God would honour our faith."

A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since then, but just over two years ago the congregation finally made a decision to get the new worship centre on the road. They sold the two churches they had, beautiful and shrouded in history, but too small and inappropriate for modern times. Then work started on finding funds to develop the new worship centre. Applications were made to the Central Lakes Trust for a substantial grant towards the proposed cost of around \$2.6m. When this wasn't successful, the church leaders literally had to cast their net on "the other side".

A concept of inviting the wider Cromwell community to help build their church in two days began to take root and soon snowballed into reality. "I wondered if it was possible," says Alan, "until I realised that it was only the equivalent of eight houses. That seemed manageable."

Before long, an astonishing number of people offered their help: labour, amazing deals on materials and equipment, food for the workers, and local businesses pitched in with generous support. The community began to catch the vision, and wherever Alan and building convenor Murray Brown went, people put their hands up to help.

Early in the morning of Thursday 9 March, in an exercise reminiscent of the way Nehemiah rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem, a lonely concrete slab waited for three crews with a total of 120 men to start work. Half of the workers were builders who donated their time and the rest were keen volunteers. Each crew, wearing specially designed t-shirts in one of three colours (yellow, green and orange) and the words "We did it in 2" on them, was responsible for one of the three areas – the 400-seat auditorium, the administration section with its kitchen, offices and foyer area, and the activity hall and meeting rooms for youth work and community activities.


As they worked, a group of 30 women, under the able leadership of Edith Mackay, prepared food in the town hall kitchen and sent meals out to the site.

By the end of the first day, the frame was completely up. Then, on Friday, the rain and the wind came. "It was not all bad," explained one of the building inspectors. "It provided an opportunity to further strengthen the frame ready for the roofing."

But it did mean the roofers, who couldn't start work until the weather cleared, weren't able to complete all of the roof by the end of the day. They had to come back on Monday.

There is a lot of finishing to be done, but the church hopes to open its new building for worship in July. They have a new slogan: "We'll be in in two months".

The two-day event saved the congregation about \$1 million in costs, but, more importantly, the community "owns" the building in a way they never would have if it had been built in a traditional way.



More than bricks and mortar

As a Church, we have over over \$500 million invested in property. **Josephine Reader** examines the factors affecting decisions to keep or sell church buildings

The church is beautiful - its brickwork is gorgeous but the intricate stained glass windows need a bit of a polish to bring them back to their former glory. The building sits in a paddock on the outskirts of town, and locals take turns at cleaning. While there is no minister here, a service is held once a month for a few locals.

This description of a much-loved building that holds memories of baptisms, weddings and funerals is an all-too-familiar sight around the country, and could describe scores of buildings within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

As parishes face increasing costs to maintain these buildings, particularly for those that are recognised as historic places, more than ever before congregations are faced with decisions about whether to keep or sell the buildings they love.

The Church's annual statistics show that as a proportion of total expenditure, property-related expenses have increased from 11 percent in 1995 to 15 percent in 2005 (in dollar terms this is an increase of around \$3 million). This trend is likely to continue as our buildings get older and compliance costs increase. Money spent on property is not available for mission or ministry programmes.

The financial strain of maintenance costs, coupled with the effort needed to comply with building-related regulations, means that some buildings have the potential to become burdens rather than tools of mission and ministry.

Parishes around the country are crying out for more resources and the reality is that the Church (overall) is blessed with enormous financial resources with which it can do God's work - however, much of the resources are tied up in investments and property.

Parish buildings alone (churches, halls and manses) are insured for almost \$500 million (excluding the value of the land itself).

"Imagine what we [the Church] could do with just 10 percent of that money," says the Rev Martin Baker, who believes that some rationalisation of this property could result in significant resources for mission today, while still leaving plenty invested for the benefit of future generations.

Martin also believes that income from property is sustaining the lives of an increasing number of parishes, and that it is important for all congregations to consider their mission and ministry priorities, or ongoing expenditure on buildings may undermine their ability to fulfil their mission.

Resource Sub-committee co-convenor John Trainor confirms that the Council of Assembly has asked the Sub-committee to advise on a way forward in relation to the Church's property resources. He confirms that the sub-committee will be looking at how it can become constructively involved.

"While Resource and its predecessor, the Administration and Finance Policy Group, have in recent times been exclusively focused on General Assembly property and finance issues, it believes wider Church property use should become a priority.

"Resource is concerned that the considerable amount of property held by all the various parts of the Presbyterian Church is not being put to best use. Property is often under-utilised or the income used to prop up existing structures, rather than the properties being available to facilitate much-needed initiatives," he says.

How sale proceeds should be used is one of the factors that parishes consider when deciding whether to keep or sell property.

Current Book of Order regulations and Acts of parliament (for instance, the Presbyterian Property Act 1885) stipulate that proceeds from property sales may only be used for capital purposes.

How the funds are to be used is only one challenge – the emotional attachment to parish buildings is also a factor to be considered says Mr John Preston, property officer for the Victoria Synod of Uniting Church of Australia.

In Victoria, the community response to property sales "was like we switched off God in the community" he says, and likens the negative community reaction to the grief associated with a divorce.

The sense of loss is just as real for the community, whether they are actively involved with the parish or not, as seen by the Mangatangi-Pokeno congregation and its sale of Kaiaua church hall (see boxout story).

The Victoria Synod actively encouraged property rationalisation, which was driven by an Assembly decision to this effect, and the financial viability of parishes, particularly in rural areas, together with the desire to give expression to the Synod's uniting environment.

New Zealand faces a similar situation. Decreasing church membership has led to numerous parish mergers in recent years, and often the property associated with the former entities is retained. It is not uncommon to have three or four worship centres associated with one parish.

The Synod of Otago and Southland reports that 30 of 51 property sales made since January 2001 were made because the properties were unused or because of merger.

The Synod has a policy of encouraging parishes to rationalise their buildings and its approach to considering applications for building projects reflects this philosophy, says Clerk Heather McKenzie.

"We look at the cost-effectiveness. And our funding application forms require parishes to state how many hours a month a church or hall is used, and by how many people," she says.

Heather goes on to say that there are often opportunities for parishes to be more effective in mission if their resources were pooled. She says that one of the functions of the Synod's mission advisor, Bruce Fraser, is to help parishes focus more clearly on how their resources can be used to serve the needs of its community.

John from the Victoria Synod agrees that a focus on mission is fundamental to parish discussions about how property can be used, saying "property decisions are relatively simple provided you know what you want to achieve".

He has worked with parishes and presbyteries throughout Victoria, helping them find answers to the question about how their current

space and place can be used to serve community needs. He says that often when parishes consider these questions, they realise that their current building may not be suited to the type of ministries they wish to offer.

Deciding whether to sell property is not a decision congregations enter into lightly; often it takes many years of deliberation.

In John's experience, the time taken to come to a decision can be cut by more than half if the congregation addresses mission questions.

The environment in which the Church operates is changing. At a time when parishes are crying out for more resources, a genuine opportunity exists to consider whether existing buildings serve their mission. In some cases this may mean retaining buildings or modifying them to suit today's context; in other cases it may mean taking the hard decision to sell that much-loved building.

Community outraged at sale

The parish of Mangatangi-Pokeno had been deliberating for approximately five years about the fate of one of its small halls about 10km away from the congregation's main worship centre.

In late 2004, the decision to sell was made and the congregation decided that sale proceeds would be used to fund development at the main worship centre. This updated centre, it was felt, would offer better facilities and better serve the needs of the community.

The Kaiaua hall, built in the late 1960s, was erected on donated land using donated labour and materials. A constitution drawn up at the time the hall was built indicated that ownership was retained by the Church and identified its purpose and the groups that could use the hall.

At the time the proposed sale was announced, the hall was used by a few groups for a few hours a week. A committee of local people, including representatives from the Mangatangi-Pokeno congregation, oversaw management of the hall. This group took bookings for the hall's use, issued keys and co-ordinated maintenance, although the maintenance, insurance and related costs were largely covered by the parish.

The community was advised of the intention to sell through its representatives on the hall committee, about six months before the property went up sale.

However, the sale of the property galvanised the small Kaiaua community and opponents to the sale expressed their concerns through local and national media. A petition organised to oppose the sale attracted over 300 signatures, and it was argued that the Church had no moral right to sell the hall because it was built with donated labour and materials.

The sale attracted extensive media attention including *The New Zealand Herald* and television's *Fair Go* programme.

The group opposing the sale also initiated legal action, and although the property was sold following a tender in March 06, they have indicated they will continue to fight for the hall.

The congregation has been surprised by the extent to which members of the community expressed their grief, given the small number of people using the facility in recent years.

Fronting-up

Andrew Harrex, convenor of the Presbyterian Youth Ministry (PYM) focus group, talks about working with young people

What does your role/work involve?

I am part of the staff team at East Taieri Presbyterian Church in Mosgiel. This involves overseeing the youth work for Years 9-13 both in the church and community. I also have the privilege of being chaplain at the local high school, Taieri College.

Why did you choose this ministry?

The older I got the more I realised I love working with youth, and after primary teaching in Auckland for six years, I felt a nudging to look at ministry fulltime. There is nothing quite as special as seeing young people meeting God, discovering the excitement of growing with Him and living a life that makes an impact on the world around them.

What have you learned about God through this work?

Above all - to trust Him always. He is an extraordinary God who wants to do extraordinary things. The challenge for us is to not get in the way of Him doing that and limit his work by our faithlessness, fear or disobedience. God changes people's lives.

What is the most exciting thing about being involved in it?

Seeing young people change. Over the past seven years at East Taieri, we've seen young people we meet through a community programme develop a relationship with a leader, start coming along to a church programme and through that relationship and a sense of belonging, grow to be a follower of Jesus. We want to see the young people we have be fired-up, passionate 80-year-olds who have lived a life for Jesus and are still growing with Him. It's still a challenge.

What have been the biggest challenges?

Acknowledging my own weaknesses and frailties and learning to let God use me anyway. Realising "it's not about me" and living a life that reflects that. Seeing young people make decisions (or no decision) that causes them to drift from the faith.

Who has inspired you?

Leaders who are committed to, and passionate about, youth – especially ones who see the need and just choose to get involved.



Young people who are prepared to choose to serve Jesus even when it costs them. People who overcome adversity to achieve great things. People in ministry who are in it for the long haul.

What are your future plans?

Great question; uncertain, still praying. To keep making Jesus known.

Do you have any recommended books/CDs?

Mountain Rain by Eileen Crossman is about a missionary called James Fraser and the power of prayer. *Heavenly Man* by Paul Hattaway, which is about Brother Yun in China and how God still does miracles. *The Core* by Mike Yaconelli is about key concepts for youth ministry from a guy who has lived the life.

Where can I learn more about what you do?

Ring or visit. Mosgiel is a great place to come to. When you see the sign on the hillside turn left at the Shell station - I know where my workmate hides the good coffee. **sPanz**

 Presbyterian Youth Ministry 

www.presbyterian.org.nz/youth

Connect 2006: 30 June - 2 July



check it out!

Vanuatu visit inspires young people

Fourteen young people from Johnsonville Uniting Church were inspired by their recent trip to Lelepa Island, Vanuatu, to raise \$25,000 to roof the village church. This is their account of the mission trip, which was supported by the Presbyterian Global Mission Office.

Was it only a week? It felt like so much longer. We arrived on a Monday morning, and were unsure of what to expect or of how we would cope. We left a week later, on a Monday morning, which felt as though we were leaving close friends. There were tears on both sides at the parting. So what happened to create this bond?

We were hosted by the locals who are mostly linked with the Presbyterian Church. It was a most humbling experience to be given so much in terms of time, food and hospitality. We knew that our hosts had gone to great trouble and personal sacrifice to create living spaces including mattresses to sleep on. Although we donated kilos of rice, that was a mere drop in the bucket.

We could go wherever we liked and any little walk was greeted by waves and "hellos". We only had to take up that welcome and sit down to talk. As soon as any one of us did that we found the conversation just flowed. Our pre-visit communication worries were non-existent.

The holiday programme run by our group created a doorway into relationships. Each day there was a hubbub of chatter, activity and fun. About 40 children took part, with 60 attending on one day. Parents and older brothers and sisters joined in. Our teenagers did so well. They planned and implemented the whole week in complete unity and enjoyment. Their relationships with the local kids spilled over into the rest of the day, and especially into torch games in the dark!

There were huge lessons for us about life lived without much money. Most locals would earn less than US\$1 per day, the global benchmark of poverty, yet they don't see themselves this way because the land and the sea meet their basic survival needs. Our conversations revealed people who are generally happy and outward-looking.

Our week showed us that a number of issues need attention. Number one was a roof for the church that stood half built in the centre of the village. This was one of the reasons for our trip. It had taken seven years and huge local effort to get to this point after a cyclone destroyed the original building. It will be a focal point for all village gatherings, and a place to shelter from harsh weather because it will be cyclone proof. It will also be a place of worship.

Other issues included the lack of water tanks to collect rain (as there is no other water source on the island). Each day most families make a 30-minute canoe journey to the main island to collect water from a stream. Other issues raised by the women included the need for sanitation (there are only long drop toilets at present), the cost and quality of health and education and the lack of electricity. The solutions for these issues will be local, but we intend to be partners in an ongoing relationship – friends who listen and support, but don't take away ownership.

Right now though, we have to prove ourselves. We need to help to get this roof on. Our new friends have asked us to work alongside them adding our skills to theirs and that's what we intend to do. It's all just \$25,000 (materials for the roof) away from becoming a reality. [sPanz](#)

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CD PICKS



Neko Case

**Fox Confessor
Brings the
Flood**

Starting her career in an inauspicious garage band, Virginia's Neko Case is now respected as a fiercely independent and creative alternative country artist. Rather than use her powerful and athletic voice to emulate Celine Dion, Case explores much artier territory; her self-penned songs largely ignore verse/chorus formats, instead sketching out a mythical Americana populated by characters such as John the Baptist and The Fox Confessor. If some of these songs would benefit from more identifiable melodies, her commanding voice and effective arrangements would make this album palatable even to those adverse to country music. It's debatable whether Case has yet reached her full potential, but *Fox Confessor Brings The Flood* is still full of intriguing and intoxicating moments.



Kutless

**Hearts of
the Innocent**

Hailing from
Portland,
Oregon, Kutless

assembled their fourth album throughout last year between fundraising for charitable causes such as Hurricane Katrina. The closest reference points for Kutless are secular modern rock bands Creed and Lifehouse, and the group's songs are similarly emotional and anthemic. The group wear their faith on their sleeves with bold lyrics stating their beliefs: "There's nothing you can do/ To shut me up when I'm speaking the truth" declares the chorus to one song. This straightforward lyrical stance, and their musical predictability, means that they will primarily appeal to teenage listeners, but *Hearts of the Innocent* is an impressively solid and consistent record all the same.

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

Is it OK to smack our children?

There is heated debate about whether Section 59 of the Crimes Act (1961), which allows parents to use "reasonable force" to discipline their children, should be repealed. sPanz canvases views from both sides of the debate.

The case for repeal...

Abbreviated from the March 2006 issue of Broadsheet, the news publication of the Churches' Agency on Social Issues.

Is the repeal of Section 59 just another example of political correctness, social engineering and the undermining of Christian society by Godless secularists? Churches Agency on Social Issues members discussing the issue are unanimous in their support for the repeal of Section 59.

We have two main reasons for this: the first, and most basic, is the theological one. The core of the Gospel message is that God in love for creation chooses to forgive rather than to punish. God as Heavenly Father does not punish us as we deserve, but chooses rather to offer us the path of grace and forgiveness. We as parents must apply the same principle to our children.

God is too often represented as One who judges and punishes, in images drawn from some Old Testament passages. A truer representation, even of the Old Testament understanding of God, is that God's justice aims more at restoration and reconciliation than retribution.

Jesus reserves some of his harshest words for those who mistreat children (Matthew 18:6). Paul urges fathers not to "provoke (their) children, or they may lose heart" (Colossians 4:21). The authority of Christian parents should not be dependent on the sanction of physical punishment. Rather it should be based on

love, respect and relationship. These all have to be earned, even by parents, rather than enforced.

Our second argument for the repeal of Section 59 is that this clause gives the wrong starting point for any discussion on child nurture and discipline. Section 59, as it stands, starts the discussion with the assumption that physical punishment is not just acceptable, but parents' right. The discussion then focuses on what is "reasonable force", rather than on the wider issues of how to build good discipline in the family. The intention of repeal is not to criminalise smackers or to ban smacking. The problem is when things go wrong, parents who react with violence have the defence that what they did was good parenting. Lots of examples are quoted on both sides, with cases that have used Section 59 both in good and bad ways, but still the focus is on what punishment is right, rather than on appropriate discipline.

Discipline and punishment are not the same thing. Discipline is about building good lifestyle habits by rewarding, encouraging and modelling in our own lives those things that are best. It is about teaching our children to respect the rights and freedoms of others. Punishment is the last resort of failed discipline. Punishment does not have to be physical. The problem with forceful punishment in the family context is that it tends to explode out of frustration and anger, rather than being a reasoned or reasonable response. If a parent starts with

an understanding that they have a right to use physical punishment, it is too easy for the situation to boil over into abuse.

In New Zealand we have seen too many cases of family violence, too many children badly beaten. To those parents who argue that they have a right to use physical punishment, and that they do so reasonably and appropriately, I can only paraphrase the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians by saying that if that right causes another parent to stumble and a child to be abused, then I would rather give up that right.

- Paul Thompson is the Research and Liaison Officer for the Churches' Agency on Social Issues. CASI is the official social responsibility agency for the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, the Methodist Church of New Zealand, The Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Aotearoa New Zealand. Their website is www.casi.org.nz.

The case against repeal...

This is an excerpt from the Society for the Promotion of Community Standards' select committee submission on the proposed repeal of section 59.

Section 59 of the Crimes Act (1961) authorises "every parent of a child ... and every person in the place of the parent of the child" to use "force by way of correction towards the child, if the force is reasonable in the circumstances."

The Society strongly opposes the repeal of section 59. If it was repealed in its entirety, we agree with Dr A Jack of the Legal Services Office of the Commissioner Of Police (NZ), who says "parents would not be authorised (or "justified") to use reasonable force by way of correction, and smacking by way of corrective action would be constituted an assault".

With section 59 repealed a parent would have no defence in law against a charge of assault laid against him or her under sub-section 194 or 196 of the Crimes Act (1961). This was illustrated on the recent *Sunday* documentary (9 April 2006). Two foster parents were both convicted of common assault (under s196) in the Greymouth District Court, for lightly smacking on the hand with a wooden spoon, a foster boy in their full-time care. This was done as punishment for doing \$6,000 of wilful vandalism to other people's property, which they had to pay for.

The terms "reasonable" force and "reasonableness of the force" should be retained and do not need any further qualification other than what is already contained in that section - "reasonable in the circumstances".

The Society believes that juries are more than capable of comprehending the concept of "reasonableness of the force" in "domestic discipline" and that it constitutes "a question of fact"; as well as the importance of considering all relevant "circumstances" specified in section 59. Furthermore, juries understand the need for the firm, consistent and fair corrective discipline of children and their application of commonsense when asked on the rare occasion (on average about 1.4 cases per year) to consider any section 59 defence.

Opinion polls have consistently shown that about 80 percent of New Zealanders completely oppose the repeal of section 59. If it is repealed, despite widespread opposition, the Society contends that a public referendum must be held confirming widespread support for this change, before it can become law.

Repealing section 59 would be injurious to the public good, exacerbating the current tragic breakdown in families, loss of control in schools and the generational effects of a write-down of parental control and responsibility.

The special role and important God-given duty of parents to apply corrective discipline

toward their children for wrongdoing, inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, open and repeated defiance and abuse, serious property damage, stealing and more would be completely undermined by the repeal of section 59. It would abrogate the rights of all good parents to be protected in law against spurious claims of child abuse and assault brought against them by persons who wish to use the law to try and take the rights of good parents away from them, and impose their own narrow ideologies on them.

The judgement of Judge Inglis QC (Family Court, Auckland, 2003) is highlighted to show the importance of the section 59 defence against allegations that the limited use of smacking in corrective discipline, makes a parent, or in this case an outstanding foster parent ("Mrs C"), unfit to care for children.

- The Society states as its primary objective "promoting balance between responsible freedom of expression and the limits placed by censors on the availability of material that is injurious to the public good". Check out more details at SPCS' website <http://spcs.org.nz/content/view/81/38/>. *sPanz*



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SPANZ 3/05

Outgoing Moderator energised by mission-challenge

Garry Marquand is relentlessly positive about his time as Moderator.

Despite the challenges facing the Church, he says, “basically, without exception, it’s been enjoyable and I’ve found it energising.”

While the Church has called for the Moderator to be a mission leader, he sees this as about being a catalyst and “not some guru or a messiah”.

“Sometimes I’ve been in the right place at the right time to confirm thinking for key leaders. I’ve tried to provoke further thought and to challenge people.”

Garry says while no Moderator deliberately seeks out the office, he didn’t feel reluctant to be appointed. “I had a sense of God saying, ‘this is the time for you to be in this position’.”

His tenure has marked several changes to the way in which the role of the Moderator is carried out. The Moderator now sets the agenda for visits to presbyteries rather than presbyteries planning the schedule, which is a change Garry says has been well received and has proved worthwhile. Another change was renewed emphasis on the Moderator’s role as mission leader. “I agree with that absolutely.”

Garry says he’s managed to keep a reasonably balanced life during his time as Moderator, partly because “I’m the type of person who can say ‘no’ to things”. He has continued to oversee preaching and leadership in the two churches of his parish, Fairfield Presbyterian in Hamilton, though other support has been provided. “The hardest thing has been missing some key parish events: both celebrations and difficult pastoral times.” Garry says he intends resuming parish ministry, “but I’ve always served in the presbytery context as well”.

Highlights of his two years as Moderator include his recent visit to the World Council of Churches meeting in Brazil, which meant mixing with its “amazing diversity” of members.

“I think the Western church needs to be listening a lot more closely to the Third World. We are too proud; we need to open ourselves to what God is doing in the Third World.”



Garry leading a prayer of dedication for the memorial established to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Christchurch.

Garry says another stand-out event was Connect, the annual gathering of youth leaders, which was full of energy and enthusiasm. Young people should be playing a crucial role in the Church’s decision-making, he says. “We need to let them form our life; they have a critical place in the formation of our life for the future.”

He says the strength of being Presbyterian and being a denomination is that together we can do things that we cannot accomplish individually, especially smaller congregations.

“Every church context is caught up in bigger contexts. The Church needs to be able to address these larger issues.”

He says that there is a subtle shift occurring in every grouping in the Church: a realisation that the future has to be centred around mission.

“And it’s about also seeing that together we’ve got to grapple with that. The intensity of our other divisions will wane somewhat. I think that realignment is actually happening. It’s a slow process.”

Rather than focusing on the terms we use, such as “mission”, change in the way we do things needs to happen first, he says.

“People are changing their terminology to use the word but not actually changing anything else. But it’s about starting with those who are outside and allowing them to determine what we do in the inside.”

People need to let go of the concept of control, he says. “This is not my church or anyone else’s; it belongs to the Lord.”

One thing that has surprised him is the lack of a sense of urgency within our churches.

"It's about starting with those who are outside and allowing them to determine what we do in the inside."

"There's little understanding of just how urgent the need for change is. We are losing faith communities; that's what it means when we lose members because of our aging congregations. We've got to be a lot more concerned, even angry, about the situation."

The attitude that "she'll be right" can cripple change, he says. "If we were running a business experiencing this sort of decline, the sense of urgency would be extraordinary."

He says the future will involve being brave enough to grow in new ways using evangelism, which is a term that many of our people find difficult.

"But if we're going to turn the church around and move to a place of growth rather than decline, it's going to involve engaging with people and helping them in their faith journey. The people of New Zealand, and especially the younger generation, are increasingly willing to talk about spiritual issues. We have yet to learn to capitalise on that."

One key strategy for the future is creating different congregations that serve different groups of people, whether cultures or generations. Costs are kept low because infrastructure, such as buildings, already exists. "We need to get in the business of planting new congregations."

He's passionate about leadership in the church and says that this issue is perhaps the most critical for our future.

"We need to learn how to identify and release new mission leaders in order to build congregations with robust health."

"A lot of our key leaders are tired. They have been wonderful, faithful and loyal servants for many years, but in a very changed world they are struggling to know where their church should go next. But I believe they can have real confidence in the young emerging leaders of our Church."

By Amanda Wells 

New Zealand centre for peace studies established

In a world continually threatened by wars and destructive conflicts, there is a need for more combined effort to promote peace and the resolution of conflicts.

This was what motivated Dorothy Brown and others in the Auckland area to work for a centre to be established in New Zealand for studying issues of peace and conflict. Since then, encouraging meetings to arouse interest and give support to the plan have been held in various locations throughout New Zealand.

Support has been forthcoming from a wide range of people involved in law, politics, business, nursing, medicine, social service and religious groups.

This has led to the incorporation of the "Aotearoa New Zealand Peace and Conflict Studies Centre Trust", which is based in Mt Eden, Auckland.

"The non-violent resolution of conflict is the greatest intellectual challenge of the 21st century," writes Kevin Clements, who is working in this field in Australia.

Retired Presbyterian minister the Rev Albert Moore advises that the group has already raised \$1 million, and the target for this year is to raise a further \$1 million.

- For further information or to make contact with the Trust, please write to PO Box 56 719, Mt Eden, Auckland.

Willpower and Indigent Gentlewomen

The language is quaint, but not the generosity behind it. Stretching back over a century, Presbyterian benefactors have been making provision in their estates for the needs of others.

Willpower indeed.

This generosity continues to this day. A large number of trusts, foundations and estates have been directed to the Presbyterian Church.

One of these trusts is the McGlashan Trust, which is available to make grants to women in difficult financial circumstances. Application forms are available from the Secretary.

It is another of the tasks of the Church Property Trustees to manage the funds represented by these legacies. The Trustees:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| » Invest the funds | » Monitor annual performance |
| » Ensure capital growth | » Distribute revenue each year. |

In some cases the funds are large (the Presbyterian Foundation includes funds of \$2.5m), and others are quite small involving hundreds of dollars that are available for distribution. Two farms have been left to the Church.

The purposes range from the welfare of Presbyterian women to the recreational needs of ministers; from parish music interests to youth education. Increasingly, people are making provision for the general purposes of the Church.

The Trustees are required by law to be precise and prudent in the investment of these trusts.

For more information contact:

**Douglas Langford, Secretary
Presbyterian Church Property Trustees
PO Box 9049
Wellington**

**Phone : 04 381 8290
Email: trustees@presbyterian.org.nz**

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am conducting a serious study of the history of co-operating ventures in the New Zealand Churches.

I have sent a questionnaire to, I hope, these ventures. If any parish has been left out, please would they contact me.

At this stage of the project I badly want input from "practitioners in the field" – ministers and parish councillors whose experience of the problems, benefits and attitudes in these ventures, would be valuable to me. My address is as above, my email is saintjohn@xtra.co.nz.

I can assure anonymity if called upon.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Barber

Readers are reminded that feedback is welcomed. Preference will be given to matters discussed in sPanz. Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words and may be edited for clarity or length. Letters should be sent to Editor, PO Box 9049, Wellington, and should include the writer's full name, home address and daytime telephone number.

Dear Editor,

This interesting feature by Kevin Ward calls for some comments.

First, the concept of "a diverse, fragmented, network church" with each unit apparently comprising members of some particular secular network, neglects the essential community values of our typical churches, whose strength and effectiveness are greatly enhanced by the diversity of their members. Further fragmentation seems highly destructive.

Then, the Rev Ward quotes a prominent American Presbyterian pastor suggesting that today's parish should embrace "post-modernity and post-Christendom", further adding "post-tradition", which is already an essential ingredient of post-modernity.

The term post-modernism was coined in the 1950s in America for a new approach to architecture, defined as rejecting the established, accepted, influential and traditional and substituting unrelated bits and pieces of detail, borrowed from anywhere, with no unified aim or style.

It rejects the concept of leadership and is narrowly introspective and without depth.

The concept spread to some in the arts and in music. John Cage, a prominent post-modern American composer, published one supposed composition as a blank sheet of paper, for musicians to play from whatever they wished.

Not one of the fundamentals of post-modernism enriches its field of human experience, much less appears capable of any value in the field of religion. Professor Lloyd Geering, a self-professed post-modernist, declaims that "Christianity must learn to exist without God. There are no absolutes in which you can put your trust".

Post-modernism may be typical of modern Western society's pseudo-religion, consumerism and secularism. But in terms of man's age-old, natural, inherent spirituality, and the Christian faith in particular, it really appears to be irrelevant, simply an aberration. I doubt it can survive.

Roger Evison

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Tuning in for God

Communicating the essentials of the Christian faith to those who don't understand is what the Christian Broadcasting Association is all about.

The Association uses top rating radio stations like NewstalkZB and Radio Sport to reach mass audiences of people who don't go to church.

Phil Guyan, CBA's managing trustee says, "86 percent of this audience don't regard religion or spirituality as important in their lives. Which is exactly why we're there."

There have been several key achievements during CBA's ten-year ministry, one of which is the "Real Life" programme. Playing every Sunday night between 8pm-9pm on NewstalkZB and Radio Sport, it averages 300,000 listeners¹, which makes it the most-listened to show in that timeslot across all New Zealand radio stations.

The programme features John Cowan talking with high-profile guests such as Paul Holmes, Dave Dobbyn and Graeme Henry about their life, passions, faith, spirituality and "God-stuff".

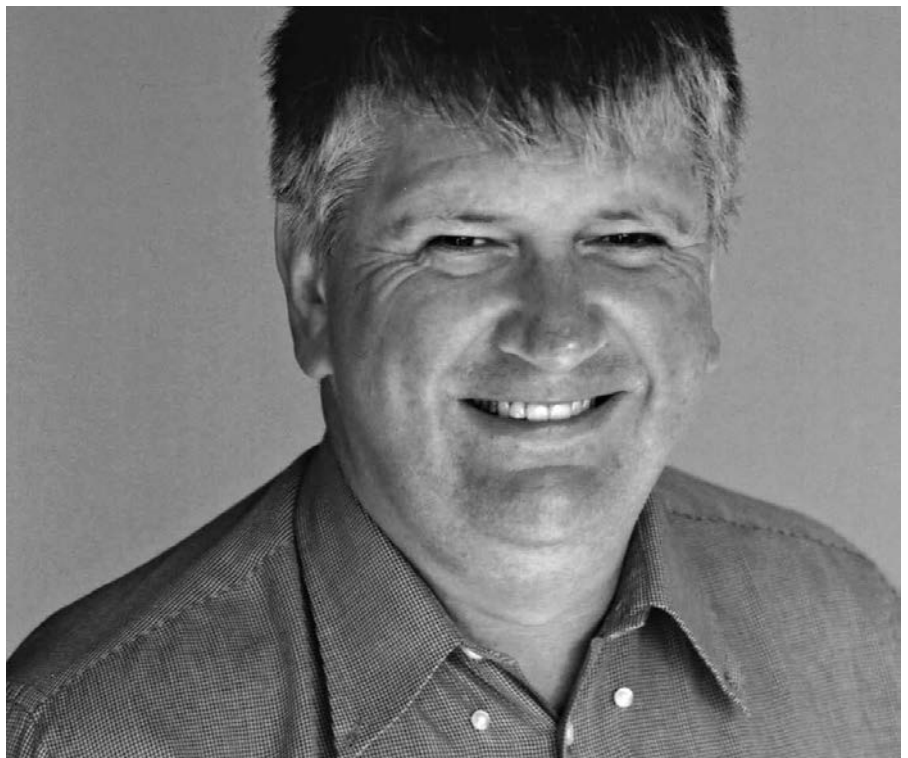
When talking about the factors that have contributed to CBA's success, Mr Guyan pays tribute to the almost 900 people who make up the Association's prayer taskforce. Through regular mailings the taskforce is kept up-to-date with developments, and is asked to pray for aspects of CBA's ministry.

Mr Guyan also recognises the contribution of "talented and professional" presenters such as Rob Harley (pictured) and Petra Bagust, saying that the Association wouldn't be as successful without them and the other people who support CBA's work, including those who provide financial backing.

"We are blessed to have such great supporters," he says.

"Quality programming is also essential, and this is about good radio and communicating the Christian faith," he says.

Considering what makes good radio before considering how to communicate the faith is quite deliberate, says Mr Guyan, because "if a programme isn't good, it won't be listened to". He adds that if radio station support is lost because CBA programmes rate poorly, then there is no vehicle to communicate the Word.



Rob Harley delivers a spiritual programme on the Viva radio station at lunchtime on Sundays.

There has been plenty of learning along the way, too, according to Mr Guyan, who describes a Good Friday show from several years ago as great radio that on reflection didn't necessarily "communicate the character of loving God" because of its format.

Seasonal programmes broadcast at Easter and Christmas are a key part of CBA's strategy to share the Word. Other successful programmes include the Scrubcutter series, which are 90-second spiritual snippets that inspire listeners to think about life's issues in an entertaining way.

Mr Guyan says the challenge for the future is to keep fresh and creative, which means developing new programmes. Developing funding for these shows is also a priority, he says, with a need to look for new sources of income. Most of CBA's work is funded by donations, with the remaining 15-20 percent funded by NZ on Air.

A further testament to CBA's success is the reputation they are starting to build among broadcasters. CBA was approached directly by radio station Viva (rather than

CBA pitching an idea to the station) to produce a spiritual segment for broadcast on Sundays at lunchtime.

While progress on the goal of having 10 separate programmes running on five top stations within five years has gone a little slower than planned (this was an initial goal), Mr Guyan is happy with the steps made to date, and says "it is good to have something to aim for".

In the Association's marketing material, Ian Grant, who is also a programme presenter says, "CBA is achieving its mission because it's in the market-place where the Gospel message has to be. Unfortunately, so many people think that by putting the Gospel message in a church up the road from the marketplace you'll draw attention to it, but you won't. You've got to be down where the people are buying, selling, talking and chatting."

To learn more about CBA's ministry, check out the their website www.cba.org.nz

By Josephine Reader sPanz

¹ Research International survey results: Survey II (2004); Survey I (2005); Survey II (2005)

Reviews

Sione's Wedding

Rating: M - contains offensive language and sexual references

Director: Chris Graham

Producer: John Barnett

Distributor: South Pacific Pictures

In Canterbury the hot dry summers and the clear days of autumn encourage things to be done decently and in order. Life is somewhat staid and predictable. Then suddenly I was in Auckland's unbearable steaming humidity with all the excitement of its youthful vibrancy, where we went to *Sione's Wedding* - a wild ride through youthful larrikinism to committed maturity.

The story is about four riotous lads who wind their way through drunken antics at weddings and weekends until their minister attempts to turn their wild ways around. Michael, Albert, Stanley and Sefa, all of whom suffer from a grossly prolonged adolescence lasting right through their 20s, are suddenly confronted with an ultimatum: grow up and find someone who sees the good in you, or stay away from their best mate Sione's wedding. Suddenly Michael's kid brother (Sione) is a grown, committed young man about to marry his beloved, and the boys are still boozers and wreckers and not wanted on the scene. Crisis! They have a month to redeem themselves.

Enter a parade of women: broken-hearted, walking out, walking in, fantasy objects, kindly, comforting, alluring women who sashay across the screen while the boys try to get it together. In one Garden of Eden scene, this adopted Cantabrian's eyes were riveted, not on the eager male falling rapidly under the spell of the delectable temptress, but on the lush, rank growth of the taro plants. I was transfixed at the sight of such huge plants towering over the humans. Unbelievable! How could they have grown so big?

Of course, the boys grow up: Sefa speaks his heart's truth without the benefit of booze or smokes and Albert transforms an everyday relationship into a love match. Sione's serious dedication to the most wonderful woman in the world shows the power of love transforming all sorts of lives. Love is the gateway into a new found maturity of purpose, of self-examination and a turning aside from the old ways. Thanks to the

minister and the community who issued their ultimatum. All's well that ends well in this wonderful Samoan romp.

- Editor's note - The movie has many Presbyterian connections: firstly, many scenes are filmed at Newton's Pacific Islanders' Church and a former Grey Lynn manse also features in several scenes. The minister of the Niuean congregation at PIC Newton, the Rev Kon-Tiki Makani, has a cameo role as does the Rev Mua Strickson-Pua (who also acted as spiritual adviser for the movie), and Newton congregation members appeared as movie extras. The voices of the Samoan PIC Newton choir feature as a backdrop to one of the wedding scenes and PIC Newton elder Dr Pita Taouma plays in a band at the wedding. For those of you who have missed *Sione's Wedding* at the picture theatre, the movie will be out on DVD later this year.

Reviewed by Elspeth Heinz



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New tool helps parishes manage legal risk

The Presbyterian Church's first comprehensive legal compliance programme will launch later this year.

Many laws apply to churches, including those related to employment, health and safety, property, the environment, taxation and intellectual property. The compliance programme gives parishes an easy way to check that they are complying with these laws.

It is designed to remove the worry that a parish may be inadvertently left open to legal action because it is breaching a law or regulation of which it is not aware.

The programme, called Presbyterian Aon Compliance Tool and developed by the Church's insurer Aon, allows parishes and presbyteries to complete simple checklists so that they can produce a report highlighting any areas of non-compliance and the actions they are taking to solve them.

PACT will be trialled by several presbyteries in coming months to fine-tune its roll-out to every parish after General Assembly 2006.

PACT is accessed through a dedicated website that provides downloads of the compliance checklists and report. The website also includes a timetable for compliance work, along with instructions and information about legislation and compliance requirements. Parishes that do not have access to the Internet will be able to request a paper version of the programme.

The launch of PACT will mark the end of a process that started in 1997, when a legal opinion commissioned by the Church revealed that members of a church's Board of Managers (which by definition includes members of session such as the elders and minister) are severally personally responsible for the statutory obligations of the congregation, apart from those that fall on the Presbyterian Church Property Trustees, but that this responsibility can also be extended to the Church as an entity.

Assembly Executive Secretary Kerry Enright says that liability can track "from any part of the body to the whole".

"The reality is that people look to all of us."

There have been several instances where employment court complaints have been extended from the employing parish to the Church as an organisation.

In 1998 there were discussions about an inter-denominational approach, with the suggestion that a compliance tool would be developed for co-operating ventures then rolled out to Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, Congregational and Church of Christ parishes.

But this co-operative plan foundered after the denominations' different insurance companies declined to work together.

When Fiona Stenhouse started as human resources manager last year, she identified non-compliance as a significant area of risk for the church, and in partnership with Aon, a system was developed to help parishes and presbyteries easily ensure they are complying with applicable legislation.

By Amanda Wells 

Assembly office relocates

In late March, the Assembly Office team relocated to new premises following last year's sale of Laughton House.

The new office, which is around half the size of the previous space at Laughton House, was blessed by the General Assembly Moderator, Rt Rev Garry Marquand, and the Rev Hariata Haumate in a special ceremony attended by the Council of Assembly and members of Te Kakano o te Aroha (Wellington's Maori pastorate).

The 12 Wellington-based Assembly staff, including two people from the Church Property Trustees, are now based at 275 Cuba Street, Wellington, in Terralink International House. The contact details for all team members remain the same, including phone, facsimile and email addresses.

The Assembly team also includes staff based in other locations – the National Mission Enabler, Archives team and School of Ministry staff in Dunedin and the Global Mission Office based in Auckland.



Rt Rev Garry Marquand and Rev Hariata Haumate delivering a prayer during the blessing ceremony.

Maori Synod ministry training centre to re-open

A former Maori Presbyterian training centre called Te Wananga a Rangi is to be revived in the Bay of Plenty and will provide courses for people interested in exploring mission and ministry in a Maori context.

A brochure for the training centre explains its focus as "equipping people for leadership within Church and society in the name of Jesus".

The previous Te Wananga a Rangi was based in Whakatane and operated from 1953 to 1971. It was aimed at training Maori for full-time ministry in the Presbyterian Maori Synod and trained 23 ministers and one deaconess over that period.

Te Aka Puaho has wanted to re-open the wananga since 1980, says the ahorangi, or head of the wananga, the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa. A recent surge of interest in amorangi training since the 50th anniversary of Te Aka Puaho last March has provided the momentum to turn the plan into reality, he says.



Students training at Te Wananga a Rangi in Whakatane in 1964.

The wananga will be housed at the Sister Emily Ross Youth Hall at Ohope marae and is expected to open in June or July 2006. The current intake of eight amorangi students will become the first students of Te Wananga a Rangi. There are also at least 10 people enrolled in the Certificate in Te Aka Puaho studies.

"We'll learn about our own history, people and events," says Wayne, who goes on to say that some courses will be bilingual and some will involve lecturers from the School of Ministry in Dunedin.

The wananga is seeking sources of funding to keep fees to a minimum.

By Heeni Collins *sPaniz*

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Gearing Up

For General Assembly

Preparations are well underway for General Assembly 2006, which will be held at St Kentigern College, Auckland on 28 September – 2 October.

The church's website is being updated regularly with more information about GA06 so keep an eye out at www.presbyterian.org.nz/ga06 for more information as it comes to hand.

Assembly theme

Christ-centered, community-facing is the theme for GA06, decided by Moderator-designate the Rev Pamela Tankersley.

It has its basis in Jeremiah's letter to exiles in Babylon. Jeremiah writes, "but seek the shalom of the place (city) where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its shalom you will find your shalom... For surely I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans for your shalom and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29:7 and 11).

Community-building has been a theme of Pamela's ministry for many years, and she believes it is one of the Assembly's tasks to build capacity and understanding among the wider church about Christ's call to work beyond our congregations.

"It's about joining the Christ who is already out there working in the community," explains Pamela. "It's about saying that

with God's amazing grace, we can have the confidence to impact this world with compassion, justice and hope."

To help congregations and presbyteries engage with the theme and to explore what it means for them in their context, Pamela will be sending out a Bible study before Assembly. Out of this discussion, each congregation will be asked to create a poster for their commissioner to bring for display at the GA06 venue.

Pamela believes that the theme presents the Church with an opportunity to celebrate the effective mission partnerships already happening in the community, and also invites the identification of new mission opportunities.

Pamela believes that engaging with our communities is especially important for the Presbyterian Church today, saying that for too long we have responded to our particular stresses by becoming more inwardly focused.

"When we in the church stand opposite each other, our differences are accentuated and often resolution is difficult. Yet when we stand side-by-side facing and serving the community with Christ, the differences matter less."

Registration

Some presbyteries may have already started the process of selecting commissioners, but if you haven't, now is the time to start



Christ-centered,
community-facing
GA06

thinking about this, because for the first time this year, a discount will apply for early registrations. All presbyteries and union district councils will shortly receive a letter inviting them to begin the process of appointing commissioners.

As in previous years, registration will occur via the church's website at www.presbyterian.org.nz/ga06. Registrations will open in late May.

Commissioners who register early will receive a discount off the registration fee for GA06 (the amount of which has yet to be set), and it is likely that the fee will be significantly higher than in previous years due to the decision to make General Assembly gatherings self-funding.

Only a portion of the costs to run the last Assembly were covered by income from registration fees; the remaining costs were covered from the General Assembly operating budget.

In line with the 2004 General Assembly's resolution that General Assembly operate within a balanced budget, this year's registration fee will be adjusted to reflect the actual cost of running the Assembly gathering.

The business work group, local arrangements committee and others are looking at ways to reduce the costs of the GA06 meeting, such as more cost-effective arrangements for travel, catering and accommodation, so that the registration fee can be kept at the lowest possible level. [sPanz](http://www.sPanz.org.nz)

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Field of dreams

If you've seen the movie *Field of Dreams*, you may remember the line "if you build it, they will come"?

The story is about a farmer who hears a voice that he interprets as instructions to build a baseball field on his farm. As lunatic as it seemed to everyone else, he took a leap of faith and built it. Cars full of people came and paid to sit at his ballfield. Clevedon Presbyterian isn't building a baseball field, nor is it collecting money from people who pay a visit, but they certainly are taking a leap of faith to build their own "field of dreams".

Growth at Clevedon has "reached a level where you cannot get any new members, and you cannot grow anything because the space won't allow it," says minister the Rev Mark Chapman.

Late last year, Clevedon Presbyterian finalised the purchase of a 20-acre farmland using the proceeds from sale of some church assets. Although they are a few thousand dollars short, plans have been drawn up to build a \$7 million worship centre on that property in the future.

The present church sits on a small site in the centre of the Clevedon village in South Auckland, however, with parish growth and an increase in the number of people and houses throughout South Auckland, the move down the road will put Clevedon at the gates to the community. For those travelling through to Clevedon village or surrounding communities, the new site is an idyllic location for welcoming them.

Mark, aware that the Presbyterian Church has lost ground over the years, believes that as a national church we need to be inspired and renewed rather than "mutter" about the state we find ourselves in. For Mark, belonging to a national church means that we support the decisions of the General Assembly; that we meet our commitments as parishes; that as congregations we inspire each other to dream dreams that help people who are hurting and turn these "impossible dreams" into reality.



The vision for this centre has been a growing dream for Mr Chapman for several years, and the Clevedon congregation have combined their ideas with this vision to "build a possible faith from what seems an impossible dream", he says.

It is hoped that the centre will provide greater opportunities for community programmes. It will also feature a large performing arts centre, which would provide a larger venue for community events, and a retreat centre for ministers and pastors to find refreshment and rekindle their passion for ministry with Christ.

There are also plans for a bookshop, cafe and information centre for providing sustenance for those on their journey. Mr Chapman explains that the aim of the centre is to expand the horizons and opportunities of Clevedon's ministries that are already "bursting at the seams".

Walking paths and park benches for providing peaceful tranquillity in nature are part of the proposed plans, as are spaces that provide youth with the opportunity to grow and experience their Christian faith. A preschool that caters to the growing needs for positive and healthy childcare are also part of the plans. The dreams go on but


ultimately we believe it to be "a place where anyone can come and feel safe spiritually", says Mr Chapman.

When asked where the money will come from to fund the development, he says: "I don't know. I do know this: money flows to ideas that help people who are hurting and glorify God and in the process inspire and lift people's vision to be part of something worthwhile. When God places a dream in your heart and the dream remains for 20 years and won't go away, you can do nothing less than start in faith."

Professional fundraising will also be used to help the congregation move more quickly toward fulfilling the dream. Currently, the parish's fundraising activities are contributing toward this cause with encouraging results and a positive response from the Clevedon community, says Mr Chapman.

He goes on to say if the centre is built and people come, it will be with "no strings attached".

"We will endeavour to meet them where they are at and help them find hope and the love of Christ in all we do through this - our 'Field of Dreams'."

By Lori Hill 

Snapshots



ABOVE:

Women from around the country gathered in Christchurch in late April for the Association of Presbyterian Women conference. This display showcases some of the corn dolls made by attendees to celebrate the conference theme "Harvest of Promise". A report on the conference will appear in the next edition of *sPanz*.



LEFT:

Earlier this year, nine ministers from the class of 1956 gathered to celebrate a class reunion. After being presented with a Knox College scarf and taking a tour of the current facilities, they shared memories over lunch. Back row: H Pirie, B MacCuish, R Paterson, R Bichan. Front row: G Drummond, B Francis, E Stevens, J Sinclair, M Cleland.

RIGHT:
Around 100 Wellington women from the Association of Presbyterian women gathered at Pacific Island Presbyterian Church in Porirua for Easter workshops. The women joined in fellowship through a series of workshops about music, creative dancing, cooking, embroidery and much more. Feedback suggested the day was enjoyed by all who attended.



If your Parish has a contribution for this page, send the photo and caption to *sPanz*, PO Box 9049, Wellington.

Presbyterian Support's parish links

The upcoming "Support Sunday" led by Presbyterian Support Northern is one of the ways that Presbyterian Support regions around the country maintain their connections with parishes.

The Support Sunday appeal is aimed at strengthening partnerships with the region's parishes to help ensure people in need can continue to receive help from Presbyterian Support Northern, says Community Liaison Manager Sue Braithwaite.

"It provides parishioners with an opportunity to learn more about Presbyterian Support Northern's services, to pray for us and our clients and to make a special donation that will support the organisation's work," says Sue.

The common heritage shared between the Church and Presbyterian Support is expressed in many different ways including appeals like Support Sunday and the fact that many of Presbyterian Support's benefactors and volunteers are Presbyterians.

"Great Mates" is another example of Presbyterian Support and local parishes working in partnership. Based on Presbyterian Support Otago's buddy programme, "Great Mates" matches young people with a trained adult volunteer with whom they spend 2-3 hours a week sharing simple activities like going for walks.

With the support of Mosgiel, North Taieri and East Taieri Presbyterian churches, Presbyterian Support Otago is able to help young people who are in need of extra adult support.

Bequests are another way that connections between Presbyterian Support and local parishes are kept alive, such as the gift from the Rev Dennis Moore who was a Presbyterian minister in South Westland for many years. His gift to Presbyterian Support Upper South Island provides scholarships that help young people pursue education outside their home region.

Presbyterian Support Central's Communications Director the Rev Chris Nichol confirms that a mission bulletin developed especially for parish leaders and published a few times a year is one of the ways that Central connects with parishes within its boundaries (from Taranaki to Wellington). The bulletin provides resources for parish leaders, including reflections about social services, and also has general news about Central's activities.

Providing parishes with resources is also a key part of Support Sunday. Sue confirms that each church will be provided with a special audio visual presentation on Presbyterian Support Northern and the positive and lasting differences it is helping individuals and families achieve. This will be supported by specially-prepared speeches highlighting local needs – delivered by either a Northern employee or the church minister.

Sue says a number of the region's churches are holding special events, such as a mid-winter Christmas dinner, after their service on 25 June - with all proceeds going towards the work of Presbyterian Support Northern.



Help Make a Difference

By Leaving a Gift in Your Will

For almost 100 years Presbyterian Support Central has been committed to helping people in need.

We have become one of New Zealand's largest not-for-profit organisations with Christian values underpinning our work.

Presbyterian Support Central services Taranaki, Wanganui, Manawatu, Horowhenua, Wairarapa, Kapiti Coast and the greater Wellington region.

Our services provide care for people at the most vulnerable times of their lives. We work with babies, children, families and the elderly.

We offer a wide range of child, adolescent and parenting programmes as well as counselling services and refugee support. Our care for the elderly includes home support, meals on wheels, respite care, dementia care, day care, hospital care and residential facilities.

Our services are offered to anyone who needs them regardless of their background or religious belief.

A gift in your will to Presbyterian Support Central means we can continue to make a difference in the lives of people who need our support.

To help make a difference you can:

- make a bequest to "Presbyterian Support Central", or
- send a donation to Presbyterian Support Central, PO Box 9246, Marion Square, Wellington 6030.

For more information or a copy of our bequest brochure please contact:

Kerin Welford, Bequest Manager
on freephone 0508 86 4357
or email kerin.welford@psc.org.nz



**Presbyterian
Support Central**

0508 TO HELP (86 4357) www.psc.org.nz

HIV and AIDS: more than a health issue

Everyone cares for an orphan in Uganda. Connie, widowed by AIDS and living with HIV, cares for her own three children and another four nieces and nephews. Edisa, an elderly widow, has lost six of 10 adult children to AIDS and now looks after her orphaned grandchildren. Such stories are common throughout Uganda, where nearly one million children have been orphaned by AIDS.

In poorer nations like Uganda, HIV/AIDS is more than just a medical condition to manage: it is the leading cause of death among adults, contributes to poverty because the working generation are lost to the disease, depletes household savings (through health care and funeral costs) and leaves vulnerable sectors of the community like children and the elderly, who provide support for the ill and orphaned.

Lack of education, unequal gender relations, conflict, poor nutrition, migrant labour, few health services and poverty all assist spread of the disease. Only one in six people who need it receive anti-retroviral therapy. To provide these drugs for everyone would cost 61 percent of GDP.

Despite this grim picture, Uganda has been an African success story for its dramatic slowing of the pandemic. In the 1990s, 18 percent of the population were affected, (30 percent in the worst hit regions), which was down to 6 percent by 2002 thanks to a community-wide approach and debt cancellation freeing up government funds for health services. However, the threat and impact remains.

Through its HIV and AIDS programme, CWS partner, Church of Uganda, is generating income, raising awareness, providing public health education and training volunteers to provide home care.

Young people are performing poetry and street theatre to get the AIDS prevention message across, while the church encourages people to speak openly of HIV and fight discrimination.

People like Connie now act as community educators and home carers. They provide counselling and basic pain relief, accompany people for their HIV tests, help with washing and other household tasks and offer friendship.

Women are helped to increase their income through small loans and heifer projects, providing improved nutrition for the family and money for education and other household needs. Edisa used her small

loan to plant over 20 kilos of maize and bean seeds.

As AIDS becomes a managed illness in developed countries, the crisis seems less critical. But poorer nations are unable to afford the life-saving pharmaceuticals and health care, while poverty accelerates the pandemic.

Globally, 42 million people are HIV positive, and 95 percent live in the developing world. New infections in sub-Saharan Africa (the worst affected region) have dropped to 1.1 million a year, compared to 1.5 million in the 1990s, but global prevalence continues to rise as HIV spreads into new areas.

CWS is part of the global Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance campaigning for the international community to take action against HIV and AIDS. In New Zealand, it is calling for greater aid spending and debt cancellation to help reduce the poverty that underlies the pandemic.

- The HIV and AIDS programme of the Church of Uganda is the focus of this year's Association of Presbyterian Women/Methodist Women's Fellowship special project. Contact CWS for a video/DVD about this work and further information at cws@cws.org.nz or phone 03 366 9274.

By Liz Martyn 



Bicycles are the main form of transport for community volunteers to visit families living with HIV and AIDS.

New Video

listen, learn and live

CWS partner, the Church of Uganda, meets the challenge of HIV/AIDS

Available with study material from March 1st

Contact CWS, stating when you would like to borrow the video and an alternate date



CWS

CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE
PO Box 22652, Christchurch
0800 74 73 72 cws@cws.org.nz



Photo credit: CWS/E. Mackle

Basketball keeps young people close to Christ

Keeping young people involved with the church is the main purpose of a multi-cultural basketball tournament organised by a Presbyterian youth leader in Auckland every year.

Called the New Zealand Youth for Christ basketball tournament, it is organised by Albert Wu in association with St David's Presbyterian Church (Kyber Pass), the Presbyterian Council of Asian Congregations, the Taiwanese Fellowship and the Christian Sports Association.

Last year's tournament was the fifth organised by Albert and was held at the YMCA in central Auckland. Explaining why he is involved with the tournament, Albert says: "Sport is very natural and everyone likes it, so they can play together, all cultures."

Basketball can also help young immigrants, new to the country, who face language difficulties and struggle to find a sense of belonging here, says Albert.

Korean, Indonesian, Taiwanese, Pacific Island and European teams all competed in the 2005 tournament. The Taiwanese team had about 25 members and included people from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and mainland China. Visiting



Eight teams competed at last year's Youth for Christ basketball tournament, and organisers hope there will be as many at this year's tournament on 9 September.

church teams included PIC Newton (Wellington), the Mt Wellington Destiny Church and the Rosehill Presbyterian Church from Papakura.

The tournaments begin with an opening ceremony, often including a sports person sharing their testimony of God's presence in their lives, he says. "Sport brings more people to come and then we can share the Gospel."

"Basketball can also help young immigrants, new to the country, who face language difficulties and struggle to find a sense of belonging here."

Church youth workers support the tournament participants, which this year includes a two-day basketball retreat in Warkworth and further intensive training by a professional coach, who will help the teams prepare for the tournament.

Albert has been involved in youth ministry at St David's Presbyterian Church in Auckland for many years. He first organised a basketball game for youth of the church in 1993. "I like sport – not only basketball but also soccer and baseball. I'm from Taiwan where we would normally play baseball. I know sports can bring the glory of God as a mission for youth."

Albert says interest in sports can also bring in non-Christian friends, and so works as an outreach, as well as retaining youth in the church. "When we have a special service like Easter weekend, or Mother's day, we have good attendance from youth."

By Heeni Collins sPanz



Yes, I want to support Presbyterian Support in my region

☐

Northern

☐

Central

☐

Upper South Island

☐

South Canterbury

☐

Otago

☐

Southland

☐

East Coast

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

☐

Here is my gift of \$

☐

Please deduct my gift from my credit card:

☐

Visa/Mastercard number:

Expires:

☐

Please send me information about including Presbyterian Support in my will.

THANK YOU!

Please post this form to National Executive Officer,
Presbyterian Support New Zealand, PO Box 19222, Wellington.



Presbyterian Support

PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT NORTHERN

91-year-old Waikato war veteran takes to the air

When 91-year-old Waikato war veteran Laurie Crossan was asked by Presbyterian Support Northern's Enliven staff what he wanted them to help him achieve he had just one request - to go on a glider flight.

And a few weeks ago the former Royal New Zealand Air Force and Air New Zealand aviation engineer achieved his goal! Enliven Waikato physiotherapist Louise Thomson-Rudge says Laurie is a real aircraft enthusiast and was determined to fly in a glider.

"When I did the initial assessment late last year I asked Laurie what goals he had that we could help him to achieve and he told me he wanted to fly in a glider, as it was

the only aircraft type he hadn't flown or been in before.

"Obviously this was a pretty audacious goal for someone his age, but with the backing of his wife and family we set about helping him achieve it."

"This involved tailoring a programme for him that included a number of daily visits to provide the support he required in order to live at home with his wife Shirley and an exercise programme to increase his mobility and fitness. I also got in touch with a local gliding club to organise the big day - which ended up being a great success."

John Cubit, Laurie's step-son, says Laurie and a friend built a glider in the 1930s but never got it airborne as they didn't have enough money to finish it.



"So, going in a glider's been a long-held ambition for him, and thanks to the good organisation and care of Presbyterian Support Northern and the gliding club he's been given a real boost by achieving this!"

Laurie's wife Shirley agrees. She says achieving the goal has definitely lifted her husband's spirits and given him "a real boost".

PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT OTAGO

The second time around

At the last census there were 4000 grandparents in New Zealand caring full time for their grandchildren. Increasing break down in family situations and the first option for family placements involving grandparents means this figure is expected to double when the recent 2006 census data is confirmed.

An innovative Family Works initiative called The Grandys Group, by Presbyterian Support Otago was born from the needs of the growing numbers of grandparents who are taking on these crucial childcare roles and becoming "parents" to their grandchildren.

The Grandy's Group support grandparents who have permanent care of their grandchildren, either through guardianship or custody. The programme was developed to offer a more comprehensive and targeted response for the changing needs

of Otago's "grandys" parenting in the 21st century.

"Caring for a grandchild is a demanding and challenging task when you are an older person. Keeping up with the modern pace of living, while meeting the needs of grandchildren is a huge task for this group," says Flo.

The children cared for by the Otago "grandys" range from 18 months through to 18 years. The grandparents themselves are between 50 and 78 years old.

These "grandys" cope with a variety of challenges. Flo points out that not only does parenting requires enormous amounts of energy at any age, there are additional daily challenges for this group, such as health issues, financial demands (often including large legal bills) and



► Grandparent swinging children at Camp Sutton.

isolation. "Keeping up with new technology, such as cell-phones and the latest play station, and even the new Harry Potter craze can pose difficulties for older carers," says Flo.

Flo says she feels privileged to be able to work with the "grandys" who are fulfilling critical caring roles for their grandchildren, and probably never expected to become "parents" the second time around.

▮ ▮ In 100 years time it won't matter what kind of car you drove, or house you lived in. What will matter will be how I parented my children. ▮ ▮

FROM THERE ELISHA WENT UP TO BETHEL.
AS HE WAS WALKING ALONG THE ROAD, SOME
YOUTHS CAME OUT OF THE TOWN AND JEERED
AT HIM. "GO ON UP, YOU BALDHEAD!" THEY
SAID. "GO ON UP, YOU BALDHEAD!"

HE TURNED AROUND, LOOKED AT THEM AND
CALLED DOWN A CURSE ON THEM IN THE NAME
OF THE LORD. THEN TWO BEARS CAME OUT
OF THE WOODS AND MAULED FORTY-TWO OF
THE YOUTHS.

Read that part yet?

You'd better start checking out your Bible.
It's got some pretty cool stuff in it.

Check it out in 2 Kings 2: 23 - 24



Only a small number of New Zealand Christians read their Bibles more than once a week. It's time you made the commitment to read it as often as you can, everyday preferably. Will you be part of a Bible reading revolution in the New Zealand church?

If you want help reading your Bible, check out the resources we have available. Visit our website:
www.youradventurebegins.com/mybible

