

# sPanz

Spanning Presbyterians In Aotearoa New Zealand

March 2007, Issue 30

Challenged by  
climate change

plus... What's happening with  
Presbyterian Youth Ministry?

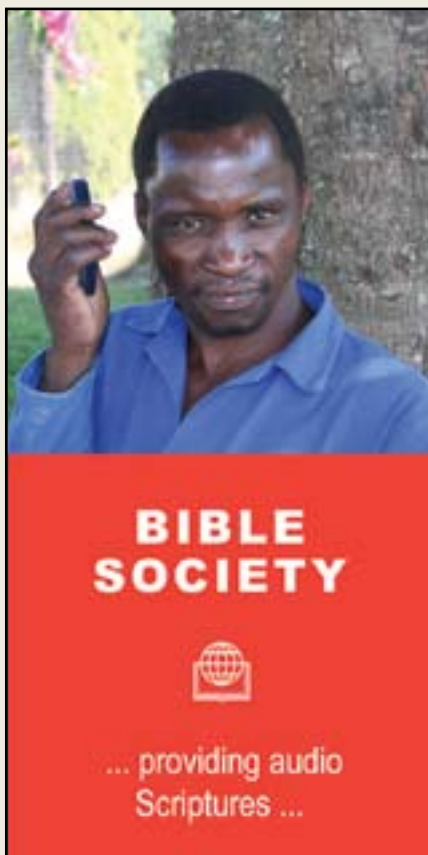
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**David Norton** explains why he has produced a new edition of the iconic translation

# Is the King James out of date?

**Why would anyone want to edit the King James Bible? Some people would say it's out of date: we can't understand its language and its scholarship has been superseded by 400 years of new work. We have much better versions. Others would say it is absolutely perfect as it is; the divinely given word of God in English. Nothing in it, not the tiniest jot or tittle, should be changed.**

To the first group I would say, give the King James a chance. Don't throw away your modern versions: they have their own qualities. But try the King James. It may surprise you. It isn't as difficult as it usually appears to be, but its traditional presentation is reader-hostile, getting in the way of reading with understanding and pleasure.



One of the things I wanted to do was to get rid of that reader-hostility, the little things that make it seem as if we are seeing through a glass, darkly. Some of the spelling is antiquated – “musick”, “bason” and so on. So too with the punctuation. One of the more confusing things is the lack of speech marks, making it much more difficult than it needs to be to tell who is speaking and where speech begins and ends. So too also with the paragraphing. This is rough because the original translators did not have time to do it properly (there are no paragraph marks after Acts 20, only one in the Psalms and, if you want to include it, six in the entire Apocrypha). Such things make it unnecessarily difficult to see how the writing is organised and so to understand it properly.

Some of this is easy to sort out, some not. If you can do it, the text not only looks more friendly, but it begins to flow and connect in ways that can surprise even the reader who knows the King James well. It can be a reader's text while remaining a study text.

The opportunity to do such things, and to present the result in a good modern type, made me want to edit the King James. It was an opportunity to clean the glass and serve anyone who wants to look into it.

I wanted to do all this without changing the text. I wanted the real King James Bible, not a new King James Bible. So old fashioned words are still there, as are the old fashioned grammatical forms; “thou art” and so on. If you cannot cope with sentences like, “Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name”, then the King James is not for you. Neither is Shakespeare.

But leaving things unchanged presents problems. What is it that should be kept unchanged? A lot of the spelling and



David Norton

punctuation in standard copies belong not to the 1611 original but to the text as it was printed in the eighteenth century. Editors and printers had changed the text, sometimes perhaps for the better, sometimes not. I wanted to give readers the text the translators decided on; that is, the first edition without its printing errors.

The work took 10 years. I think it was worth the effort because many readers have testified, both privately and publicly, how effective the result is.

This is part of my answer to those who say the King James is out of date. If it can still speak to the heart and soul, it is not out of date. Another part of the answer is this: the more I study it, looking at it in relation to the original language texts, the more I am impressed with its fidelity to those texts. It is a quite remarkably literal translation, and more often than not gives the sense and wording of the originals more closely than modern translations.

The people who believe that the King James should not be edited because it is perfect as it is need no convincing to read it. But to them I would say this: if what I have done is faithful to the work of the translators and makes that work speak more clearly, then the editing was worthwhile. If, moreover, it brings more readers to the Bible, it was very worthwhile.

*David Norton is Professor of English at Victoria University of Wellington. He has edited The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible (2005), and the Penguin Classics Bible (2006), and written A Textual History of the King James Bible (2005).*

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The Right Rev Pamela Tankersley will be contributing a regular column to sPanz

# Moderator's musings

**When I thought about becoming Moderator, I wondered what might be my priorities for the two years of my term. What can the Moderator do to make any difference? Make connections... hold out a vision...raise a voice. Let me share with you in more detail.**

Firstly, I am passionate about helping parishes engage with their local communities in mission – being the love and grace of Christ to those who most need it. When we “seek the shalom of the place where God has sent us and pray for it”, we find our well-being and the well-being of the community are mutually enhanced. The energy created in such partnerships is a joy for both. And I am naïve enough to believe that as we stand side by side to work in our communities, our internal divisions will become less important. The Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, keynote speaker at Assembly and Minister of the Community and Voluntary sector, pointed out that the Church – our Church in particular – is a significant contributor to New Zealand civil society. We are being called to join Christ; to engage with our local communities.

Then I want to help our Church celebrate its amazing, rich diversity. How do we enjoy and enhance this diversity beyond our own fear of difference and change? How do we make room for the wonderful diversity of ethnic relationships in our church – Pacific Island, Asian and European. Beginning by keeping faith with Te Aka Puaho, our primary bicultural partner, can we then look to local partnerships in our community? How can we be a YES church to diversity?

In a visit to the Wairarapa last November, I ran a workshop on how we can resource our Church's mission, with people's energy and expertise and with buildings and money. I suggest to you that it is possible that community-facing mission be in part resourced by the community. I want to see, too, that the fantastic wealth of expertise



available in our Assembly Office and across the Church is accessed to help us all in mission. The responsibility for mission has been divulged to the Presbyteries yet most struggle to make it happen, so how can we maximise the resources we have for effective, accountable and transforming mission?

Finally, as spokesperson for the Presbyterian Church, I want to strengthen our voice on public issues, particularly in those areas where we have a good track record of wisdom and experience. Have we become so paralysed by a fear of offence and by our own internal wrangles that we have become silent in what really matters? Our Church's voice, reflecting the compassion, justice and integrity of Christ, should be heard as a voice of hope in the hard places, perhaps in the midst of racial prejudice, nonchalant acceptance of violence, environmental insustainability and in the shocking statistics about child welfare and youth suicide. I am setting up a focus group to resource me on some of these issues - I would be glad to hear your views too.

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How should Christians  
respond to a

# changing climate

You might think climate change is simply the topic de jour; a news story that tomorrow will be fish-and-chips wrapping like the rest. But talk of alterations in our atmosphere is more than a fashion. While event-generated hype – like that around Al Gore's *Inconvenient Truth* film – might wax and wane, the issue will shine inexorably on. **Amanda Wells reports.**

Magazines from Christian denominations throughout Australia and New Zealand have featured countless stories about climate change during the past six months, as Churches grapple with responses to the impact we are having on God's creation.

It's helpful to note at the outset that debating climate change can take a theological turn. Some view the changes to temperature and weather systems through an apocalyptic, Revelation-informed lens, putting them in opposition to those concentrating on duty to care for creation. Still other groups question the veracity of scientific evidence for global warming in the same way that they approach evolutionary theory.

# ng ate?

But it's easy to find hard facts about climate change. Underpinning global warming are the increasing levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere. In simple terms, these trap the heat that the earth would otherwise radiate into space, warming our atmosphere.

For example, marine scientists at the UK's Southampton and Plymouth universities recently published research revealing that the upper 1500 metres of the ocean between Western Europe and the eastern United States have warmed by 0.015 degrees Celsius in the past seven years. The large capacity of sea water to store heat means that a water temperature rise of that size equates to warming the atmosphere above by almost 9 degrees. Disturbingly, the researchers suggest that this heat stored in the oceans could be released into

## A theological view

No matter what you think about global warming, the Bible tells us that all God's creatures praise their creator and groan in travail for redemption (Romans 8). God wants us to care for and conserve our planet. Just read over Proverbs' teaching to the young, and the Torah's instructions about caring for all living things. Remember our grandparents' wisdom in sayings like "waste not, want not"! And remember Paul's admonitions in 2 Thessalonians that believers "not be idle" while awaiting the Lord's return.

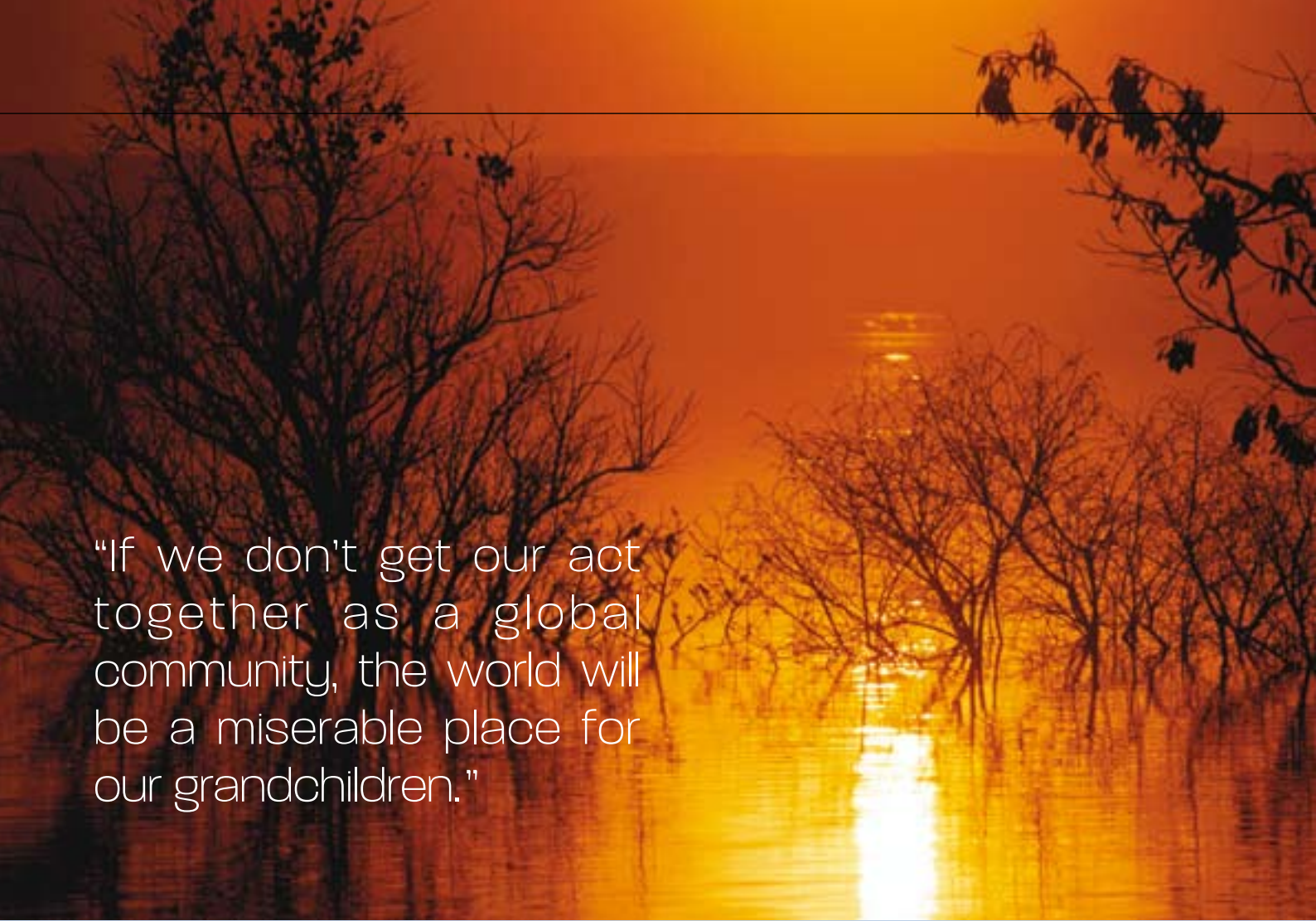
So how do we encourage nurture of the earth and its creatures? We need to be intentional about it, because society emphasises two approaches to nature – both egocentric. On the one hand, there's a large push to use and throw away the world's resources: you deserve to be happy; take what you want. On the other hand, there's a move to recycle and reuse and care for the earth's resources. Why? Society's reason: so we can enjoy life.

Is there a Biblical approach that balances our use of resources with caring for the planet? Indeed there is. We see it in God's commandment to keep the Sabbath - our animals are to rest from their labours also. We see it in the multiple instructions to let the earth remain fallow (for example, Exodus 23:10-12), which is a process that restores the soil's health. We see it in Paul's prophecy that the earth and all creatures will be reborn, 'earth itself will be set free to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Rom 8:21)!'.

By Susan Werstein

the atmosphere in the future, potentially hampering our efforts to stabilise global temperatures with cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

Then there's the fact that high sea temperatures starve phytoplankton of nutrients, decreasing their ability to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which then fuels further climate change. Research by a team of US scientists released in December 2006 analyses satellite data over the past 10 years to show conclusively, for the first time, that the growth of marine phytoplankton is being harmed by rising sea temperatures. Phytoplankton account for about half of the photosynthesis carried out by all plants on earth, meaning that any change in their ability to absorb carbon dioxide is hugely significant.



“If we don't get our act together as a global community, the world will be a miserable place for our grandchildren.”

The developments outlined on the previous page are merely those making news during the writing of this article; further pieces of evidence are being published every week, making the reality of our altered world increasingly difficult to deny.

Dr Kevin Tate, who's part of St David's Presbyterian in Palmerston North, has spent more than 30 years looking at changes to the terrestrial biosphere. He was awarded the New Zealand Association of Scientists' Marsden Medal in 2005 for his work into ecosystem processes and climate change.

Kevin headed up New Zealand's biggest research programme into greenhouse gases and climate change, at Landcare Research, from the 1990s till his retirement in 2005.

He describes US-generated theological argument against responding to climate change as “frightening”. He says he's often asked to give talks on climate change, with more church groups expressing increasing interest during the past couple of years. In December 2006, Kevin was asked to help the Interchurch Bioethics Committee put together a study guide on climate change, which is due out in mid 2007. He says he's encouraged to see churches engaging with the issue.

Climate change requires urgent action now, Kevin says. “Even five years' ago, we couldn't say how fast impacts would appear. But now, especially in the Arctic, the effects are there for all the world to see, if they're prepared to look.”

He says European countries' level of concern has been heightened by stutterings in the Gulf Stream, which history shows has stopped catastrophically in the past, prompting ice ages.

But Kevin says care needs to be taken “not to blind people with frightening scenarios” and instead to offer positive courses of

action. “We haven't got much time left. Maybe 20 years.”

“If we don't get our act together as a global community, the world will be a miserable place for our grandchildren. The impacts are far bigger than anything humankind has ever faced before.”

One of the greatest effects for New Zealand is the potential flood of environmental refugees, Kevin says. More than 100 million people from the Asian subcontinent will have nowhere to go if sea levels rise as predicted. Another consequence is that tropical pests and diseases previously unseen in New Zealand will become commonplace, creating a huge burden on our health system. And many coastal developments will become nonviable.

These kind of effects are now well-documented, Kevin says, and “not just speculative”, as some responses to them demonstrate. An article in *New Scientist* late last year outlined the extent to which the US energy industry is seeking to muzzle scientists investigating the issue, for fear of greater regulation.

Kevin says he's heartened by rising awareness of the difference individuals can make through small changes. For example, energy-efficient lightbulbs use only 20 percent of the energy of a standard bulb, delivering substantial cost and energy savings over their eight-to-10-year lifespan. “It's a very simple and painless thing for people to do.”

Other positive changes individuals can make include walking, taking the bus or cycling, instead of always using the car. The rapid escalation in oil prices during 2006 should have got people thinking, he says, and despite the current blip will inevitably continue to increase.

Churches can form awareness groups and encourage individual action. Corporate measures are also possible; for example,

including improved insulation in new building or renovations. "There's a lot to be done at every level, including churches. We can't just talk about it, we've actually got to do it."

Because of the impact on future generations, our response has become an ethical and moral issue, Kevin says, and churches need to engage with this. "How much do we care about future generations?"

The Rev Dr Keith Carley, retired former dean of Auckland theological college St John of the Evangelist and part of the congregation at Kapiti Uniting, says the assumption that a theology of nature is not a good thing has stood in the way of church engagement with environmental issues.

Keith is involved in the Earth Bible project, which has developed five volumes of studies of Biblical passages that put a case for our responsibility to care for the environment.

This broad-based initiative aims to get the Church thinking seriously about its responsibility for the environment. "It's part of our responsibility, rather than something that God takes care of for us."

Developed by a team of scholars from Adelaide, with Australian Lutheran Norman Habel as chief editor, the project aims to read the Bible from the perspective of justice for the Earth. More information can be found online at: [www.webofcreation.org/Earthbible/earthbible.html](http://www.webofcreation.org/Earthbible/earthbible.html)

The first five volumes published so far cover: Reading from the Perspective of Earth, The Earth Story in Genesis, The Earth Story in Wisdom Traditions, The Earth Story in the Psalms and the Prophets and The Earth Story in the New Testament.

Keith says there is a multitude of resources available online designed for Christians who want to be better informed about climate change. For example, [www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com) is a collection of resources dedicated to the "season of creation", which equates to four Sundays in September. A number of readings and liturgies are available for download from the website, which also contains material for children, a theology for the season of creation, and plenty of other resources.

Many of our churches are responding to environmental issues. In 2006, Island Bay Presbyterian ran a Lent study on climate change, says the Rev Nathan Parry. Out of the study grew an environmental task group, which invited a series of speakers along and continues to generate ideas and plans. The church has developed its own environmental guide, which is a leaflet of suggestions things individuals can do to make a difference. These include directions to where batteries can be recycled in Wellington, where to buy energy efficient light bulbs, and examples of cleaning products that are environmentally friendly.

Decisions are also being made at a national level. General Assembly 2006 agreed to urge congregations to be conscientious in ordering congregational life on sound principles of sustainability, and honour our responsibility to be God's stewards for Earth. A notice of motion that General Assembly urge congregations to be pro-active in their local communities in challenging and educating people about sustainable living was also passed.

At its November 2006 meeting, the Council of Assembly established a task group, under the direction of Assembly Executive Secretary the Rev Martin Baker, focused on ecological issues. The group will aim to provide resources and guidelines for churches as

## What can your church do?

### Conduct a green audit

This means evaluating the impact your church's operations are having on the environment. One helpful template is online at: [www.christian-ecology.org.uk/env-audit.pdf](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/env-audit.pdf)

### Start a discussion group

Check out some of the online resources referred to in the article or surf Google for more, and perhaps invite guest speakers.

### Encourage individual action

## What can you do?

**Simple switches** include energy-efficient light bulbs, low energy appliances, and insulating your hot water system.

**Consider transport alternatives.** Maybe you can give someone else a lift to work, or think about taking the bus. Cycling and walking require more organisational effort and initial motivation but the pay-offs in terms of health and time for reflection are commensurate.

**Reduce the other resources you consume.** Cloth bags make for better shopping and it's not hard to choose products with less packaging.

**Or look at your diet.** How far has that food travelled to your table? Perhaps there are local, seasonal alternatives. Some disturbing facts to inform your thinking: producing a kilogram of beef consumes 50 times as much water as producing a kilo of rice. Seven kilos of grain are needed to produce a kilo of beef. Currently, 36 percent of the world's grain goes to feed livestock and poultry. If the 670 million tons of the world's grain used for feed were reduced by just 10 percent, this would free up 67 million tons of grain, enough to sustain 225 million people or keep up with world population growth for the next three years.

well as auditing the Church's national operations and developing a "Declaration on the Care of Creation".

On the international stage, the World Council of Churches called on government representatives meeting last November to discuss the Kyoto protocol to "listen to the scientists and the cry of the Earth and address the reality of climate change with the extreme urgency that it demands".

"Faith communities are addressing climate change because it is a spiritual and ethical issue of justice, equality, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. The situation is critical. We must all act now," the WCC said. sParr

# Fronting up – Warwick Moffat

## What does your role/work involve?

I am the youth director for Hornby Presbyterian Community Church (in Christchurch), which basically means I am responsible for and co-ordinate all our various youth programmes. These include our high school youth workers, monthly social events, weekly small groups, and weekly discipleship groups, along with the odd camp, a tramp, Easter camp etc etc... This means that along with contact time with young people, a large portion of my role is leading our team of leaders, and quite a bit of the good ole administration as well! I also help run (with a team of people) our evening church services, called p3.

## Why did you choose this ministry?

Hmmm, arguably it chose me... I trained as a landscape architect, and after finishing uni worked for about 18 months in this. However my job “fell over” somewhat unexpectedly, and so after having about six months off, God directed me to approach our church to see if they would take me on as a youth intern (I was already helping with the youth group at that time). So I did... And they did! And things have kinda just grown from there really, and I am now full time and have been doing this for about eight years.

## What have you learned about God through this work?

That he IS at work! I still get surprised sometimes when certain people respond to God – the people you just don't expect to – and it blows me away! It is very cool though, and reminds me that God is at work, and that he is the one who does the work. He has a plan, he is sovereign, and he is faithful and full of grace. And I continue to learn more and more about his heart and his special concern for justice and the poor and marginalised, and that inspires me! Our God is a radical and countercultural God, and that is an awesome, awesome thing!

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

The most awesome thing is undoubtedly seeing young people “grow”, and faith become real for them – it is flippin' cool when that happens!!! It is just a huge privilege to be involved in people's lives



over a long period of time, to walk with them in the good times and the struggles, and see them grow and mature into outstanding young men and women! Another very exciting thing is the potential for community transformation – when the flow-on effects from what you do and the people you are involved with impact families and the wider community, it is very cool!

## What have been the biggest challenges?

I find the biggest challenge is “difficult people” – the people who are just hard work... You really want to persevere with them, as that is what Jesus was all about, but sometimes it feels like even though you go the extra mile for them, and persevere with them when no-one else does, they “spit in your face” (so to speak). And that hurts... Another ongoing challenge is staying “fresh” – not getting stuck in a rut, but staying open to God and His leadings, and not thinking “right, we've found the answer, now we just need to keep doing this [for ever]...” Also maintaining good team dynamics when working with people, as it is easy to get frustrated. But we need to remember that in spite of our differences, we actually do all need each other to be “successful” in God's mission, and when we work together we are all richer for it!


## Who has inspired you?

I find that I am inspired by “quality people”... These include our pastor Murray Talbot, the assistant pastor Darryl Tempero, and many of our youth leaders and young people! There are just some awesome people around, who love God, have big hearts, and are prepared to give selflessly of their lives for others, and that always inspires me!!! Bono from U2 is another inspiration. I was fortunate enough to go to their recent concert, and seeing his passion for justice and the way he included God in the whole concert experience I was just left thinking “you are the man!!!” It was very cool! I am also a bit of a sports nut, so am inspired by the likes of Thierry Henry, Alejandro Valverde, Paolo Bettini, Jeff Wilson etc...

## Do you have any recommended books/CDs?

Hmmm, books, what are they again?! I'm not really much of a reader to be fair. I really like the idea, and do actually really want to read more, but never quite seem to get around to it... (Although what about sports magazines, do they count?). Having said that however, I would recommend Purpose Driven Youth Ministry (Doug Fields) – for me this was a very formative book, especially the early chapters. Other books I would recommend include Beyond Renewal (Brian Hathaway), It's Not About the Bike (Lance Armstrong), Walk On (Steve Stockman), and Blue Like Jazz (Donald Miller). I am currently reading Finding Life (Ashley Barker), and am planning to read Who Stands Fast? (Michael Duncan) and Bono on Bono (Michka Assayas) over the summer... And generally I like to read stuff that is going to challenge me and my thinking in some way. As for CDs, pretty much anything by U2, along with the likes of Shawn MacDonald, Dave Matthews Band, Pearl Jam, Coldplay, Cat Stevens, Bruce Springsteen, Genesis, Switchfoot etc...

## Where can I learn more about what you do?

You can find us on the web, [www.hornby.org.nz](http://www.hornby.org.nz) – just follow the links (under the hpcc menu) to fusion youth, or feel free to give me a call on (03) 980 2296. 



# What's going on with Presbyterian Youth Ministry?

**Change is afoot at PYM, with new national positions being filled for 2007. Amanda Wells reports.**

In late 2006, two new youth coordinators were selected for the South Island: Stephanie Redhead (from Calvin Community Church in Gore) and Robyn Burnett (from Hornby Presbyterian in Christchurch), who will both combine this work with other roles. The North Island co-ordinator position is being re-advertised in early 2007.

Jo Ryan, a student in Dunedin who was the PYM intern in 2003, has been holding together PYM operations on a part-time basis in 2006. She's been working with the Youth Focus Group, which was set up by former youth coordinator Mo Mansill and stepped up to an enhanced role after her departure. Jo says she's excited about seeing new people take up bigger, more permanent positions.

Jo says the new staff will come into a situation "where there's already a whole lot of momentum going". Rather than having to kick things off from scratch, they'll be able to add new projects around those that are already operating successfully.

Having two people will mean better pastoral care and enhanced networking, she says, including the ability to travel, to more widely spread areas. "They'll be able to have a lot more contact with youth workers, which is what it's all about."

A key focus for PYM is building relationships between youth workers and encouraging them in their ministries. Jo says PYM is about encouraging the Church's young people to have a long term perspective "so they will continue on in that faith". Young groups and events are "not just party games but digging deeper. There are values that run through everything we do."

Leadership training course Going Somewhere operates regionally, although new national staff means more support for starting it in new areas. 2006 was the fifth year in Wellington of Going Somewhere, which brings together young people



with leadership potential and encourages them to use their gifts in their churches and communities. Dunedin took up Going Somewhere in 2004, it started in Auckland and Blenheim in 2005, and in Christchurch in 2006.

Many of Going Somewhere graduates have started to lead youth groups or taken up leadership roles. Jo says being challenged to exercise their gifts means young people become involved when they might otherwise have stayed on the sidelines. People got to know those from other churches doing similar work and started to think, "if they're doing it, I can do it". "There are many people for whom it was a significant kind of turning point."

Sue Holani, family ministries facilitator at Whakatane Presbyterian, came to PYM conference Connect for the first time last year. She says she wasn't sure what to expect, so contacted Jo: "Getting from Whakatane to Otaki seemed a challenge. Jo was great in giving me contacts to try and get lifts with. She kept contact with me and always answered my endless emails and calls. I thought I'd known her forever when we did meet!"

Sue says at Connect she asked people a lot

of questions that related to issues within her youth group: "how am I to grow our church", "why are youth leaving", "is it me, am I that bad", "what can I do to keep them?"

"The answers I got were that they were in the same boat, or 'this is what we did to help our church'. I think meeting so many people who face the same ongoing problems is what really enriched my leadership/ministry."

Sue says the worship, which is lead by the Connect Band from Wellington's PIC Newtown, was a huge highlight. "It just lifted me so high. It felt so good to sing loud, to praise and praise and praise and really feel 'connect'ed to God through song. And not to feel shy or alone in the want or need to worship that way was really awesome. The band was truly amazing."

Sue encourages people working with youth to tap into PYM's resources. "Get to the next Connect conference. Be prepared to sing, laugh, cry, learn and grow! It really did blow me away."

"I went by myself knowing no-one. I came away completely blessed with having met so many great people."

Desmond Uili of PIC Newtown has been involved in his church's youth ministry for more than 10 years. PIC Newtown's youth group has about 40 members, with maybe 25 turning up on a Friday night but more than 45 to some of weekend events.

Des says the chance to play every year at Connect has had a big impact on the worship group that has become the Connect Band. The Connect Band will be playing at FaithFest in March, and is actively looking into other festivals like Samstock.

Des says another band has just started that has grown out of the youth group. "We're very passionate about our music."

All PIC Newtown's youth ministry leadership team goes to Connect, along the band's 10 musicians. Des says the best things about Connect are the chance for youth leaders to network and "know they're not alone". People always come back fired up with good ideas and full of motivation, he says.

Des attended Youth Assembly and General Assembly 2006, and says he enjoyed spending an intense period of time with strong leaders from around the country. "I'm really passionate about my work."

He says it makes a big difference to know that other youth leaders are dealing with the same challenges.

Emily Wotton, youth, children and family ministry co-ordinator for the Auckland Presbytery region, says young people in Auckland are typically overextended, with an abundance of leadership opportunities at school and in community groups, as well as churches.

It's part of Emily's job description to support and promote PYM, and she says she's excited by the energy the ministry has. "I think there's a huge amount of momentum that has grown and has got to the stage of snowballing."

Part of this energy is being invested in looking at familiar programmes in different ways, for example, running Going Somewhere over a weekend rather than eight weeks, to better attract those with excessive time commitments. Strong interest has already been expressed by a number of churches: "they're saying they'll make it compulsory for their volunteer leaders". Emily says that Going Somewhere in 2003 and 2004 attracted a huge cross-section of the Church, creating connections and friendships that have proved durable.



As part of her presbytery role, Emily's planning to hold regional gatherings next year to help break down the barriers between Auckland's suburban enclaves.

She says that funding bodies are starting to recognise the potential in Presbyterian youth ministry, with half a dozen people now being funded in roles around the country, compared to the situation in the past of having only one national coordinator.

"We could still do with more to make the ministry more effective and have better geographic coverage."

She says she's energised by her contact with PI churches, some of which have huge, "joyous and energetic" youth groups full of talent. "They've really changed the atmosphere at Connect."

Youth ministry faces the challenge of supporting young people into the next phase of their lives, Emily says, which is where programmes like studentsoul (profiled in the December 2006 issue of *sPanz*) become crucial.

But Emily says leaders working with young people also need to be able to see a career path so that "it's a longer term job". The development of the Centre for Christian Leadership is being watched with interest in youth ministry circles, she says. "We have so many people in their mid to late 20s and early 30s with leadership potential. We've almost producing too many leaders to keep up with at the moment, and we want to make sure they're not snapped up by other denominations."

Creating a vital youth programme means the rest of the Church must be ready to pick up the ball.

As Whakatane's Sue Holani says, "sometimes you don't know that a need is waiting to be filled until it is". *sPanz*

## What does PYM do?

**Connect:** the national youth leaders' conference, held every year in July, to inspire, equip and entertain. In 2006, Connect celebrated its fifth birthday, with about 150 people attending to be inspired, challenged and entertained. Connect 2007 will be 29 June to 1 July at Forest Lakes Camp near Otaki.

**Going Somewhere and Going Somewhere Deeper:** eight-week regional courses designed to grow your young people into leadership roles.

**Fuel:** the PYM magazine, published quarterly to maintain connections, promote resources and spread the word about PYM happenings, as well as provide a helping of inspiration.

**And in 2007? Get set for even more...**

# Ground-breaking research by Dunedin minister

## Research by a Dunedin minister will show how culture and ethnicity affect congregations within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Rev Tokerau Joseph, of First Church, is examining the extent to which ethnicity and culture affect how people choose which parish to belong to and the degree of their participation. “My research may challenge just how multicultural we are in the Presbyterian Church,” he says.

One thing that has made it “tricky” is the lack of statistics. “Presbyterian Church records don’t have ethnicity, so we don’t know how many Pacific Islanders, how many Asians we have,” Tokerau says.

“The development of the different ethnic groupings (European, Maori, Asian, and Pacific Islanders) within the life of the Presbyterian Church has mainly been homogenous. Although there have been individuals or groups that have engaged and interacted across cultural and religious lines among the different groups, most people have chosen to remain and participate within their own groups,” he says.

Tokerau’s decision to undertake the research was triggered by work in his previous parish, Otara PIC, in South Auckland. The Otara parish has three congregations – Cook Island, Niuean and Samoan – each effectively with its own minister but Tokerau, a Cook Islander who came to New Zealand when he was five, saw himself as ministering to all three. Also having an influence on his choice for his PhD thesis was his master’s research, which looked at the reasons young Cook Islanders were leaving Cook Island congregations within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Tokerau is examining four ethnic groups – European, Maori, Pacific Islanders and Asians – “bearing in mind there are specific ethnic identities within those groups”. “I do mean ethnic groups in the broadest sense,” he says.

Questionnaires will be distributed and in-depth interviews conducted in Te Aka Puaho and the presbyteries of Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland. “The reason [for selecting these

presbyteries] is because they are the main areas where Asians and Pacific Islanders are concentrated,” Tokerau explains, adding that Te Aka Puaho has been chosen as it has the highest level of Maori participation within the Presbyterian Church.

Two hundred parishioners and 70 ministers – “but I have a feeling it may go up to 80 ministers” – will be asked to fill out questionnaires. The second strand of the work will involve in-depth interviews with 20 parishioners and some 16 ministers, while the third component is gathering material from parishes.

Of Presbyterian ministers, he says: “my suspicion is that they are more comfortable working among their own people, although New Zealand is becoming more and more diverse.”

He sees lay people as tending to continue to express culture and customs through their church involvement. “In this research, the finding may be that language is the core cultural value and people choose a congregation where their language is spoken.”

He also hopes his research will show whether that is confined to people born overseas or whether it extends to their children. “And what about a [multi-ethnic] Pacific Island church with only one



The Rev Tokerau Joseph is investigating how multicultural the Church is.

minister? What are the dynamics involved in that situation?” he asks.

“I think it’s a challenge to have to look at making relationships work not only at a church level but also at different levels of understanding of people,” Mr Joseph says. “And I’m hoping it will be some sort of resource for the Church.”

He admits juggling full-time study with a heavy workload at First Church is “a lot of work” but is upbeat, his only concern being that presbyteries, parishes and individuals will recognise the value of what he is doing and wholeheartedly support him.

By Gillian Vine 

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# Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I have just read through the December 2006 edition of *sPanz*. Please take this as a reaction from a senior minister who has been almost completely alienated from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand as a result of Assembly decisions, not because I belong to any of the groups directly affected by the leadership and sexuality decision, but because I see that decision as a violation of the universality of the Gospel.

While the December edition of *sPanz* has lots of positive stories in it which are worth sharing, its coverage of what was probably the most momentous General Assembly in years is superficial to say the least. The coverage of the sexuality and leadership decision lacks any real depth. Why could this not have been dealt with in more depth, and from both sides, as happened in *Candour*?

**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 amanda@presbyterian.org.nz and should include the writer's full name, home address and daytime telephone number.**

Is it any wonder that our lay people so often have so little knowledge when such matters are not dealt with in depth? Remember the words of Hosea: "My people perish for lack of knowledge." (Hosea 4:6.) Is it that lack of knowledge that made it possible for Assembly to make such destructive, anti-Gospel and anti-missional decisions — such as telling a broad swathe of the population that they are only welcome if they have no aspirations to leadership; and the final nail in the coffin of a specifically Presbyterian theological education, thus giving the death knell to our Presbyterian and Reformed ethos?

While the comments from the new Assembly Executive Secretary and the new Director for the Centre for Christian Leadership were interesting and full of new possibilities, neither of them made any reference to the sexuality and leadership decision and its serious implications for mission and the future of our denomination. "See no evil, hear no evil."

So I am asking for more substance and in-depth discussion of issues please, and far less spin and propaganda.

Kind regards,  
Rinny Westra.



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# Financial Services Department

Throughout 2007, *sPanz* will introduce the departments that make up the nine-person team at the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand's Wellington Assembly Office. This issue we take a look at the Financial Services Department, or FSD as they're often known.

The Financial Services Department is responsible for the measurement and management of the Church's finances.

The team is made up of four hardworking and motivated staff: Brendan Sweeney, finance manager; Margaret Fawcett, finance administrator; Katrina Graham, finance administrator; and Nick Coates, accountant. While each of them have multiple individual roles and responsibilities within the unit, they work hard as a team to carry out the instructions of parishes and Church governance, as well as other financial investigative and reporting tasks. "My staff have a very valuable mix of skills and experience, which is appreciated highly throughout the Church", says Brendan. "In any one day they could go from data input, accounts and clerical, to investigative and policy work."

The majority of the team's day-to-day interaction occurs with parishes and ministers, mainly in relation to the administration of the beneficiary fund, administration of the seniority allowance, issuing of ministers loans, mobilcard accounts, parish insurance and the Presbyterian Investment Fund. "Parishes and ministers are our primary customer base – we are here to serve them." In addition, Brendan also has a close working relationship with the Council of Assembly, Resource Committee, presbyteries and other groups within the Church such as the Pacific Island Synod, the Asian Congregations, Youth Ministry, Archives and policy groups.

"Our job is to provide visibility on how money is being used to conduct the activities of the Church, particularly relating to global mission, national mission and the School of Ministry", says Brendan. As finance manager, he reports to the Resource Sub-committee, who in turn



Katrina Graham (left), Margaret Fawcett and Brendan Sweeney

produce a six-monthly report to the wider Church on financial performance and financial position. He has been in the role on a contract basis but in January 2007 accepted a permanent appointment to the position.

In an endeavour to continue to improve this visibility, FSD, in conjunction with the Church's communications team, is working on a document that will outline to the wider Church exactly how year-to-date spend is broken down relating to all Church functions. This document will be published on our website in early 2007. "It will make interesting reading", Brendan says.

With a reduction of numbers from eight full-time staff in 2003 to just four today, FSD has become a very busy, motivated and productive unit. However, Brendan acknowledges that there has been an element of frustration from parishes and ministers who have in the past expressed that the department perhaps hasn't been performing as well as it possibly could. He says that the team is very aware of those frustrations and made a big effort in the past year to address them. "We are working a lot smarter, and feedback that we are getting from parishes, the Resource Sub-committee and Council of Assembly is quite clear on the turnaround of FSD performance over the last couple of years,"

Brendan says. "However it is still a work in progress and we can improve further."

Brendan explains that the department is also aware of the financial restrictions and struggles that are placed on many of the parishes and of the current trend of diminishing memberships and collections. "We don't want to be seen as just a collector of parish taxes – we do want to provide greater visibility and explanation of how funds are used, and offer support and advice when needed."

One objective for 2007 is to establish a financial coaching and mentoring service for presbyteries and parishes whereby the department will be available to offer financial, finance process and regulatory advice. FSD has been underutilised as an advisory resource for parishes, Brendan says, and the team wants treasurers and clerks to know that they are available should they require it. "We are very much service-orientated and committed to serving the Church."

The best way to get in touch with the Financial Services Department is to email [fsd@presbyterian.org.nz](mailto:fsd@presbyterian.org.nz) or telephone the Assembly Office on (04) 801-6000.

By Tracey Patterson *sPanz*

Next issue: we profile human resources

## Book Review: *My Name was Judas* by CK Stead

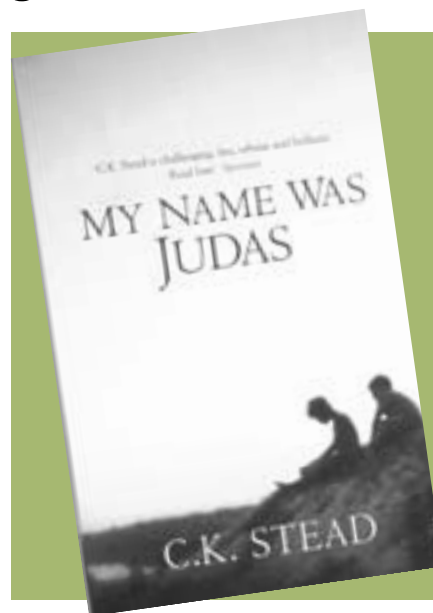
**On the front cover of CK Stead's latest book, *My Name was Judas*, is a quote from the Spectator describing the author and his work as "challenging, fun, urbane and brilliant":** Hmm.

But as I read this book, I struggled to find these features. Unusually for a novel, there was not the slightest attempt at characterisation. The book is told in one voice – the author's. Likewise, any sense of historical authenticity is stamped out by some of the most anachronistic speech and behaviour I've had the misfortune to read.

Another aspect that I found particularly strange was that, for a book based on the Gospels, it almost appears that Stead has not acquainted himself with the source material. Instead, we are taken on huge flights of fancy. For example, did you know that Idas/Judas was so brilliant that he could only be truly at home amongst a Greek family that had discovered the Earth was round?

Of course, Stead isn't always so inventive. For some parts of the book, he simply adopts the opposite line to what is recorded in the gospels. For example, in the Gospels, Mary and Jesus enjoy an ideal mother-son relationship. But here, Stead sets us right; in fact Jesus hated and resented his mother – with no explanation as to why. Other times during the book, he is satisfied with merely modifying events. For example, Lazarus wasn't actually dead. Rather it was a metaphor for the depression from which he suffered. Does Stead really believe the early Christians were prepared to die for someone who merely made people feel good about themselves?

However, there is a pervading fear of death that permeates the book. It was as if Stead is attempting to delay his own trip into eternity by rehabilitating Judas Iscariot – that is, to prove God is wrong and therefore he/she/it cannot exist. The problem is that he cannot back up any of his own arguments – they simply don't stack up.



Had I not agreed to do a review of this book, I wouldn't have bothered to read the 15 chapters that I did. As it was there was nothing to compel me to read the remaining seven. sPanz



### Making a Difference

Presbyterian Support Otago's Centennial History: "Making a Difference" was launched on 22 September 2006 as the opening activity of the Centennial Weekend celebrations.

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# A scientist's faith

**Some people look up at the stars or at grandiose mountains to experience the awe of God but Joy McIntosh prefers looking down a microscope. Joy works at AgResearch, though you can often find her around Knox Presbyterian church, Lower Hutt, helping with Seismic, the group for early teens.**

She is part of the Reproduction group at Wallaceville, researching what happens in the ovary leading up to ovulation. This work aims to allow farmers to control the birth rates of their stock from season to season. When there's enough food, farmers want as many calves and lambs as possible, but when there's severe conditions they want to be able to limit the numbers being born.

But talk to Joy and you'll find her interest in biology is far wider than animal reproduction. It began as a young child when she would dissect bits and pieces she got from the butcher. After leaving school she completed a biochemistry degree at Canterbury and Lincoln universities, and more recently researched for a PhD in cell and molecular biology at Victoria University.

While that research brought up questions about the ethical boundaries biologists now face, she says. "I guess where God has taken me over the years is to see that, while technology allows us to do a lot of things, there are some boundaries that we shouldn't go beyond. Just because we can, doesn't mean we should."

As a Christian biologist, she came face to face with this dilemma when applying for a job as an embryologist. "I knew that there were several ethically grey areas in the IVF methods, the most important one to me being the number of spare or waste embryos that were produced and not used, but I had thought the outcome for the couple of a healthy baby was worth these dilemmas." But Joy decided not to pursue the job, because of her growing sense that some of its implications were "outside of God's purpose for us". "But I would like to see more effort put into the grey areas by scientists... and I think God has given



Joy McIntosh

us the capability to find these methods if we look."

Another area where Christian scientists have the challenge of integrating their faith and their work is the evolution versus intelligent design debate. Joy says it's an area in which people on both sides of the debate are searching for what's true. "The more I see and read about what other scientists are finding out and gather more information myself, the more evidence there is to support God as an amazing creator."

Living as a follower of Christ is top of Joy's list. She says her faith often comes into her work and she thinks it is important for Christians in all areas to have a voice. "Whether I exercise my voice strongly enough, I'm not sure. Everyone at work knows I'm a Christian and we've had some good discussions."

Joy believes it would be good if more Christians who are scientifically inclined looked at science as a career. "God needs Christians there."

Copies of a talk Joy gave at Knox on some of the issues above are available; contact the church office on [office@knoxstc.org.nz](mailto:office@knoxstc.org.nz)

By Viv Ball 



# If you go down to the church today...

**Making the most of the Holy Spirit's "comforting" characteristics was the way into the Cashmere Hills Pentecost service last year. "As far as I know, it's a new approach," says the Rev David Coster. "As Pentecost drew near, I was thinking of the different names for the Holy Spirit, and one of them is Comforter," he says**

"When they were babies, our own children found comfort in their baby lambskins. They relaxed them and helped them go to sleep. So I thought about other things that comforted people, and teddy bears came to mind."

At the well-attended Pentecost service, teddy bears belonging to all ages, from newborns to 90-year-olds, were gathered in front of the church. "A good range of people attended," says David, "including regular congregation members and those we see only sometimes".

Cashmere Hills makes a practice of reaching out to the 33 families on *their* roll, many of whom have such time pressures that they attend church only occasionally. At the beginning of each year, they are sent a list of all the services the worship team thinks might appeal to them. Then they are notified by post when each is coming up, and telephoned not long before to remind them again.

"The verse for the day was "I will send you my Comforter", David says. "At the service I asked the children what they called their teddy bears and why. They were very willing to talk. It was a short service – 45 minutes or so – and I didn't use the pulpit, so there was a real picnic atmosphere.

"Everybody entered into the spirit of the theme. One man who didn't have a teddy bear collects elephants, so he brought along one of those. He said they were his comforter."

David thinks the Cashmere Hills Teddy Bear's picnic is a new way of celebrating the Pentecost season. "I didn't get the idea from anywhere else," he says. "But it was so successful we'd do it again this year – and maybe in years to come."

By Julia Stuart 




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# Reforming the world

**Kiwi Presbyterians might not be aware of it but we're part of an alliance that includes more than 75 million Christians worldwide.**

The General Secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Rev Setri Nyomi, spent several days in New Zealand late last year, as part of his first visit to the Pacific, which also took in Fiji, Samoa, Australia and Malaysia.

Setri says his visit helped him understand the obstacles facing mission in the region. "Everywhere in the world, churches are facing challenges." But the challenges each country faces are specific to its context, he says. For example, in Africa, the church is growing but faces issues of finance and how to relate Sunday's message to the rest of the week, as well as speaking out on "the powers that destroy the lives of people, including governments".

One of WARC's priorities involves looking at poverty and the way that the world's economies are arranged. Setri points out that many people in the world live on NZ\$1 a day or less. "The question is, do we as Churches keep quiet?"

He likens the situation to that of slavery in the United States; about which many churches were also silent. "We have to say 'no' to those forces of injustice that disadvantage people."

Setri is based in Geneva, along with the rest of WARC's 11 staff, and spends about 40 percent of his time travelling. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches was formed in 1875 and set up a base in Geneva in 1948 so as to be near the newly forming World Council of Churches.

During his time in New Zealand, Setri met the Rev Graham Redding, the incoming director of the Centre for Christian Leadership, and says this type of leadership training is a good example of a Church taking steps to respond to the challenges of its context.

Mission renewal is another focus for WARC, including equipping member churches to engage in mission. "Everyone



**The Rev Setri Nyomi**

is called to be in mission," Setri says. In particular, WARC has a focus on gender justice and empowering young people.

WARC is also concerned with renewing the Reformed tradition. Its motto *semper reformanda* means "always reforming"; a concept that underpins the orientation of all Reformed churches. "It's about fostering renewal in our churches based on solid theology."

Maintaining knowledge of our theological heritage can be a challenge, he says, particularly for young people. "In this day and age, people's awareness of theological reflection has changed. We've come to live in a disposable world: if the way the church is doesn't fit with the way we think it should be, then we go somewhere else."

Setri has been General Secretary of WARC for six and a half years, and says the challenges have grown during that time; "at least the global challenges have".

"Six years ago, we focused on drawing attention to global economic injustice. But the problem is compounded."

WARC is shifting its communication focus in an attempt to connect with

congregations, who are often not aware that they belong to WARC. This year, a resource that celebrates World Reformation Day is being produced for the first time.

One of WARC's most significant documents was developed as a result of its conference held in Accra, Ghana, in 2004. This document, entitled "Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth", can be downloaded from [www.warc.ch](http://www.warc.ch)

Setri describes the Accra confession as "a theological statement on the state of the world today and our relationship to it out of our faith". "I hope next year will be a time when Churches get to know this confession and ask themselves what implications it has. If we're going to make a difference in this world, that could be one of the stepping stones."

Of WARC's 216 member churches, 58 are in Africa and 57 in Asia. Setri says having these parts of the world represented in its leadership, which has traditionally been European dominated, has been a positive move. "Now all of us are contributing our gifts."

By Amanda Wells [sPanz](#)

**From running a major mining company in Zimbabwe to managing Camp Columba in eastern Southland has been a long and winding road for Kristian Jensen, his wife Grace and their three children. Gillian Vine reports.**

When Kristian Jensen and his wife, Grace, arrived in Christchurch from Zimbabwe in October 2004, a friend lent them a car. "We went to four service stations in a row and put in \$10 at each for the pleasure of being able to get petrol," Kristian (46) says.

When they left Zimbabwe, once one of Africa's most affluent countries, getting petrol meant travelling into Botswana in a truck modified to carry extra fuel. Black and white farmers had had their farms confiscated and in the increasingly harsh regime of Robert Mugabe, corruption and violence ruled.

"Until about 1998, things had been going along smoothly," Kristian says. He sees the rise of the union movement as the catalyst for change, a shift which saw him praying for guidance. In 2001, he left his job as chief executive of a steel manufacturing company, planning to go to the United States but an Old Testament verse – "why are you rebuilding your house when the House of the Lord is in tatters?" – persuaded the Jensens their role was to stay in Zimbabwe.

Kristian, an electrical engineer who has a business management degree, joined a Christian trust called Let the Nation Grow (or Tears of a Nation), based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city. The trust, whose special focus was on widows and orphans, was established in partnership of the Churches, including the Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist. The aim was to educate farmers and make them self-sufficient by supplying ostriches, chickens or sorghum. After six months, produce was collected, sold and profits returned to the farmers.

"From [hatching] to six months, the mortality rate of ostriches on commercial farms, which would have 10,000 birds, is 15 to 18 per cent," Kristian says. The trust gave each small farmer 50 birds. "They looked after them like their own children, mortality rates were about 9 per cent and commercial farmers took them on [as contractors]."

The phenomenally successful project was supported initially by the Mugabe regime, "then things started going quite sour" with "tremendous persecution, trucks

# Long road to Southland

impounded, drivers beaten up". The Jensens battled on, increasingly concerned for the safety of their three teenage children. The catalyst was probably the gun battle in their street in July 2004. Two people were killed, one a corrupt policeman.

"We felt the Lord saying it was time to move on and a season had closed," Kristian says. Initially, they planned a holiday in Australia, where Kristian had worked in 1994, and on to New Zealand. Camping was all they could afford because of the lack of hard currency in Zimbabwe.

Surfing for campsites, Grace found Camp Columba, at Pukerau in Southland, and saw they were advertising for a manager. "She sent my CV off and when I got home, told me what she'd done. We laughed and thought that would be the end of it." A week later, the job was his.

"We arrived in New Zealand with almost nothing. Suitcases, that was it," Kristian says.

Southland welcomed them with "such amazing hospitality" and he enjoys running Camp Columba, which caters for 4500 children a year from Oamaru to Invercargill and across to Queenstown. In just 5ha, there are abseiling walls, high ropes, a boulder wall, purpose-built motorised climbing wall and kayaking facilities.

Kristian loves New Zealand's peacefulness and opportunities for his children although there have inevitably been some regrets. "You do leave behind your heritage and we've still got family trapped there, by choice or for financial reasons."

**Camp Columba has a website at [www.campcolumba.org.nz](http://www.campcolumba.org.nz) and for more about Zimbabwe, go to [www.zwnews.com](http://www.zwnews.com)** SPANZ



**The Jensen family at Camp Columba. Kristian and Grace with, from left, Marc (18), Sandra (20) and Barry (17).**

# E-minister

– we're there when you need us

**Have questions about matters of faith or life but not sure who to turn to? E-Minister is a real Presbyterian minister you can email now!**

The e-minister operates through the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand website and provides a forum where people can anonymously contact a minister for support and pastoral counselling. They may be able to answer your question directly, or point you to where you can learn more about Christianity and the Presbyterian Church. Or they may refer you to some other professional who offers more appropriate assistance.

E-minister has been operating since December 2003, and during that time an average of a dozen email queries have been received each month. Enquiries cover pastoral matters, theological questions and basic queries like "where is such and such church?"

There are many reasons as to why someone may choose to contact the e-minister rather

than using traditional channels. These may include those people that are tentatively exploring the Church but who are not ready to make the bold step to go along to worship or approach a minister in person, those who may need someone to talk to and don't know where to go, and those who already have someone to talk to but wish to remain anonymous.

A 2003 review of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand website highlighted that a possible barrier for newcomers or returning congregation members was a reluctance to contact the church because they felt like they would then have to commit to attending or signing up. To address this issue, several churches offer an 0800 number as a way to get in touch without having to meet face-to-face. This gives people the chance to find out a bit more and meet a fresh friendly face before taking the step of attending a service or meeting a local minister. E-minister is an extension of this 0800 service, which allows

contact with church but does not carry the same perceived level of pressure to attend or become a member.

E-minister is staff by a team of four ministers who are rostered on for three months, which are spread throughout the year. They are bound by professional ethics to be confidential and therefore anything shared with them is for their eyes only. The identity of the individual e-ministers also remains confidential.

In addition to using the personalised service, people are also able to subscribe to a monthly newsletter from the e-minister. This newsletter is a communication providing feedback to users of the service, and may include reflections on the themes of the previous month's messages, inspirational quotes or scripture, and links supporting comments or useful websites. The content of the newsletter does not refer to individual people or correspondence, but rather general themes and issues.

You can contact the e-minister either by visiting [www.presbyterian.org.nz/eminister](http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/eminister) or by emailing [e-minister@presbyterian.org.nz](mailto:e-minister@presbyterian.org.nz).

By Tracey Patterson 



## 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:

Bequest Manager  
on freephone 0508 86 4357  
or email [bequest@psc.org.nz](mailto:bequest@psc.org.nz)



Presbyterian  
Support Central

0508 TO HELP (86 4357) [www.psc.org.nz](http://www.psc.org.nz)

# An African journey

At the end of October, Kirk and Mo Morgan (nee Mansill) began a three-month trip to Africa. They began their trip in Embu, a small town in Kenya, about two hours north of Nairobi, where they spent a month building and helping out at a live-in discipleship and life-skills programme for school leavers run by nondenominational organisation Trinity Fellowship. They then went to Zambia for three weeks, visiting projects supported by the Global Mission Office and the Livingstone Presbyterian Church, where they painted their youth centre and taught classes in their community computer programme.

Our experiences in Kenya and Zambia were quite contrasting. Embu is not a tourist town - most people live in mud-brick huts with thatched roofs and the few cars drive alongside donkeys pulling carts down dirt roads. We didn't see any other *muzungus* (white people) while we were there, so we were a bit of a novelty! In contrast, in Zambia we were in the two places with the highest *muzungu* populations in the country. We found both countries had a lot to teach us, but it was perhaps Kenya that somehow tugged on our heart strings the most.

One of our main motivations for coming to Kenya and Zambia was that we might be able to explore global inequalities more deeply, and have more insight into how we might respond in more compassionate and effective ways. One of the things that stood out to us - that we would change if we could - is children having equal opportunities to attend school. In Kenya and Zambia, most children attend primary school, but many miss out on high school due to their family's inability to pay for them to attend, or their family's need for the child to start working and contributing to the household income. This has been the case for many of the labourers that Kirk has worked with on the building site in Embu.

Some of our experiences have emphasised the inequalities and indeed injustices that are evident when comparing life for those living in the developed world compared with those in developing countries. But we have also been reminded that what poverty is depends on who defines it. We have been reminded that poverty is not just a financial issue; it is also about oppression and freedom. And we have also been reminded that while we should be challenged to respond to poverty, we should also be challenged to receive from it.

Many of our experiences have shown us that poverty has a lot to teach us. For example, one day while we were at Embu, Katherine, one of the workers at the place we were staying asked me if she could have the weetbix box I was about to throw out so she could give it to her son for a toy. The day before, Kirk had seen a boy walking down the street with a "pet" plastic bottle on the end of a string. While one could see these as signs of poverty, we found ourselves hoping that our kids might, one day, not need plastic crap or play stations to amuse themselves, but instead might have the imagination to find amusement from cardboard boxes and old plastic bottles.

So as we reflect on the things that stand out to us from our time in Kenya and Zambia, perhaps the most significant thing that



Kirk Morgan (right) on an African building site

Kenya and Zambia have taught us, is that when it come to poverty, we should be open to give and receive - in essence, we should be seeking to be partners in mission. [sPazz](#)

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Presbyterian Church  
of Aotearoa New Zealand

# Fading voices from our past

**"To arouse and sustain a missionary spirit among the congregations" read the Missions Committee report of 1939 announcing the production of gramophone records of missionary addresses. To today hear these fragile but fervent and inspiring voices, recorded 67 years ago, is a spine-tingling experience.**

The recent chance discovery that a broadcast recording had been made of the 1940 Presbyterian Church Centennial service on the Petone foreshore means we can also re-live this historic occasion and hear those same venerable voices from our past.

These unique recordings appeal to our senses where written words can fail to sufficiently inspire, inform, or more importantly, give that indefinable "sense of occasion" and presence.

Unfortunately much has been lost through disinterest, overzealous clean-outs, and misguided perceptions that such items were of no further use. Many "old worthies" were interviewed in the 1960s about their days in ministry. Only one tape survives, that of 96-year-old the Rev W F Evans. His faith story is full and inspiring but leads one to consider what else might have been lost. Taped interviews with the intrepid Sister Annie James of South China Mission and Second World War fame were later destroyed and even our Church General Secretary mourned this loss. The 1948 Synod of Otago and Southland Centennial service cannot now be located in the radio archives, despite being set aside for preservation in 1956. As late as 1982, a large number of older sound tapes, including missionary addresses, were culled from the Department of Communication tape library and most have disappeared. Such losses must not continue.

But, what had prompted our Church to set up its own audio library and how did they achieve this? In 1955, the Publicity Committee foresaw the evolving need for sound tapes as an additional and effective resource tool for Parish, Christian education and promotional activities. Mr Ernest Adams (of baking fame) generously donated funds to purchase sound recording equipment to facilitate the production of reel-to-reel recordings in our very own sound studio. The Department of Information library catalogue offered



**Anne, a Department of Information staff member, kneeling on a mosaic of 500 sound tapes ready for distribution to parishes, October 1961**

audio tapes combined with religious slide sets and filmstrips. Anxious to ensure information was clearly and concisely delivered, the Department's 1961 annual report emphasised: "we would require the sponsoring committee to have clearly in its mind what it wants to say and to whom it wants to say it to..."

There is now growing interest in recording our personal faith journeys. A significant acquisition has been the APW collection of interviews with those women who have served and made a noteworthy contribution in our Church. Stories collected from parish members should not be overlooked, reminding us of a comment in a 1930s parish history, "much of the most interesting matter gathered into this history has come, not from [written] records and documents but from people."

General Assemblies have additionally been recorded since 1961; initially just addresses by official personages, but later of all Assembly business. Some parishes also had the foresight to record their jubilee speeches and services.

Evolving technology has taken us from gramophone records, to magnetic tapes, and now to digital compact discs; each format being inherently more unstable than the last. Rapidly changing then obsolete technology, the obvious risk of magnetic recordings on thin delicate tape, and the life expectancy of audio files on a CD being estimated at 10 years (no one really knows), fills one with dread that we are now the

custodians of such an inherently unstable and fragile resource. Best advice now indicates that audio files should be stored on an external high capacity computer hard drive and migrated to new similar technology as available. We have no option but to proceed with such an expensive project if we ever hope to save this fragile resource for the future.

But who will use this hitherto overlooked material? Oral history is becoming an increasingly important aspect of academic and religious research as a means of gaining a greater first-hand understanding of events, of people, and of various events in the life of our Church. But what the tapes tell us about our Church, where we have been, how we have evolved in our faith including the issues we have encountered and overcome along the way is the greatest treasure. Have you a dust-laden box of semi-forgotten tapes in that storage cupboard? Hopefully we can yet fill some of the many gaps in our collections before these voices fade forever.

At the 1940 centennial service, the Moderator, the Right Rev J Lawson Robinson, eloquently addressed Presbyterians: "...the truths and principles of the Christian religion had been faithfully proclaimed by the churches of the land. Take away their influence, silence their voice and lower their ideals, and civilisation would soon become a byword and reproach."

**By Donald Cochrane, Presbyterian Archives**

**sPanz**



## Presbyterian Support

### PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT OTAGO

Presbyterian Support Otago's Centennial year concluded in fine form when the organisation took out the Supreme Award at the Westpac Otago Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards.

As the largest non-governmental provider of social services in the region, Presbyterian Support now ranks with major businesses; offering a range of services and programme which are efficient, effective and based on sound Christian values. Financial surpluses achieved are ploughed right back into services through improved wages and conditions for staff.

On-going research and development ensures that services meet community need and also provide a platform for further specific research and advocacy.

The past year has offered many ways for Otago people to engage with Support's history and the culminating event, at the Centennial weekend (22-24 September) was a Thanksgiving Service at the First Church of Otago. Connections between First Church and Presbyterian Support are strong, as evidenced by the involvement of significant church leaders in the establishment of the organisation in 1906.

**Above right:** The Centennial Thanksgiving Service featured a parade of ecclesiastical-style banners, made by residents, clients and past and present staff, volunteers and supporters of Presbyterian Support Otago.



Postcards of the 12 individual banners, and their stories, are available from PSO reception, phone 03 477 7115 or email [psotago@psotago.org.nz](mailto:psotago@psotago.org.nz)

### PRESBYTERIAN SUPPORT CENTRAL

#### Bequest Societies prove popular

Presbyterian Support Northern (PSN) now has three bequest societies - in Auckland, Bay of Plenty and Waikato - all proving popular with supporters.

Set up over the past year the bequest societies are one of a number of new initiatives aimed at building relationships and improving communication with PSN supporters, says Bequest Advisor Linda Stratford.

"In particular the luncheons we organise periodically for the bequest societies provide us with an opportunity to thank regular supporters and to celebrate the generosity of our committed bequestors in an enjoyable social setting," she explains.

"They're also a chance for the society members to learn more about our organisation and the support we provide to children and families, older people and younger disabled people.

"We also organise interesting guest

speakers such as former Governor General Dame Cath Tizard, veteran broadcaster Dr Brian Edwards, sporting legend Dame Susan Devoy and gardening guru Eion Scarrow to ensure the luncheons are entertaining," Linda says.

Dr Newton Wickham ("Wickie"), a retired dentist and a confirmed bequestor, is a committed member of the Auckland-based St James Bequest Society and a regular attendee at its luncheons.

"I really look forward to the luncheons for the warmth and friendship," he says. "I also enjoy the chance to learn more about Presbyterian Support Northern from the very caring people that work there." Tauranga-based Chris Tustain thinks the Bequest Society luncheons are a "really good concept".

"It's particularly nice that PSN uses the luncheons to acknowledge people who have left them money in their will," she says. "They're also a good chance to meet



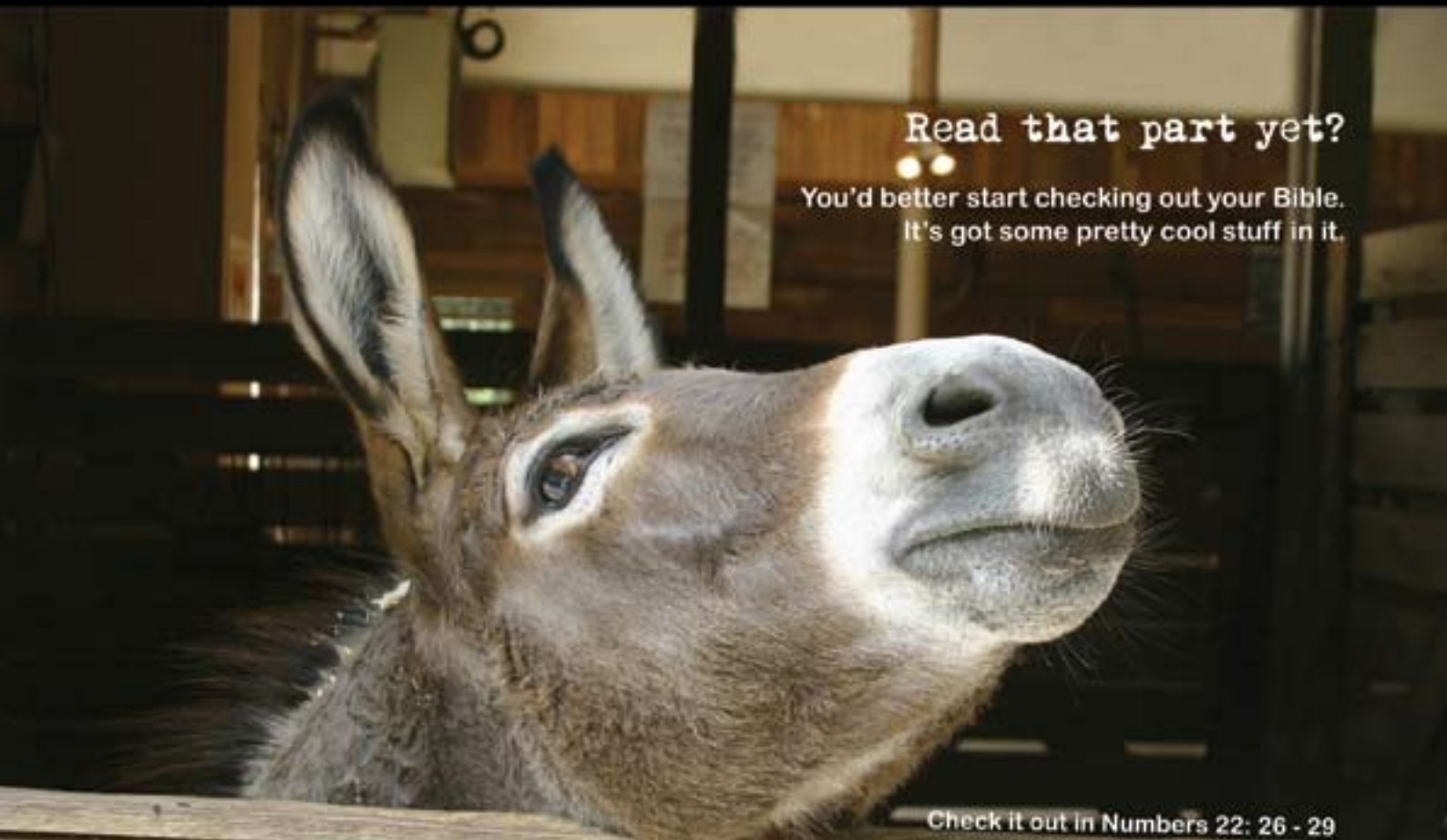
people and to socialise with other supporters. I've really enjoyed the guest speakers too."

If you would like more information on Presbyterian Support Northern's bequest societies or about leaving a bequest to PSN please call Linda Stratford on 09 520 8603 or email [lindas@pressupt.org.nz](mailto:lindas@pressupt.org.nz)

The angel moved once more and stood in a spot so narrow that there was no room for the donkey to go around. So it just lay down. Balaam lost his temper, then picked up a stick and smacked the donkey.

When that happened, the LORD told the donkey to speak, and it asked Balaam, "What have I done to you that made you beat me three times?"

"You made me look stupid!" Balaam answered.



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 Numbers 22: 26 - 29

**Caution**

***Donkey May Talk!***



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