

Spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

DECEMBER 2010, ISSUE 45



churches
serve up
Christmas cheer

Plus... General Assembly 2010

www.presbyterian.org.nz

Statistics reveal skewed picture of growth

When I recently announced at work that I was taking a days leave to go to a church statistics conference, the reaction was stunned disbelief. Boring church statistics! But I see pictures in statistics – and in the case of the Presbyterian Church, the picture is one where:

- » **Most people worship in large parishes, but processes make small parishes the most visible.**
- » **Much of the focus is on the performance of small parishes, but many middle- and larger-sized parishes should be doing better.**
- » **In theology we are where there is strong growth – but we are ignoring the signs that we might be benefiting from that growth.**

So what is my evidence for each of these pictures?

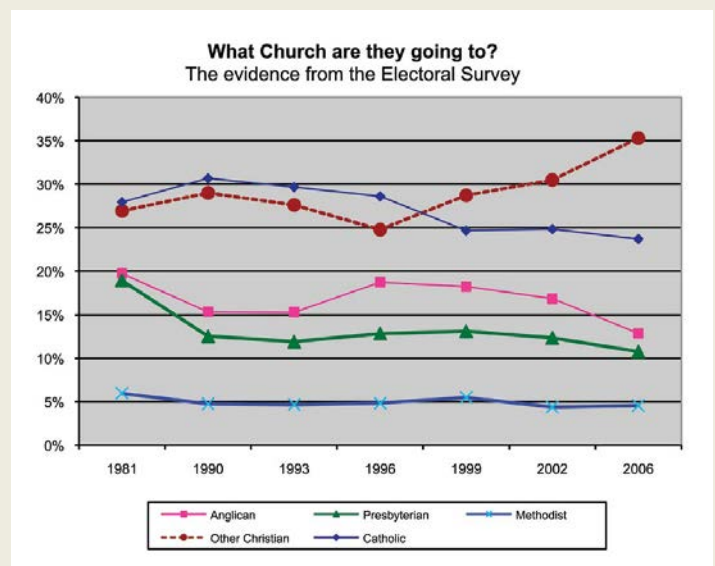
If you just count parishes, we do look like a Church of little congregations. Over a third of parishes have fewer than 40 people at worship and since we send parish representatives to Assembly and presbyteries, people at these meetings may feel a small parish is the norm. But this is not true. Less than a tenth of our people actually worship in a parish with less than 40. At any large meeting of Presbyterian people, the number of people from little parishes would match the number from parishes with over 600 at worship. We are a church whose processes strengthen the visibility of small parishes.

In reality, half of our people worship with more than 135 others and a quarter with more than 270. We are a church where the majority of people worship in strong, vibrant, large parishes; but where a minority worship in a very large number of small ones. However, since I think one of our strengths is our “national brand”, I think we need to keep some (but not all) of those small ones. One “rule of thumb” I have developed from looking at the statistics is that where there are enough people for a state secondary school, there are probably enough for one good-sized Presbyterian parish. New Zealand has 340 secondary schools – and we have 410 parishes, so perhaps a rule of thumb might help us to think about where we should and shouldn’t have churches.

However, I worry less about the small parishes than about the underperformance of some of our middle-sized parishes. The same rule of thumb suggests that some of our “not-struggling-but-smallish” parishes should be much larger, particularly where the population has boomed and the parish has not. I also question the effectiveness of those larger parishes where children are less than 20 percent of those at church. Over half the parishes with more than over 200 at worship (and three-quarters between 100 and 200) are in this situation and, unless they are in retirement villages, this should not be the case.

We should also be seeing an increase in young adults in our congregations. A surprising trend in recent surveys has been the

increasing proportion of young adults who say they go to church at least once a month. In the early 1990s, only 12 percent of those aged 18-25 said they did so; now it’s around 22 percent. This growth is fastest amongst the “Christians” with no other label and the regular Electoral Survey¹ shows this group is now about 36 percent of those going to church. In other words, this group is really the new “mainline”. There is so little information on this fragmented group that their growth has largely flown under the radar.



The best information I have on this group is an analysis of Wellington churches on the Charities Commission website. This suggests the majority of these “Christian” churches (and generally the largest) are for English-speaking Kiwis, rather than for immigrant groups. Many of the churches are big, own property and, in Wellington at least, their combined paid workforce was larger than that of any of the traditional denominations. While their websites suggest they like loud, modern music and presentation styles, recent surveys of beliefs show the Presbyterian and Baptist churches are the closest to them on the theological spectrum. So theologically, we are positioned at the growth end of the market.

And this might explain a final important point. After four decades of continuous decline, the number of adults at worship in our churches has, since 2002, bounced around the 30,000 mark. It may just be that we need to revisit the current perception that we are a Church in decline.

Dr Margaret Galt is an elder at Wellington’s St John’s in the City. While she is a Church Property Trustee, she points out that this article is written in a personal capacity.

¹ This is a nationwide survey based on the electoral roll. Church affiliation and attendance is collected as background personal information.

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Who we are

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Cover Photograph

Angela Singer

The lovely Christmas pudding hat was
knitted by Lynne Prowse and has been
gifted by the Presbyterian Church to
Operation Cover Up founder Liz Clarke.

The Right Rev Peter Cheyne contributes a regular column to *Spanz*

Moderator's Musings



**My experience as Moderator is limited
so far! There was the Assembly and
since then life has been "normal".**

Clearly there are more things on the
horizon. I am looking forward to them and
to sharing the highlights with you through
this column.

I am very conscious that no General
Assembly will please everybody and that
some will have been disappointed with
GA10. On the other hand, I am greatly
encouraged by the positive feedback I
have received.

There were moments when we were
probably not the Church at its best. We
love points of order and I have heard people
laughing about our spending an hour
debating one word. But maybe that is also
a strength, demonstrating the robustness
of our processes and the place given to
debate as we discern God's voice. Maybe.
Maybe not.

I have heard particular appreciation of
the worship. I am very grateful to the
team that provided the leadership there.
The sense of overflowing praise present
on the Saturday night when we were led
by the Christchurch Korean Presbyterian
Church was something some people said
they never thought they would experience
in an Assembly.

I am of the view that the worship plays
a huge part in shaping the tone of an
Assembly. The other major factor is prayer
and I am very grateful to all those people
around the country who committed to
praying for us as we gathered.

There has also been much appreciation
of the theme: "Making disciple-making

disciples". In other words, we have been
commissioned to make disciples who are
so well "discipled" that they go on to be
disciple-makers.

Assembly was a buzz but the key thing in
my mind is what happens now. We are a
Church described as being in "terminal
decline". I don't want to suggest that
there is a single key to reversing that but I
do believe that getting on with the work
Jesus commissioned us to do has got to
be a crucial factor – probably the crucial
factor. Logic suggests that the future of
the Church is dependent on more people
becoming followers of Jesus and, as
followers of Jesus, helping yet more become
followers. Besides the logic, maybe we will
experience God's blessing in a new and
fresh way when we do what we have been
asked to do. Jesus said, "make disciples and
I will be with you." Reversing the decline
will require God's blessing. We will not be
able to do it alone.

What happens now that the Assembly is
behind us? Can we keep the momentum
going? I really encourage you to make
use of the resources available. There are
studies on this theme available from
www.presbyterian.org.nz/ga10, where
there are also resources from the Assembly
available. In particular, I suggest you
listen to the talks given by Mick Duncan.

Mick was brilliant. He simply told his
own story but that story included some
powerful truths. His four encouraging yet
challenging talks could easily be used for
discussions in small groups.

I am also keen to provide suggestions
of resources that can be used to make
disciples and for us all to be able to share
our suggestions and experience.

Finally, can I suggest the following for
reflection? If we are to make disciples,
then we need to know what disciples look
like. In Matthew's Great Commission, a
disciple is someone who has come to faith
in Jesus and grows to obey everything
Jesus commanded. But Paul's prayer
in Colossians 19-12 provides another
description. Look at those verses, list the
qualities Paul prayed for, then consider how
your church can make people like that.

It is a big call but it is what we are called
to. Let's do it.

God bless,

Peter

Knitters join together to warm orphans

During the past 10 years, Liz Clarke has overseen the delivery of 67,000 knitted blankets to orphans in Eastern Europe, many knitted by Presbyterians. All from placing a newspaper advertisement that requested “67 blankets for an orphanage in Moldavia where I sponsored an orphan through Mission Without Borders”. ANGELA SINGER reports.

Liz had discovered that orphans living in temperatures as low as -30°C had little to keep them warm. “They had a thin cotton bed cover. I just cried thinking about it. Then I asked God what I could do. A wool blanket is more than warmth; it’s comfort, God’s covering and God’s love.”

She soon had 240 blankets and the inspiration to go further. “Operation Cover Up was born in my hometown of Taupo with the support of Mission Without Borders, an international Christian organisation. I can’t knit so I produced a brochure, which the Salvation Army distributed, and I soon had 20 coordinators helping me find knitters to make and donate blankets and clothing for the orphans. Every year since, Mission Without Borders has distributed these to children in orphanages in Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.”

Liz now has nearly 100 coordinators around the country “but we still need more, especially in Wellington and Kapiti”. The knitting brings people into churches and helps provide companionship, especially for older people on their own.

This year Operation Coverup has gathered 100 bales of knitted items, weighing around 24 tonnes. Packed into two 40-foot containers, the knitting will arrive in Eastern Europe in time for Christmas. Freight and shipping costs \$20,000, so Operation Cover Up suggests a donation of \$4 per blanket.

Many Presbyterian and Uniting churches have supported Operation Cover Up every stitch of the way, with involvement often coordinated through APW groups.

“People tell me that when they knit they pray over every stitch,” Liz says.

Chris Whitman has been involved with Operation Cover Up for nine years. When Chris moved to Rotorua, she became a member of St John’s Presbyterian Church and got the parish involved. After the death of her husband, Chris decided to give more time to Operation Cover Up and placed ads in the local paper for more knitters. “Today I coordinate just over 100 knitters”.

Chris is very involved in sourcing wool for knitters who cannot afford to buy it. “My spare room is packed with wool donated in response to ads in the paper. We also get money donated to buy wool, I find wool at op shops and even get jumpers from op shops to undo for wool.”

St John’s also sends toiletries such as toothpaste, shampoo and soap along with their knitting, Chris says.

In 2000, Beth Johnson encouraged her parish, Otaki Waikanae Presbyterian, to become involved after she learnt about Operation Cover Up during a holiday in Dunedin. Beth says her church “responded marvellously with offers of wool and volunteers to knit peggy squares to be sewn into blankets. In 2001 we sent about 70 blankets and some other knitting for the children.”

Such was the enthusiasm that one woman in a retirement village in Waikanae knitted peggy squares “even though she only had one good arm”. “She knitted enough for one blanket and her nurse sewed them together”.

About five years ago, Margaret Knowles of APW Te Anau began knitting for Operation Cover Up after hearing about it from Southland coordinator Hani Aurik. Margaret says she knits donated wool into single-bed-sized rugs in strips, which are then sewn together. It takes her a year to make one rug.

Jenny Grandiek of First Church, Invercargill, also discovered Operation Cover-up through Hani Aurik. “After Hani told us how we could help, I placed a notice for knitters in the First Church bulletin. For the past four years a group of us, we call ourselves Knitwits, have met fortnightly on Friday mornings to knit and share tea.”

This year Jenny says Southland produced a huge number of knitted and crocheted items for Operation Cover Up: 634 blankets, 440 jerseys, 596 hats, mittens and scarves, 109 pairs of socks and 612 pieces of baby wear.

Margaret Boyle, who had been knitting a blanket for Operation Cover Up by herself at home, saw a notice in the local paper about the Knitwits display and came along. “I was impressed, so I joined the group.”

Seven years ago, Knitwits group member Florence McCoy created her first blankets for Operation Cover Up. She says that many in the church who do not knit are still involved. “They buy and donate wool; the wool we need just appears for us.”

Shopping in Spotlight, Elza de Rijk saw a notice about the Knitwits. “I phoned and Jenny invited me to join. I have been crocheting rugs now for two years and make around eight rugs a year. I’m very fortunate that wool just gets dropped at my door.” Elza says she gets a great amount out of the Knitwits group. “Companionship and knowledge about what is happening overseas.”

Ann Mollison, who knits blankets with the Knitwits, says as an elderly person she gets “real pleasure from knitting in the company of other women, and from knowing what is so enjoyable to me is also helping others”.



Operation Cover Up knitters from Manawatu

Win Caley became involved with the Knitwits “through my association with the Girl Guides; one of my former guides suggested it.” Win knits jumpers: “29 last year; the number depends on how much wool I can cadge”. Win says she loves the group’s Friday meetings. “I live alone and the companionship and friendship is important to me”.

The ladies at St John’s Presbyterian Church, Arrowtown, have been knitting for Operation Cover Up for many years, making single bed blankets, jerseys, hats, scarves and bed socks. Pauline Bayley says St John’s knitters saw a DVD of the orphans receiving “something of their very own and we keep their happy faces in mind as we knit.”

In 2004 Natalie Watkin began convening “a ladies coffee circle” at Kohimarama Presbyterian Church. She says the coffee circle’s interest in Operation Cover Up was at first “tentative” but soon the group of “between 20 and 30 older women” began to knit “peggy squares for rugs, and also hats, scarves and jerseys”.

The group has grown to include knitters “who have no church connection, but they see the need and respond in love. This year we produced 16 rugs, 35 jerseys, 192 hats, 12 scarves, 10 pairs of slippers and 8 pairs of socks”.

Freighting is a challenge for the group. “I said to the wonderful woman who supervises the packing in West Auckland that we needed a benefactor, she replied ‘we already have one called God’. So I requested donations from the congregation and received \$230. After sending \$100 we have a wonderful amount left to buy wool.”

Betty Harris and Gloria Hunt of Tahunanui Presbyterian Church say this year the 43 blankets their parish produced were displayed in the church for their congregation and community before being sent to Operation Cover Up, along with three small blankets, 25 jerseys, 25 scarves, 27 scarf and hat sets, 12 beanies, four singlets and seven pairs of mittens.

Central Southland Presbyterian Parish in Winton has been supporting Operation Cover Up for many years. However, while they used to receive a good number of wool donations, this dwindled over time. In response, the group got creative and recently held a hugely successful concert that raised \$950 to purchase wool. Expect 2011 in Winton to be a bumper year.

Dellwyn Moylan who attends St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Ashburton, became an Operation Cover Up knitter through her late mother’s involvement. She says the APW group in Ashburton meets every fortnight to knit together and they are very committed. From her church she singles out May Parker, who is in her early 90s and sews together knitted squares to make blankets, as does Roma Stonyer, also in her early 90s, who attends St James’ Presbyterian Church in Ashburton.

Dellwyn says her mother, who also attended St Andrew’s, crocheted rugs, hats, scarves and jumpers for Operation Cover Up “because as a double-leg amputee confined to a wheel chair, she found that she was still able to minister to others through this”. Dellwyn’s mother made a total of 80 rugs and was crocheting up to a fortnight before she died. “We kept the last rug she made.”

Many other churches and APW groups are knitting for Operation Cover Up, including St Andrew’s Presbyterian, Te Awamutu; St Enoch’s Presbyterian, Tauranga; First Church Dunedin; Opoho Presbyterian Church, Dunedin; Union Parish, Oamaru; and St Paul’s Presbyterian, Timaru. Would your church like to join in? Liz Clarke says keen knitters and wool are always needed, as are cash donations and new toiletries, new children’s PJs, tracksuits, shoes and stationery. Contact in the North Island, Liz Clarke (07) 3789171 and in the South Island, Maureen Braun, (03) 3276413 or see www.operation-cover-up.org.nz

Spanz

EARTHQUAKE

The 4 September Christchurch earthquake shook many to the core, affecting lives, homes and businesses. Among the older and historic buildings damaged were Presbyterian and Uniting churches, with damage estimated at \$8 million.

The Christchurch churches damaged most severely were St Paul's Trinity Pacific and Kowai Presbyterian; there was also major structural damage to Knox Presbyterian and St Alban's Uniting. The church hall at St Martin's Presbyterian was seriously damaged. Christchurch North Presbyterian's St Luke's church suffered cracked walls and Prebbleton Parish has damaged brickwork; large amounts of plaster fell from the walls at St Giles' Presbyterian and St John's Presbyterian. Twenty two Presbyterian churches suffered minor damage, with churches as far away as Geraldine, Temuka and Timaru sustaining cracks.

The Rev Martin Stewart, moderator of Christchurch Presbytery says that his church, St Stephen's Presbyterian, suffered a crack in the floor that "runs down the centre of the middle aisle".

But Martin says the damage can't be compared to that experienced by two families in his congregation. "Neither know if their homes can be repaired. A couple also lost their business, a bed and breakfast, and are in rental accommodation for a year. One parishioner cannot return to her home and is camped in a hotel; fortunately insurance covers her accommodation."

Martin says he is quietly keeping in touch with those who have been deeply affected by the quake. He is particularly concerned about older parishioners. "Some who were quite able before the quake have become less able; it's had a considerable effect on them. Several who before the quake were in good health in their 90s have died."

With close to 100,000 residential insurance claims expected in Christchurch, big delays in repairs are expected. Martin says churches waiting on repair work are unlikely to see it begin for at least a year. "We need to think about the future of damaged churches openly, carefully and pastorally."

One priority, Martin says, is helping parishes to pay their insurance excesses.

"Initially we invited other parishes in the area to see how they could help and now we are asking others to register their interest with us and 'buddy up' with an affected parish to pay their excess."

Martin says that Christchurch Presbytery has received significant support and donations towards earthquake relief. During the Sunday service at the recent General Assembly in Christchurch, an offering for earthquake relief totalled close to \$5000. A further \$25,000 was contributed by Christchurch Presbytery - \$5000 from national fundraising and \$20,000 gifted by the Presbyterian Savings and Development Society - and a large and generous donation of approximately \$37,000 was given by Korea's two largest Presbyterian Churches, the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK) and the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK).

Martin says the presbytery is working in consultation with the city on how the donations can best be used.

He says one of the biggest challenges has been "that people handle stress like this in different ways: for some there is delayed shock; for many this is the first crisis of this kind they have ever faced. I am responding by doing lots of listening."

Martin says that he knows some of his colleagues are carrying a heavy load. "We catch up over coffee. I get alongside them. I am hugely impressed by the calibre of my colleagues. Those who have been most affected are doing a great job."

Then-Moderator the Very Rev Dr Graham Redding's visit to the region shortly after the earthquake was much appreciated by Christchurch clergy, Martin says. Graham had the opportunity to see the most damaged churches and to meet with 15 ministers who shared their stories and encouraged each other. Graham was able to assure them of the prayerful support of the wider Church and deliver offers of support from parishes and presbyteries around the country.

One of the churches most affected in the earthquake was St Giles' Presbyterian. The alarming sight that greeted the Rev John Hunt when he entered the church was "plaster and bricks tumbling to the floor inside the worship area where people

sit". Because the church has "plaster and masonry that could fall at any minute", they are having to worship in the hall.

His congregation overall are "doing well" says John. "There is an underlying feeling of being glad to be alive, knowing it could have been very different. There has been distress but not dismay. Most people have accepted what has happened and are getting on."

One of John's congregation could lose her house and is understandably very upset. "She showed me her home's broken foundations and her broken precious things and said, 'I am also broken,' which is terribly sad."

John describes people from the congregation "looking through the church doors, through the dust and the grit, seeing where they used to sit and where their parents used to sit destroyed, and they cry".

Preparing for the first Sunday worship after the earthquake, John says he had "people hugging me because I represent continuity and safety. Everyone was hugging their neighbour. We had a flower arrangement sent to us by St Paul's Presbyterian, Taupo, acknowledging our grief. We lit a candle for those who are struggling."

During the service, the session clerk and the oldest members of the congregation took home the chalice and silver plates for safe keeping. "They solemnly walked the vessels out and will bring them back when we return to the church."

Like the rest of Christchurch, John says he is very tired. "It takes energy coping with the aftershocks; it drains you, wondering if this will be a big one. It is an elemental human need to stand on firm ground."

John visits people living alone and has heard of huge outpourings of caring. "We are led to believe that money is what matters, but it is neighborliness that is really important. In areas without power, there were neighbours having street barbeques. One woman from St Giles', who lives by herself, had been having problems with her neighbours; four brothers who irritated her with their loud music and car noise. Immediately after the quake they knocked on her door to ask if she was alright and let her know her chimney was teetering dangerously, then they got up on the roof and got the chimney down for her.



The Rev John Hunt surveys interior damage at St Giles' Presbyterian

She told me she will never complain about them again."

Offers of help from the wider Church have been much appreciated by St Giles', John says. "Elders at Knox Church in Dunedin who run a B&B have invited anyone from St Giles' in need of a break to stay. At the recent General Assembly, the Rev Don Hall let us know that Mairangi Castor Bay has accommodation for St Giles' people."

John hopes that St Giles' church can be repaired but "we have to wait on the insurance to decide on this. We could be in the hall for a year." Because he will retire next March, John says it is likely that "I will never offer worship in my church again".

The first priority after the quake for the Rev Geoff King of Knox Church was to make sure his family was safe. Next, Geoff got on his bike and went to see if the church building was damaged. "Brickwork had fallen from the facades, and stonework had toppled backwards through the roof into the sanctuary space".

Geoff says the church building suffered largely external damage, "although aftershocks have caused plasterwork to crack and a lot of dust to fall inside the building".

While the damage to the church building is obvious from the street, Geoff says that "we are conscious that we have fared better than

a number of other churches in the central city and farther afield".

"I think people here generally are accepting the need for patience; we are still awaiting a full structural assessment and recognise that it may be many months before repair or rebuilding work can begin. One of our oldest members has announced her intention to live to see the church restored as she wants her funeral to be held there!"

Because the church building cannot be used, the worship space is now the hall in the adjoining Knox Centre.

"Our first service in this space was moving and very meaningful for me and, from the feedback I've heard, also for members of the congregation. We arranged the chairs in semicircle around the fractured limestone Celtic cross that had been on the top of our church. Behind, we had the peace candle we light every week to begin our worship. I made more time available during the greeting part of the service for people to reconnect with one another – something made easier by sitting in chairs rather than pews! We are treating this as an opportunity to grow rather than as a catastrophe in terms of our worship life; it is people rather than buildings that make a worshipping community."

Geoff says that he has "made it my first priority to stay in contact as much as

possible with members of the congregation who are vulnerable".

"As the aftershocks have continued people need reassurance and a listening ear, for which I've found I need simply to be available and to plan my week knowing that the pastoral dimension of my work will take up more time".

Apart from the pastoral work done by his elders, ministry team members and himself, Geoff says the church can help the community by getting its facilities up and running again as quickly as possible, because of the number of community groups that use the centre.

"It is my hope that we will be able to use our venue to host a community event before Christmas, as a way of expressing our gratitude to the many people who have given so freely of their time and talents to support others since the quake".

It is still not too late for churches to make a claim for damage caused to churches by the Christchurch earthquake, says Presbyterian Church Finance Manager Brendan Sweeney. Phone Aon on 0800 50 20 20. Claims for residential properties, including manses, need to be made directly to the Earthquake Commission on 0800 326243, before the cut-off date of 4 December 2010.

By Angela Singer Spanz

General Assembly embraces discipling theme



The Right Rev Peter Cheyne (left) and guest speaker Mick Duncan



The worship was lead by a team from Calvin Community Presbyterian Church, with Malcolm Gordon (right) lending a helping hand

General Assembly 2010 took place in Christchurch at the end of September, with its local organisers keen to proceed despite the trauma of the recent earthquake.

More than 350 people from around New Zealand attended the four-day event at St Andrew's College, with every Presbyterian or Uniting church eligible to send a commissioner.

Moderator the Right Rev Peter Cheyne, of Calvin Community Presbyterian in Gore, acknowledged the pain felt by the people of Christchurch and thanked them for their willingness to hold GA10.

The theme of Assembly and of the remaining two years of Peter's term as Moderator is "making disciple-making disciples". During Assembly this was elaborated on in Peter's sermons, which are available in both print and audio form on our website, and also by guest speaker Mick Duncan, whose addresses proved popular. Mick told captivating stories about his faith journey and about his time serving in the slums of Manila, which you can also listen to on our website.

Another popular feature was Saturday night's worship, lead by Christchurch Korean Presbyterian Church. After showcasing a mix of musical styles and performers, they lead the Assembly in what many described as powerful worship.

Much of Assembly was taken up by business as the meeting worked through a series of reports. Key decisions included the adoption of Kupu Whakapono (a contemporary statement of faith) as a subordinate standard; the rejection of a proposal that would have overturned the GA06 decision on sexuality and leadership; and a raft of changes to the Church's ministry development programme, including mandating supervision for all paid ministry staff and a thorough review of the programme before GA12.

GA10 also adopted new guidelines for assessing the viability of congregations. Under these new provisions, which are effective immediately, presbyteries can initiate a congregational assessment if, over a period of 12 months, there has been an average of fewer than 40 adults at worship.

Assembly approved the formation of three new presbyteries and agreed to a range of

other measures to enable further presbytery unification. General Assembly also agreed to appoint a special committee that would investigate giving the Pacific Island Synod the status of a presbytery.

General Assembly sent a strong message to the Government that New Zealand's alcohol laws need to be tightened, urging that all recommendations in the Law Commission's report be implemented, endorsing the 5+ solution being promoted by lobby group Alcohol Action New Zealand and recommending a total ban on the marketing and advertising of alcohol.

On the final day of Assembly, it was announced that the Rev Ray Coster, of St Andrew's Mt Maunganui, had been elected Moderator Designate for 2012-2014. Ray, who is also chair of the Press Go Board, spoke to Assembly of his passion for growth and of his deepening understanding of the importance of relationships with the tangata whenua.

Overseas guests at GA10 included representatives from the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea, the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, L'Eglise Evangelique Nouvelle Calédonie et Les Îles Loyauté, the Pacific Conference of Churches, the Uniting Church in Australia and the Cook Island Christian Church.

You can read much more detail about every decision made by GA10 at www.presbyterian.org.nz/ga10, as well as download audio and text versions of key sermons and speeches, a take-home summary of business, and photographs taken during the event.

By Amanda Wells Spanz

GA10: We ask six attendees for their views

Brendan O'Hagan

MINISTER OF WAIRAU PRESBYTERIAN PARISH IN BLENHEIM

This is my fourth time at Assembly

What's been different?

There was a very strong sense that God is doing a new thing - a new beginning.

What will you remember?

The gift of US\$35,000 from the Korean Churches to the Christchurch Presbytery to help earthquake victims - followed by the items and worship led by the Christchurch Korean Presbyterian Church.

What interested you most?

Leadership standards - upholding the decision of the 2006 General Assembly.

Your favourite aspect?

Catching up with colleagues and friends.

How did you experience God?

The theme of discipleship-making had a re-calibrating effect on me - I sensed God impressing on me that a recommissioning of the Great Commission is needed in the Presbyterian Church both locally and nationally at this time.

What should change?

Although Mick Duncan was excellent, I think that having the guest speaker twice a day was almost overload with everything else happening - I would prefer a daily presentation from the guest speaker.

Karima Fai'ai

MINISTER OF ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN GORE

This is my sixth time at Assembly

What's been different?

There seemed to have been more younger commissioners this time than what it used to be. I remember many people in suits at my first few Assemblies. This time is so different. Younger commissioners felt more relaxed and free to express their views, which was good to see. I think that had a lot to do with the positive environment created for commissioners. I thought the Business Committee did a splendid job.

What will you remember?

I enjoyed Mick Duncan's talks. His style was unique and refreshing and his message gave plenty of food for thought, particularly when he shared about his own journey and experiences. Inspirational!

What interested you most?

The Kupu Whakapono (Focal Identity Statement). It is about time the Presbyterian Church had a statement of faith that reflects our time and place.

Your favourite aspect?

The Moderator's theme "Making disciple-making disciples" was very appropriate at a time when the Church has been struggling with issues of decline. GA10 as an event - from the displays, workshops, guest speaker, prayer and worship, talking to others and more - all very encouraging and resourceful in a time of need for the Church.

How did you experience God?

Worship at Assembly I've always found uplifting and inspiring. GA10 was no different.

Lyn Heine

LAY APPOINTEE FROM GREYMOUTH DISTRICT UNITING PARISH

This is my third time at Assembly

What's been different?

My first one was the 2006 Assembly at Auckland and the word I came away from there was "gruelling". The long hours and the, to me, "harsh" decision-making process made me think that there wasn't much opportunity for less able or confident voices to be heard. I really enjoyed the dialogue group process and have continued to do so at subsequent Assemblies. Third time round, I think I have come to a place of appreciating that there is a place for participating in the decision-making at this national level, and that generally differing voices are heard. I met up with some first-timers and I think it helped them having a "buddy" to explain processes and to let them know some of what to expect. Things like the long hours; how to find things

amongst the papers; and that attending Assembly justifies rewarding yourself afterwards with whatever treat you think you deserve.

What will you remember?

I think a highlight for me this time was Malcolm Gordon presenting the Kupu Whakapono in song and the Korean-led worship demonstrating such a beautiful mix of customary and modern approaches.

What interested you most?

Coming from a small population area and a co-operating venture, the decisions around future structures were of importance to me and our regional body. We are uncertain about how to get involved in this process constructively.

Nari Auelua

ELDER FROM PRESBYTERIAN PACIFIC ISLANDERS CHURCH, NEWTOWN

This is my first time at Assembly

Was it what you expected?

In preparation for Assembly I read up on the standing orders, recommendations and reports. The processes and procedures that took place at Assembly were similar to what I expected.

What will you remember?

The particular moment that I would remember from GA10 would have to be our inspirational guest speaker Mick Duncan who had "real stories" that captured the theme for Assembly of "Making Disciple-Making Disciples". Our guest speaker motivated the meeting to be able to make hard decisions as commissioners.

What interested you most?

I was most interested in the issue that was sent to dialogue groups on congregational assessments relating to the decline of numbers within our congregations. I was also very interested and happy with the decision to appoint a special committee that would investigate giving the Pacific Island Synod the status of a presbytery

Q & As continued

Your favourite aspect?

My favourite aspect of GA10 was the opportunity to come together as a Church; we all come from different genealogies and various cultures, for me it demonstrates our multi-cultural community of faith, and the importance of networking to learn from each other and help develop us as leaders to be open and transparent.

How did you experience God?

The worship services at the beginning of each day “set the scene” for me, it was a great experience, to be able to worship together. I also found worship at the end of our business each night, although it was late in the evening but it didn’t feel like that at all because the spirit of God was moving through us.

Nathan Parry

**MINISTER OF ISLAND BAY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
WELLINGTON**

How many times have you been to Assembly?

Four. Once as a ministry trainee running around with microphones, twice as a commissioner, and in Wellington I was on the facilitation committee that the dialogue groups report back to.

What’s been different?

This Assembly was comprehensively focused on the Moderator’s theme - evangelism and disciple making

What will you remember?

The Moderator Designate’s impassioned talk and his mastery of Te Reo surprised and moved me.

What interested you most?

Having been present at the last four Assemblies, I’ve heard the debates about the Kupu Whakapono since it was first introduced. I feel relieved for the workgroup that it has now been accepted at last!

Your favourite aspect?

Mick Duncan’s talks. They were light, entertaining, moving, and very practical – the missional power of choosing where to sit and investing in others.

How did you experience God?

Some of the debate depressed me, but God was a discernable presence through most

of Assembly, and the singing and song writing talents of Malcolm Gordon I found particularly anointed.

What should change?

GA this year was very compact: short, while retaining time for fellowship and workshops. This was good, but still, I feel we can learn a lot from each other – it didn’t feel like the full diversity of our denomination was on display, and I’d love more time in dialogue groups to discuss some of the issues.

Rose Luxford

**MINISTER OF ST PAUL’S
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN OAMARU**

How many times have you been to Assembly?

This was my fifth Assembly.

What’s been different?

What was different was the changing face of the Church as many of our wise and experienced ministers retire.

What will you remember?

The particular moment I will remember was Millie Te Kaawa’s response to the presentation to her - a grace-filled, holy moment.

What interested you most?

The new confession of faith, Kupu Whakapono and whether the Westminster Confession of Faith would remain as a subordinate standard.

Your favourite aspect?

Catching up with colleagues from around the country, and meeting new people.

How did you experience God?

I experienced God at this Assembly during a small group gathering where people shared their experiences of being part of the Presbyterian Church. God was present in the honesty, in the struggles and in the hopes.

What should change?

I wonder if we could find a way of being less adversarial in the way we sometimes conduct our debate - it can bring out the worst in people, and leave a feeling of dislocation in the Body of Christ.



Gordon launches second album at GA10

The Rev Malcolm Gordon, minister of St Paul’s Presbyterian in Katikati, showcased several songs from his new album *The Ministry of the Exterior* at General Assembly 2010.

If not as instantly likeable as his first release (*One Voice*, 2008), repeated listenings reward its theological depth and more sophisticated musicianship. “Break the bread” from *One Voice* is reprised on *The Ministry of the Exterior* but all other 11 tracks are new compositions.

With a varied team of musicians and singers, the album achieves a satisfying variety of sound styles, from the boppy and 80s-esque “Everyone” to the peaceful ballad “Down to the water”, along with other more standard worship-style songs.

Many of these are likely to be embraced by congregations, with General Assembly goers enthusiastically joining Malcolm as he performed “May we grow” (written to compliment the theme of GA10) and “Kupu Whakapono” (inspired by our new subordinated standard and downloadable from the *One Voice* website).

Stand-out tracks on *The Ministry of the Exterior* include the anthemic “Haere Mai” and the more reflective “Where else can we go?”. This album, which feels both more upbeat and more sophisticated than its predecessor, deserves a place in every congregation’s music library.

More information about The Ministry of the Exterior and sheet music for many of the songs can be found at www.onevoice.org.nz

Volunteer helps make refugees at home

For Dama Black, volunteering for Refugee Services is an opportunity to give time, energy and care to the newest members of her community.

Dama, who attends St Ninian's Uniting Parish in Karori, Wellington, says she helps refugees "get on their feet in their first months in a strange new country".

As a Refugee Services volunteer, Dama has worked with two Afghani families, a family from Myanmar, and is currently one of several volunteers assisting a woman recently arrived from Colombia.

The service is in demand by the 750 quota refugees who arrive in New Zealand each year, coming mainly from Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Myanmar (formerly Burma).

Dama says she knows what it is to move to New Zealand from a different culture although her family arrived under quite different circumstances. "My father chose to come here as a professional so we had networks of support, also I spoke fluent English."

The hands-on side of assisting refugees appeals to Dama. "Many people send money overseas but I wanted to help people myself, one-on-one."

Refugee Services volunteers work in teams of four. "We commit to one client at a time for around six months. The time we each give depends entirely on the time they need. Often you will only have to show someone once where the shops are, how to use the bus, how to get to the doctor, the bank, the post office, WINZ and Housing New Zealand. Then you may not be called to help for weeks".

A mistake that people often make with refugees new to their community, Dama says, is thinking that they are in need of charity. "They find this insulting. We help them to budget and most



Imran from Afghanistan (left) and Olwyn, a Refugee Services Volunteer

manage on a combination of a resettlement allowance, a benefit, and Housing New Zealand accommodation. I had one mother who had a new baby and a toddler and she asked me to help her find a second-hand double pram. I would never have just offered her a second-hand pram; I had to wait for her to approach me or she would have been very offended."

What refugees would like to receive, Dama says, are visitors. "Many of the refugee women are housebound with small children and would welcome visits by older women. It would also be wonderful to have a volunteer from a church youth group to take a teen refugee to soccer practice or the movies. Teens do not want to hang out with us older volunteers!"

If you would like Dama to talk to your parish, contact Molly at Refugee Services, Wellington, on (04) 805 0310. To volunteer with Refugee Services in your area, contact your local office through www.refugeeservices.org.nz/how_you_can_help/volunteering_with_rms

By Angela Singer Spanz



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WELLINGTON TEENS MATCH ACTIONS TO FAITH

Actions speak louder than words when we engage with our community. So on the last weekend of term three, 50 young people from a number of Porirua and Wellington churches got together to worship God through their actions. They broke into small teams and through their faith and determination they:

- Cleared four flower beds at Aotea College and replanted them with sturdy plants provided generously by Palmers Garden Centre.
- Took away three large trailer loads of rubbish from a bank at Aotea College.
- Made 160 portions of food for our frozen food ministry (yummy lasagne and fish pie!)
- And helped plant over 400 native plants at Maara Roa.

For me, youth ministry has to get our young people involved in the practices of the Christian faith. So several years ago when I heard about the Soul Survivor Festival in Feilding, I took myself off to a festival where young people not only worshipped with their mouths but put their hands and feet to use as well. The churches in Feilding had worked together to come up with projects for the 300 young people that descended on the town.

It inspired me and a youth pastor from my area to start a local Soul Active Day. To start the day we had some sung worship and then some teaching from Diana Langdon. The young people were then broken into groups and went out to their projects. On returning two hours later, they were full of stories of the things they had done.

After this we had some teaching from Sam Harvey, who talked on Nehemiah and the building of the wall. He highlighted that the people that rebuilt the wall in Jerusalem were really not the best-qualified people. But they were there, they were in the city, and they contributed; they got involved in the building. Sam taught that we might think we are too young or too old or too whatever to be doing something that is in front of us, but God doesn't look at it that way.

We ended the day with some sung worship, some ministry time and some food! It was a great day and a huge thank you has to go to the Soul Survivor team who came and helped out for the day. We are planning another one for next year and are looking forward to seeing more people, young and old, put their faith into action.

By Jono Hesp Spanz

➡

Going Further is a spiritual journey for young adults and leaders who currently hang out with the Pressy Church tribe in New Zealand. It's a week to consider loving God and living the Jesus-way as you head into the year with your life, career, studies and church.

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+++++
GOING
FURTHER

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experiences
reality of
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Delivering a speech in Parliament and watching a film with MPs were just two highlights from Alasdair MacLeod's time at Youth Parliament. Alasdair, who is Year 13 student at Wellington Presbyterian school Scots College, attended the two-day event in July as the representative of Labour MP the Hon Annette King.

Every three years since 1994, young people from around New Zealand have been chosen by their local Member of Parliament to be a Youth MP. "They try to make it as real for us as possible; during the two days we debated legislation, sat on select committees and asked parliamentary questions of the Cabinet Ministers."

For Alasdair the selection process involved him taking part in a speech competition held by Annette. "I wrote on a topic that interests me, on the New Zealand my great great grandfather Job Freeth knew in 1857. Job believed that a great country could be built by working together to achieve nationhood, symbolised by an inclusive society".

Three weeks beforehand, Alasdair attended a pre-Youth-Parliament workshop with other Youth MPs "where we learnt how Parliament works and we were told we would have to abide by the same rules as the other MPs in the House, including always wearing a suit jacket, always bowing to the Speaker, only speaking when the Speaker

allows it and no swearing in speeches - not that any of us had planned to!"

The first day of Youth Parliament was spent in Select Committee "and the second day the MPs came and spoke to us". Alasdair gave a speech in the House on discrimination against the youth of New Zealand. He said that at 17 he could fight and die to protect the freedoms and democracy of New Zealand, "which is ironic because at 17 I still don't have any say in who governs my country. At 18 I could stroll down to the local and grab a pint but I am still not allowed to set foot in any casino until I am 20." Before attending Youth Parliament Alasdair had wanted to be a doctor, but now he is thinking about whether he would prefer "to work in Government or study law - but I'm not sure if I would like public policy".

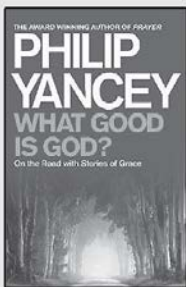
The two days were not all work. "In the Beehive theatre, where the Prime Minister gives press conferences, we watched the movie *Boy* with some of the MPs. When Youth Parliament ended, I attended a dinner hosted by Annette King at Bellamy's Restaurant in the Beehive."

One thing that surprised Alasdair was how approachable MPs are. "They are regular people. I know they would have been on their best behaviour for us but they were very easy to talk to. Here in Wellington it's

not like the United States where they feel threatened and are surrounded by security and can't go anywhere. Michael Cullen told us how when he was Acting Prime Minister he would go to Lambton Quay and get a coffee by himself. Can you imagine running into the US President at a cafe?"

By Angela Singer [Spanz](#)

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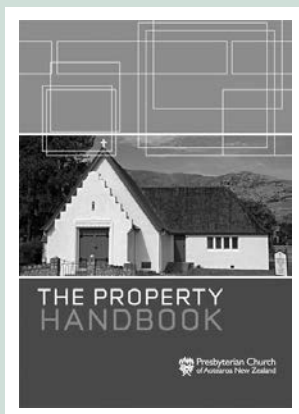


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Letters to the editor

The Rev Brian Turner's letter warning of challenges to Cooperative Ventures and the possibility of some backward steps seemed timely in view of some issues we have faced in our local CV. These have given opportunity to closely study the *Guide to Procedures in Cooperative Ventures*.

My analysis is that it is a document born in a moment of crisis when congregational numbers were falling and in an era of ecumenism that emphasised uniformity rather than unity in diversity. The joining together of local churches across denominational lines did ensure the maintenance of Christian witness and worship in many situations, and for this we can be thankful. Overall, however, I sense it is a document for *survival* and not for *growth*. Such documents must always serve the vision and what is needed now is a set of guidelines to free local ventures to thrive.

The ongoing control of the five partner denominations - promoting unity at the grass roots but not practised at national level - shines through this dated document. If a lack of church growth is the reason being expressed by some denominational leaders for taking a fresh look, perhaps the CVs need to develop that new set of guidelines designed to liberate them for progress.

In a nearby CV, none of the present members or adherents have any connection with the denominations that first came together, and I am sure that a lack of denominational allegiance or memory would characterise many people and groups. Life has moved on and a new generation of Christians are looking for new wineskins in order to express their faith in ways that are relevant to our increasingly non-Christian world.

Brian Turner notes that Waimakariri and Crossways have seen progress under a new model that has freed them from major drivers of denominational property and finance. Perhaps Brian could help the entire CV movement move in this direction.

I agree Jesus' prayer that "they will be one, just as you and I are one Father.... so that the world will believe...." must motivate us today.

That unity amidst diversity is best expressed nationally through linking with a dynamic group like Vision Network of NZ, now identified as The New Zealand Christian Network. At the grass roots the unity that celebrates differences can be powerfully demonstrated in CVs resourced to thrive.

Gordon Stanley
Northland

The Uniting Churches of Aotearoa New Zealand paper on parish oversight does not go far enough for some Cooperating Ventures. Brian Turner is 100 percent correct when he says that the paper "won't promote ecumenism". It just reinforces the current position of partnership churches. Nothing changes for CVs.

Johnsonville Uniting Church organised a meeting of Wellington CVs to discuss the paper. Peter MacKenzie [UCANZ Executive Officer] was invited to speak to the meeting. Peter spoke of the partnership nature of CVs, with the partnership being like a three-legged race with everyone working together. He also talked about the complexities of dealing with property. UCANZ is currently working on a model to streamline the property process. This is a small step, but it is progress; however the partnership Churches still have the final say.

There was vigorous discussion on several points. The CVs spoke with one voice and were on the same wavelength. CVs have a uniting vision of what they can do in their communities, but something is holding us back, and causing frustration.

There was a plea to simplify things and remove the complexities CVs faced in their operations and identity. Any guidelines should be there for the purpose of enabling CVs, not hindering them in their operations. The additional time and resources required for CVs to meet their obligations to be involved and be represented at regional and national level is time taken from their parishes. Anything that makes CVs easier to operate would be welcome.

We have moved on since the 1970s when CVs came into existence, but we are still stuck with a model that reflects that time. We are now ecumenical churches. We no longer see ourselves as Presbyterian, or Methodist etc, but have taken the best of the partnership Churches, and have created something that is different.

There is no desire to form a separate Church. There is a strong desire to walk in the sun with partnership churches, not in their shadow.

Dennis Mundt
Newlands

**These letters have been
abridged for space reasons.
Spanz welcomes letters to the
editor. Please email amanda@presbyterian.org.nz**



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Baking

makes social connections

A befriending service “is a way of bringing a little bit of the community to those who can’t get out into the community”, says Kevin Missen of Mangapapa Union Parish.

Kevin is a former coordinator of the Enliven Befriending Service, set up by the church nine years ago with the support of Presbyterian Support East Coast. The service involves volunteers from Mangapapa Union taking baking and cheer and to the elderly and home bound in Gisborne. Parish visitors are also able to bring in the mail, stop for a chat, help out with chores and assist people with getting to appointments – anything that helps older people keep doing the things that are important to them as well as ensuring they have social interaction.

Leslynn Jackson, area manager of Enliven Presbyterian Support East Coast, says there are a couple of different ways that clients get into the Befriending Service. “There are people from the church congregation who cannot attend church anymore and are at home, often through ill health, then there are people who might have attended the Enliven day programme but who through illness and injury might no longer be able to come along. A couple of the church’s parishioners who were once cooks for the Befriending Service have now moved on to become clients.”

Kevin Missen says it was Joy McCarty, a member of what was then known as Mangapapa Presbyterian Church, who had the idea for a befriending service as

community outreach. “Joy approached Presbyterian Support to come on board, as she needed help organising police checks for the home visitors. The service was initially funded by the church and the community, and when funds ran low Presbyterian Support took over the funding.”

The Befriending Service has always been based at Mangapapa Church, Kevin says, where on Friday mornings baking is made by parish cooks and then distributed into the community by parish helpers. The baking is, Kevin says, more of an excuse to “go and talk with elderly people stuck at home who otherwise might not see a visitor all week except for maybe Meals on Wheels who have to just come and go. I found that clients quickly became friends”.

While some of the clients Kevin worked with preferred to receive their baking and “just have a chat with you on the door step for a bit, others would invite you in and you would stay an hour with them. I’ve visited clients who couldn’t get out to their letterboxes and the mail was getting wet so I would bring it in for them. It sounds small but it’s a big task for an elderly person with a walker”.

The Befriending Service currently has 24 clients, both single and married people. Kevin says that couples appreciate visits too. “Even married couples can get lonely after staring across the table at each other for years and running out of things to talk about”.

Befriending Service parish cook Lorraine McAra is also a visitor who delivers baking to clients’ homes; she is in a good position to hear feedback on the type of baking that clients want. “We keep the baking simple. Four of us from the church bake and then another group from the church arrive to pick up the packages, help deliver and visit with clients. We have a good group of about eight from our parish running this and we really enjoy all working together”.

Lorraine says that the parish cooks “stick to lemon, chocolate chip and mixed fruit muffins, pikelets and cheese scones and date scones because that’s what our clients have told us they want. We tried soup and other things but we have stuck with what is popular. At Christmas and Easter we have some festive seasonal things such as little Christmas puddings and cakes. We took a survey with our clients to see if they wanted some variety and we found that they did not want any change to the baking so we have hit the recipe for success.”

Leslynn agrees that the Befriending Service is a recipe for success for communities and encourages other parishes to get in touch with their local Presbyterian Support Enliven office and see if they will help run a befriending-type service in their area. “By working together, we are better able to reduce social isolation, keep those elderly people who are isolated connected with their community and let them know that someone cares about them.”

By Angela Singer [Spanz](#)

Church heads refute CV rumours

Recent issues of *Spanz* have seen a flow of letters suggesting that the denominations are engaging in hypocrisy and have a hidden agenda to divide and rule cooperating ventures.

Former Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand Moderator the Very Dr Graham Redding says these fears are “unfounded”.

“That’s putting two and two together and getting five.”

Because of the complexity of the situation, the Presbyterian Church put a moratorium on new Cooperating Ventures. “But this doesn’t say anything about the commitment to existing CVs,” Graham says.

Peter MacKenzie is the Executive Officer of the Uniting Congregations of Aotearoa New Zealand. He says he has seen no indication that the partner Churches want to divide up CVs between themselves, even if they can find the situation difficult at times.

Some letter writers have suggested that instead of the current system of alternating denominational oversight, UCANZ should take on the functions of a denomination.

UCANZ was created by the partner Churches to provide structural support for Cooperating Ventures.

Peter says he’s surprised by this talk and describes the idea as “unsustainable”.

“It goes against the spirit of the Church Union movement that established Union parishes at the outset, and which was about reducing the number of Churches”.

Methodist Church General Secretary David Bush says, “if ecumenism is about working together, then creating another entity seems to me to be going completely against the whole notion of ecumenism”.

Idealism aside, it would be impossible for UCANZ to fulfil compliance and ministry requirements currently handled by partner Churches, Peter says.

But he agrees that the “clumsy” system of oversight, which determines which of the partner denomination’s processes

and rules are governing the parish, needs improvement.

Under proposed new regulations, which were recently approved by General Assembly 2010, churches will not be compelled to change oversight if the partnership is working well, and the focus will shift to partners working together at a parish rather than regional level.

David says there have been recent efforts to reduce the administrative burden on cooperative ventures; for example, requiring the completion of only one statistics form.

He says CVs have the ability to pick and choose the most relevant of the partner denominations’ resources. “In my experience, CVs often work the system really well.”

Peter says new models of partnership are emerging as churches grapple with decline, particularly in rural areas. “We have to be flexible to find new ways of cooperating.”

Cooperative ventures make up about 30 percent of Presbyterian congregations and about 50 percent of Methodist congregations, although the proportion of total members is less in both cases.

Presbyterian Assembly Executive Secretary the Rev Martin Baker says that CVs, like other churches, are grappling with the realities of decline. “These issues aren’t particular to CVs, but can be more complicated for them.”

If a CV is dissolved, its assets are sold and divided among the relevant partner Churches. A CV that wants to reform itself, for example by becoming part of a neighbouring denominational church, faces a process of paying out the other denomination’s share of any assets.

David says the denominations need to develop new ways of working together in the years to come. “I don’t think we’re talking about a Uniting Church but we do need to find real and authentic ways of churches working together, especially in areas of low population.”

By Amanda Wells *Spanz*

New ecumenical body on horizon

High level talks on the formation of a new inter-denominational body are making slow but real progress.

Former ecumenical body the National Council of Churches was dissolved in 1988, partly because some of its constituent Churches were unhappy with positions it was taking on issues.

Former Presbyterian Moderator the Very Rev Dr Graham Redding says that different Churches take different approaches to ecumenism, depending on their history and on their current emphasises.

He sees the Presbyterian Church as walking a middle line between those who see cooperation belonging at local level and those who embrace ideas of national ecumenism.

“The Presbyterian position is to keep in touch with both strands of thought”.

No one wants to repeat the NCC experience, he says, but instead to create a forum that provides for an expression of Christian unity.

Graham has been supporting an open membership structure for the new body, “provided people can sign up to the doctrine of the Trinity and concur with the terms of reference”.

A theological paper has been developed and is getting closer to being signed off by the Churches who are part of the conversation at the moment.

Mandarin ministry tackles mission field on Auckland's doorstep

An urban Auckland ministry to Mandarin speakers is bringing the Gospel to people who have never experienced church before.

Lay minister Christy Leow says churches can spend a lot of money supporting Christian workers in China, where being a missionary is not allowed and people belonging to the Communist party are not allowed to go to church, when there is another option for mission to the Chinese.

"God has opened the door for people from mainland China. We can use our resources to help these people more openly here.

"Once they believe, they will bring the Gospel back to China."

More than 17,000 Mandarin-speaking people live in the Auckland CBD, comprising the largest people-group in the area. Many older Chinese people live in small apartments in the Nelson, Albert and Hobson Street areas.

Along with a team of six volunteers, Christy runs a Sunday afternoon service, held at the Auckland Chinese Presbyterian Church, that attracts about 30 people, as well as English language sessions and mid-week Bible classes. The ministry began as an initiative from ACPC but now comes under the aegis of the Asian Advisory Committee of Auckland Presbytery, says the Rev Dr Stuart Vogel, who is the secretary of this committee.

He says the challenge is explaining the Gospel "to people who have no idea about it". Having grown up in an atheist, communist state, people from mainland China have virtually zero knowledge of Christianity, he says. They need to have a reason to come to church, so the ministry has explored different bridge-building tactics.

For example, a health day was held in April where doctors spoke about breast and



A health day held in April attracts the local community

cervical cancer as well as care for the heart, followed by skin cancer checks. About 100 people attended. Another health day, focusing on diabetes, was held in August.

Chinese events such as New Year and the mid-winter festival are also being used to make connections.

The events have been publicised through Auckland's seven Chinese newspapers, as well as notices in local shop windows and leaflets on their counters.

Stuart says providing a useful public service helps the ministry develop a good name and reputation, which is important to the Chinese community.

Christy says they would like to expand the ministry; by offering computer classes, for example.

However, the ministry's future is uncertain, with funding from Auckland Presbytery guaranteed only till the end of 2010.

Stuart says his committee is working with congregations and other groups, and would like to see Christy's role expand from half-to full-time. The ministry is a long-term project, he says, and won't be self-funding for some time. He describes the ministry as very challenging and high risk, but with significant potential.

Christy says Chinese people see New Zealand as a very attractive place to live, because it is quiet and peaceful in comparison to the competitiveness and pollution of China.

Often they come to New Zealand after their children settle here, she says. They

have nonexistent or poor English skills, which makes everyday life difficult.

Many older immigrants are not rich and their English skills make it difficult for them to find high paying jobs. So they work in restaurants or in cleaning jobs, "or rely on their children to look after them, if their children can find a good job".

However, sometimes the children may go to Australia in search of better prospects, leaving their parents in New Zealand because of immigration rules.

"This is very difficult for the parents. They can be very scared. So they ask us to help them."

Christy will often take people to the doctor or the dentist and provide some interpretation, or she will help them look for a Mandarin-speaking doctor.

Sometimes she is asked to help deal with government departments. Strong relationships are built up through these interactions, she says.

Over the past two years, seven people attending the programme have become Christians.

Participants become keen to learn about Christianity, Christy says. "They want to know why we help them and love them. It touches their hearts."

Sometimes people will come here to visit for six months, she says, then go back to China.

"If they go back to China, they start looking for the church there."

By Amanda Wells Spanz

Elderly appreciate 'flatmate' programme

Two years on, Presbyterian Support East Coast's Enliven Homeshare programme is proving a success in Hawke's Bay with older home owners and younger homesharers.

Coordinator Deborah Biggs says there is a waiting list of homesharers and householders for suitable matches.

Adapted from a successful US concept, Enliven Homeshare helps older people stay in their own homes longer through an innovative "flatting" style situation. The older person offers the younger person free rent in return for help with things they have trouble doing, such as cooking, shopping or gardening – personal care or nursing-related activities are not included.

Deborah Biggs says the programme is win-win for all parties, especially for the family of the householder "who know that Mum or Dad are not alone at night".

One month ago householders Howard and Betty Gorton became Enliven Homesharers with adult student Maree Hart. Howard says, "we are still getting to know each other but having Maree, a younger fit person, around the house has improved our lives so much we can't recommend Homeshare enough."

Visiting the Hastings Hospital, Howard saw a poster on the wall promoting Homeshare and thought it sounded like something that would help him and his wife.

Gordon says Deborah quickly found homesharer Maree "who is perfect for us. A young woman in her 40s – that's young to us because we are in our 70s – who is away most of the day and free at the weekends and home most evenings. We live at one end of our large house and Maree at the other so she can come and go as she pleases".

Maree pays no rent as she provides help in the home and the garden. "Maree pays \$30 weekly towards food and power, we think that sufficient."

Howard says he is pleased that Maree is helping him with outdoor work. "We have a 1.7 hectare garden so it's a challenge. I have taught Maree how to use the tractor



Paul Taylor

Howard and Betty Gorton with homesharer Maree Hart

mower and she has taken to it like a duck to water. I also taught her how to use the chainsaw."

Cooking is not Maree's forte, Howard says, "and that is fine because both Betty and I cook. I made a meal from Rick Stein's seafood cook book the other night, turbot grilled in tomatoes and garlic. Maree said she wasn't keen on fish but she had never had it like that and enjoyed it. Betty made us chicken with grapes last night and that went down well."

Betty says that after dinner Maree does the dishes "because she says that is fair. We do have a dishwasher for her to use".

Initially, Howard says, Betty was reluctant to have a homesharer. "When I suggested it, Betty was taken by surprise and got quite cross; we had a discussion about how she could do with some assistance in the home."

Betty agrees that she was "a bit upset" at the idea of another person living in their home because "until I retired I was a physiotherapist, I like to do things my way". However, Betty was very ill last year "and I get breathless so I came to realise that I couldn't help Howard do things around the property. I accepted that we needed someone here."

Betty is pleased that Maree has "taken to the garden. She is a quick learner; I taught her how to prune the roses".

For Maree, Homeshare appealed as she had been living with and helping her aged parents prior to moving to Hawke's Bay for study.

Maree says she knows it was hard at first for Betty to accept her. "It wasn't easy for Betty to accept being helped. My dad had the same trouble accepting that he couldn't do what he used to be able to do and needed some helping hands. Fortunately Betty and I now work well together."

The opportunity to learn from Howard and Betty has been a "real gift", Maree says. "They are so cultured and have a huge range of books and music that I have never experienced."

Maree says that Howard has been instrumental in boosting her self confidence by encouraging her to learn how to drive the ride-on mower, use a tree shredder and a chainsaw. "We have a fantastic time pruning trees together. I'd never mown a lawn in my life and now I'm not only doing it, I'm getting fit".

"I consider myself very lucky to be here, I've landed on my feet with enlightened and interesting people."

By Angela Singer [Spanz](#)



Dunedin nurse follows childhood call to warzone

Forty years ago, our television screens beamed out shocking images of starving children in Biafra, Nigeria, cradled by Red Cross aid workers. A young Barbara Turnbull knew she would never forget these images, and told her mother one day she would join the Red Cross and help. In 2008, after many years as a surgical nurse at Dunedin Public Hospital, Barbara decided it was now or never: she resigned and left to nurse in the world's conflict zones.

Barbara, an elder at Coastal Unity Parish in St Clair, Dunedin, works for the New Zealand Red Cross, and is seconded to the International Committee Red Cross (ICRC) as an operating theatre nurse. Her first mission in 2008 was to Jalalabad, Afghanistan, where she worked in support of the government hospital. Next she was sent to Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where as part of the ICRC team she provided surgical care for the wounded in three rural hospitals. In 2009 Barbara returned to Afghanistan, this time to Kandahar, once again working in support of the government hospital. Currently she is nursing in Peshawar, Pakistan, in a ICRC field hospital.

Although Barbara had a picture in her mind of “the aid worker at a feeding centre, helping the starving children surrounding her,” she says that reality turned out differently. “I am in the operating theatre caring for patients wounded in armed conflict.”

Red Cross nursing missions tend to be short, usually lasting no more than six months because “the hours can be long and you cannot enjoy the freedoms we know in New Zealand. But living in a compound where you cannot go outside of the gate, as was the case for me in Kandahar, six months seems more like a year!”

In Pakistan Barbara says she is “relatively free to walk around safely, we go shopping and out to restaurants but there are ‘no go’ areas as you can imagine. We are well catered for on mission, for example, we have a cook and a cleaner who does the laundry, so I can’t complain”.

The Red Cross was not Barbara’s first experience working overseas. “Through the Council for Mission and Ecumenical Co-operation, I worked for two years in Papua New Guinea as a nurse tutor at St Mary’s Mission Hospital in Kokapo.”

Although she is far away, Barbara remains close to her home church, Coastal Unity Parish, where her mother Fay worships, where her father was an elder and where Barbara has been a member for 20 years and an elder for 14 years. “My church family helps me spiritually through prayer and practically by providing letters, emails and warm welcomes home.”

Barbara says that working overseas “makes me really appreciate being a Kiwi and our beautiful country. I miss my family and friends. I miss the freedom to go for a nice long walk. I really miss the sea, especially the St Clair Esplanade; I miss walking there every day and getting a coffee at one of the cafes there.”



Otago Daily Times

Barbara Turnbull

Fay Turnbull says that she is grateful to have her daughter come home to stay with her between nursing missions. This year Barbara will be back home in time for Christmas. “When Barbara is away I and her brother and sister talk to her on Skype, but I don’t see her on the camera as it would be too much emotionally.”

Fay says that when back in Dunedin, Barbara gives talks about her work to groups, including local Association of Presbyterian Women groups and Rotary.

Although her daughter nurses in conflict zones, Fay says she does not worry. “I know God will take care of her, and the Red Cross is well protected and they do not allow them out if it is not safe, as was the case in Afghanistan.

“She has wanted to do this for such a long time, since she was a teenager, so it’s not for me to stand in her way. She is leading an interesting life. After Christmas we wait to learn where she will be sent to next”.

Barbara is currently nursing in Pakistan. She says everyone will be aware of the devastating floods Pakistan has recently suffered and anyone wishing to help can donate to the New Zealand Red Cross.

By Angela Singer Spanz

GLOBAL MISSION

Former Moderator takes global mission reins

The Very Rev Pamela Tankersley has stepped into the role of Global Mission Coordinator for the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Pamela, who was Moderator from 2006-8, says she is passionate about “seeing our Church as part of the global family of Churches”.

She says her two-year appointment is akin to a transition ministry. Pamela will continue to be based in Palmerston North, commuting to Assembly Office in Wellington for three days and working from home the other two days.

Local churches are the key locus of mission, she says. “I would like every parish to be able to identify and celebrate the fact that it is doing global mission, not just those sending people. We’re all in this together.”

Pamela says she also wants to hear churches’ stories of mission, no matter what agency or means a church is using to reach out internationally.

“I want to encourage them to keep on doing it and to tell their stories.”

Pamela says using local churches to manage key relationships, such as St Andrew’s Mt Maunganui partnering with Vanuatu, and St Columba @ Botany with Myanmar, emphasises this message. Similarly, the Friends of Jagadhri is coordinating engagement with North India.

She says her philosophy of mission centres on sharing together and developing partnerships.

“Our task is to discern where God is working and to join that mission”.

A key emphasis is on supporting projects developed by our partner Churches in other countries to meet their own needs.

“I would like to think that what we’re doing as mission Church within New Zealand is seamless with what we’re doing beyond New Zealand.”

Aid and development agency Christian World Service, along with the Council for World Mission, represent significant global mission relationships, she says. She is keen to talk to the Uniting Church in Australia, where our former Assembly Executive Secretary the Rev Dr Kerry Enright heads up its global mission arm, about how we can work together.

Pamela says going on mission trips isn’t about arriving with all the answers to local problems. “Our emphasis is on recognising that countries in which we work have the answers to their own dilemmas. We’re not there to tell them what to do but to empower and support.”

“I want to promote a conversation about a good theology of mission.”

Pamela has also recently become the Association of Presbyterian Women’s UN convenor, which includes attending an annual consultation on the status of women in New York.

Pamela is keen to receive invitations to speak to presbyteries and churches about global mission. You can contact her on pamela@presbyterian.org.nz

By Amanda Wells Spanz



At the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu General Assembly: Flora, Toktok, Pamela and Rosa

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Bags change lives for former prostitutes

In January, nine people from Dunedin's Leith Valley Presbyterian will head off for a mind-altering experience in Calcutta, India.

They will be working at Freeset, an organisation that employs former prostitutes to produce bags and t-shirts, and at one of Mother Theresa's homes for the poor.

Minister the Rev Richard Dawson was inspired to plan the trip after a short teaching stint in India earlier this year.

He says most people agree that short-term mission trips aren't particularly helpful in terms of meeting needs on the ground; "but they give an opportunity for the hearts of those who go to be changed significantly".

"When I came back I immediately thought I wanted to take a group from the church there; I wish I'd done it years ago." Seeing the reality of poverty made him see the world through new eyes, he says.

The teaching trip came about through Richard's family connection to a United States Baptist minister who has been leading mission work in a small town in the state of Andhra Pradesh for the past 20 years. A week-long training school is run for 20 local pastors and Richard was invited to help out, an experience he describes as "amazing". Afterwards he went to Calcutta to visit Tim and Sarah Muller, a couple from Leith Valley Presbyterian who were spending a year volunteering for Freeset.

Tim, who's 24, managed the screenprinting department, where 20 women print about 1000 T-shirts and jute bags daily. He told Dunedin's *The Star* newspaper that the experience opened his eyes to how much the Freeset women had to offer back to those behind the project.

"The biggest lesson for us was the inter-dependence of people from different cultures, backgrounds and economic situations. If we do not interact with each other, we lose ourselves in so many ways."



Cooking on the street in Calcutta

Freeset was set up by New Zealanders Kerry and Annie Hilton in 2001 to help women escape from the sex trade. It is in Sonagacchi, Calcutta's largest red-light district, where more than 10,000 women sell their bodies. Many of these women are trafficked from Bangladesh, Nepal and rural India.

Freeset has grown from employing 20 women to more than 160. The women are well paid and able to educate their children, and also receive health insurance and a pension plan. Any profit that Freeset makes is put back into the business, with a second factory being outfitted nearby at the moment.

Richard says he was struck by the "absolute contrast" between the exploited women on the streets of Calcutta and the inside of the factory, where women were laughing and singing.

The Leith Valley group will spend 10 days working at Freeset and then spend several days at Mother Theresa's first home for the poor, which is nearby.

They will be staying at a backpackers and buying their own food, so as not to put any

burden on their hosts. "It's not a tourist trip," Richard says, although there will be one or two free days so that people can process what they have experienced.

Five of the group of nine people are students, and the trip will cost each person \$3000. Richard says the church is planning to fundraise both to help those struggling with the fare and to bring a *koha* for the groups being visited.

It will be mandatory for the travellers to attend a debriefing when they return, to help them work through the experience and cope with the shock of returning to "normal" life. Richard says he's planning to bring in people with overseas mission experience to help with this process.

At the moment, the group are meeting regularly to prepare and to talk about how to deal with cultural expectations and challenging situations.

More information about Freeset is available at www.freesetglobal.com

In New Zealand you can buy Freeset products online from www.marketplacers.co.nz

By Amanda Wells Spanz

GLOBAL MISSION

Trip exposes horror of human trafficking

Rose Howarth experienced the reality of human trafficking during a recent trip to India.

The 18-year-old attended the Council for World Mission's global youth roundtable on the issue in New Delhi, along with eight other young people from around the world.

Rose is a University of Otago student and part of Leith Valley Presbyterian Church, as well as attending Student Soul.

She says human trafficking has always been an issue close to her heart, and she had mentioned it to the Rev Helen Harray. So when Helen told her of the opportunity to take part at short notice, "I was so keen".

Less than two months later, Rose embarked on her first overseas solo trip with a 36-hour plane journey to New Delhi.

The 10 delegates were aged from 18-30 and

came from Taiwan, South Africa, Zambia, Guyana, India and the United Kingdom.

After some introductory sessions and speakers, they had an "exposure day" that included visits to nongovernmental organisations set up by the Church of North India and to a brothel. Rose says the prostitutes endured horrific living conditions, with no windows or natural light, in what delegates recognised as a heavy and oppressive atmosphere. "A rat would run across the floor." Prostitution is illegal in India so there is no regulation of the sex industry or protection for its workers.

They also heard from the founding director of an organisation devoted to stopping human trafficking through theatre. His group travels to communities and gives performances that contain warnings for poor villagers, who often fall prey to traffickers. Rose says an interesting point this speaker made was that communities with strong cultural practices were much less likely to become victims, because when they experience times of scarce work or resources, women can fall back on craft or traditional roles rather than seeking work outside their district.

Another speaker spoke of his work in hunting down missing young people and

children who were trafficked into brothels.

"It was amazing to hear a first-hand account of actively rescuing people. He risks his life in that job every day".

With this speaker was a young woman who had been rescued, after being trafficked into a brothel when she was young. "Now she's committed her life to helping the authorities find brothel owners and rescue women."

But it isn't only sex slavery that results from human trafficking. For example, some victims are forced to work in circuses and receive very little food; some children are used for camel racing. This involves tying a small child to the back of a camel, which goes faster the louder the child cries. "Often the children don't make it to the end of the race."

"In the beginning I was quite naïve and thought it didn't happen in the Pacific. After the conference, what changed in me was an understanding that knowledge is really powerful. Raising awareness throughout New Zealand and the Pacific has an effect."

Rose says that by the end of the conference, the delegates' passion for the issue had grown. "We'd seen how horrific it can be."

By Amanda Wells **Spanz**



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Following in the footsteps of a missionary pioneer

Earlier this year, Auckland woman Frances Morton travelled to India to retrace the steps of her Presbyterian missionary great aunt, Mary Salmond.

Frances, who is in her 30s, says whenever she speaks to friends about Mary's story, she is always struck by their reactions. "They are astounded.

"We have these stories in our history of these adventurous young women that don't really get told. That's what sparked an interest in me."

Mary served as a Presbyterian missionary in Jagadhri, India, from 1916 to 1925.

Frances says her mother told stories about Mary's adventurous life, with the family also holding letters sent between Mary and her brother, who was fighting in World War I. "They have a strong spiritual element to them. She had obviously given him some guidance."

The Presbyterian Archives contains letters written by Mary to the authorities back home, reporting on the work that she was doing.

Frances describes Mary's family background as "strongly Presbyterian". Her brothers became ministers, and her missionary service was driven by her faith. "What comes through in her letters is a strong desire to teach girls and to teach egalitarian values."

Born in 1887, Mary undertook teacher training at the Dunedin Training College before earning an MA at the University of Otago. After several years teaching, she trained as a deaconess, and then left for India in 1916.

After spending some time language learning, Mary taught in three different girls' schools in the Jagadhri area over the next eight years. She also reinstated a women's fellowship and Bible classes for women.

Frances says the Jagadhri she visited seems quite different from in Mary's time, having become an agglomeration of two cities. The three small schools that Mary worked in have become the 2000-pupil St Thomas' School, which Frances describes as "grand and beautiful".

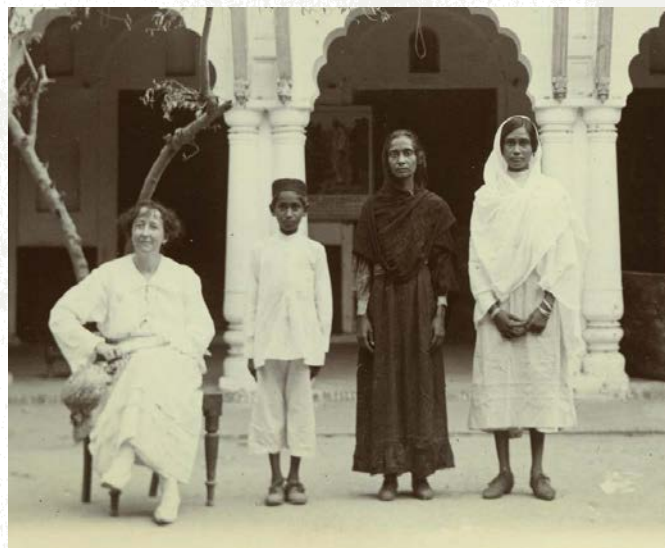
Principal Kamla Singh (who travelled to New Zealand as part of the Presbyterian Church's celebration of North Indian mission in 2008) invited Frances to stay and gave her a tour of the school and the Christian hospital, where Mary was based.

Inside the hospital were many plaques remembering donations over the years, and Frances says she felt a strong sense of connection to Mary's life and work.

Frances, who is a journalist, took a video camera with her and made lots of notes, she says, with the intention of putting Mary's story together at some point.

"I developed a different perspective on what she had done, and on how brave she must have been."

Frances says she was struck by the extreme heat during her visit, which lasted several weeks. Often the temperature was more than 40 degrees Celsius.



Buriya School staff in front of the school building in about 1920: Mary Salmond is on the left

Frances describes India as a "confronting place" today, let alone nearly 100 years ago. "It must have been such an extremely unusual experience for her to be so far away from home. Letters would take months to arrive."

Mary must have had significant amounts of independence and courage, Frances says.

Becoming a missionary gave her the opportunity to step outside a woman's traditional role. "It was one of the first professional jobs that a woman could do where they were treated as equal to men."

In 1925 Mary became very ill after contracting a tropical disease. She was sent home to New Zealand by boat, accompanied by a doctor who expected to bury her at sea.

But she returned to Queenstown and "ate a lot of strawberries," Frances says, to which she attributed her cure.

Mary never married and Frances says family folklore has it that she was engaged to a young man who fought and died in World War I. "We have a legend that she carried his letters in her pocket."

After recovering her health, Mary became a lecturer at the Presbyterian Women's Training Institute, which trained deaconesses, and was principal from 1929-41.

On retirement, she set up a holiday home in Queenstown for missionaries on home leave. Mary later spent 20 years serving in the Queenstown parish, particularly in youth work, and in 1957 became one of its first woman elders. She learned to drive in her 60s, which meant she could teach Bible in Schools in Arrowtown and visit young families in outlying areas, and is well remembered for making sweets that she would give to children.

The University of Otago's Salmond Hall, which opened in 1971, is named after Mary and her brother James, who was a lecturer at Knox Theological Hall.

Mary died in 1976.

More information about Mary Salmond and about the history of Presbyterian mission in North India can be found in the Rev Doreen Riddell's Light and Love: One hundred years in North India and Nan Burgess' A Braided River of Faith.

By Amanda Wells Spanz

GLOBAL MISSION

Madagascar's orphans benefit from Kiwi support

Dunedin's Highgate Presbyterian is funding childcare training in Madagascar, thanks to a volunteering stint by two members of its congregation.

Gil and Wyn Barbezat spent two months at children's home Akany Avoko in 2008 and have continued to raise support for the home, which caters for neglected and abandoned children, since their return.

Madagascar ranks among the 10 poorest countries in the world, with the World Bank estimating that 70 percent of the population of 19 million live on less than US\$1 per day.

Akany was established 47 years ago by two social workers from Switzerland and Sweden who had come to provide emergency relief after a typhoon. They found that girls as young as 10 who were charged with petty crimes were incarcerated in adult prisons while awaiting their court date, which could take up to 18 months.

As well as taking these children, Akany soon became a place where police brought abandoned babies and where street children could find a home.

The home is run by FKJM, Madagascar's main protestant denomination, and while it is supposed to receive funding from the state for children placed by social services or the courts, often this does not appear.

Highgate is funding training for the workers in Akany's early childcare centre, as well as ongoing support for its director and the employment of a play supervisor.

Because the training is run by local people, it also supports the local economy, Wyn says. She says fundraising hasn't been difficult, because of their first-hand accounts and because people can be confident that all donations go straight to the home.

Gil and Wyn visited Akany Avoko in 2006 while on holiday in Madagascar and were impressed with its ethos and with the love and care given to the children, Wyn says. "When we came back, we wanted to go back again."



Wyn runs a playdough session for preschoolers, with the help of fellow volunteer Ben

So they arranged to spend two months volunteering in mid 2008. Akany, which houses about 100 children and young people, attracts many volunteers, who are selected on the basis of what they can offer. Some stay for several months, others for up to two years.

Wyn and Gil, who have backgrounds in preschool education and medicine, were the oldest people who have worked at the home; all the other "wonderful" volunteers were younger than their children, Wyn says.

They spent each morning helping with preschool activities, had lunch with the children then gave extension lessons to the primary school children in the afternoon.

"Activities that our preschoolers take for granted – like playdough and blowing bubbles – were a real treat and novelty for them."

One boy that Gil became close to had been brought to the city by his aunt, who had told his rural parents that she would send him to school. Instead he had to work in her house as a servant, and her husband eventually threw him out on the street.

Children of any age can stay and they are not kicked out when they reach a certain age: Habitat for Humanity has created some housing for young adults.

There is a primary school in the home, because the children need more attention than would be possible at the local school. They have a 100 percent pass rate of the state junior school exam, and four Akany children have become university graduates, with more on the way. **By Amanda Wells** Spanz

Theology from Otago

Food for thought

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GLOBAL MISSION

Spotlight on positive for 65th Christmas Appeal

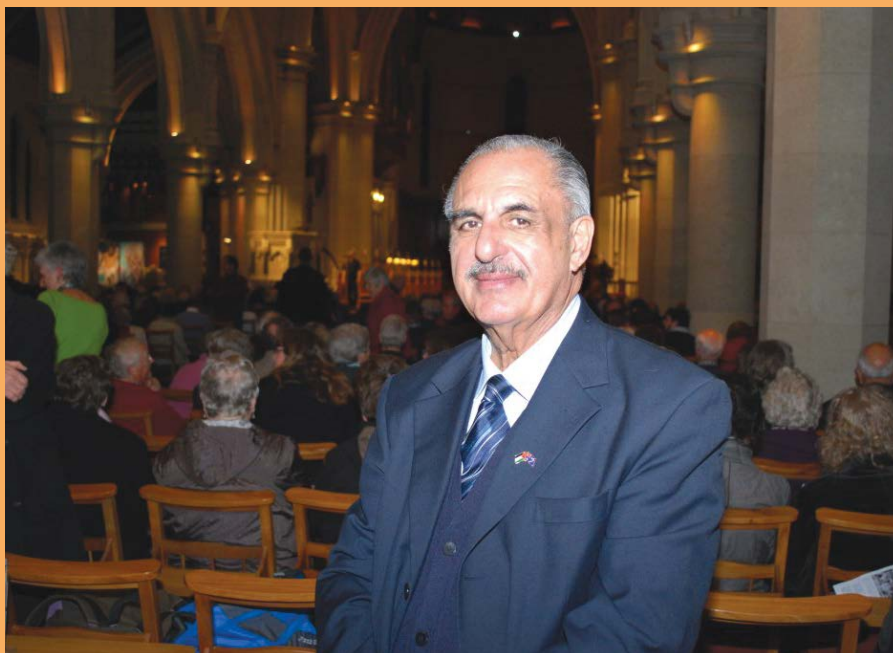
The theme of this year's Christian World Service Christmas Appeal reflects a collective decision from CWS staff to take a reflective look at positive results.

The poster for the appeal features a post-Haitian-earthquake photo of a toddler being bathed by her mother, which has become known at CWS as "bath baby."

This poster led to the 65th Appeal theme of "Share the Care", based on the nurturing image of care and compassion.

CWS national director Pauline McKay says that the Appeal manages to be both "contemporary, positive and true to our traditions of respect and partnership with people".

"The mother and child theme is central to Christmas but it also universal as a message of care and nurture."



Constantine Dabbagh in Christchurch Cathedral

With 30 partner groups to choose from, the challenge was to find a small number of relevant examples.

The four partner profile stories are based on projects in Haiti, Uganda, Tonga and Gaza.

Haiti has become a focus for Association of Presbyterian Women activity and has provided an unexpected reference point

for CWS after Christchurch was hit by a similar-sized earthquake in September.

Although supporting relief and development work in Haiti has been a major part of CWS activity this year, one of the longest running partnerships highlighted in the 65th appeal is with Gaza.

For more than 30 years CWS has partnered with the Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR), which is run by the Middle Eastern Council of Churches.

This partnership helps fund three maternal clinics in Gaza, which have had more than 19,000 women attend them for antenatal lessons on health and hygiene.

In 2009 the clinics were able to report that no women attending them had died from pregnancy or birth complications.

DSPR executive secretary Constantine Dabbagh visited New Zealand in August. During his visit, the Palestinian Christian leader spoke at many venues, met Church leaders and UN Development Programme head Helen Clark in Christchurch.

He said that his tiny Christian community was there for the long haul.

"There are only 2000 of us Christians but we have been there since the time of Christ himself.

"We will not be the generation that lets our churches become monuments."

A poster for the 65th Christmas Appeal. It features a close-up photograph of a young child with their face and arms covered in white soap suds, being bathed. The text "share the care" is written in large, white, lowercase letters on a red background. To the right, "65th Christmas appeal" is written in red. At the bottom, there is a dark blue banner with the CWS logo (a globe icon) and the text "CWS ACTION AGAINST POVERTY", followed by "DONATE TO LIFE NOW" in large red letters, and the website "www.christmasappeal.org.nz" and phone number "0800 747372".



Presbyterian Support

With 30 rest homes and hospitals throughout the country, Presbyterian Support is a leader in the provision of residential services for older people. Within these Homes older people receive rest home, hospital, dementia or palliative care; according to their needs. In many cases the Homes are part of a wider continuum of care which includes independent living, retirement villages and community and home-based services. Increasingly the various regions are including their residential services under the *Enliven Positive Ageing Services* banner.

Positive ageing is a philosophy that recognises some things make for a healthier, happier life, no matter what your age. A sense of community, friends, family and a home of your choosing ensures that ageing is a positive experience for all. It goes without saying that we are committed to supporting older people to maintain their independence and continue the lifestyles they enjoy.

Residents are actively encouraged to maintain their own routines, hobbies and interests. Family and friends - and even pets - will continue to be an important part of residents' everyday life. We also help residents to remain active in their church, RSA and other community networks.

This year four Presbyterian Support Otago (PSO) rest homes and hospitals have received four-year certification from the Ministry of Health. This puts these homes in the top 10 of the 716 residential facilities in New Zealand.



Rest Home Managers: Mary McKay (Taieri Court), Mavis Thornton (Ranui), Margaret Pearce (Ross Home) and Penny Fisher (Elmslie House) celebrate the four-year certification of their Homes.

Ross Home (Dunedin), Taieri Court (Mosgiel), Holmdene (Balclutha) and Ranui (Alexandra) all practice the *Valuing the Lives of Older People* philosophy of care for residents, a level of service the auditors found "fantastic".

Like the *Eden Alternative*, which is practised in Presbyterian Support Central residential services, *Valuing the Lives of Older People* is an internationally acknowledged service philosophy which focuses on the needs of the individual – not just as a resident but as a spouse, sibling, parent, and friend, understanding that we offer people a home which is as unique as they are. And if that means that a resident prefers breakfast in bed at 9am rather than when it suits the kitchen – that's fine with us!

Ross Home in Dunedin has a café on site and Peacehaven in Invercargill includes a café in their bright modern community centre. Rather than hosting visitors in their bedrooms, residents can catch up with friends over a cup of coffee and a snack. This has proved very popular and with both venues being fully accessible, trade is steady as well!

Recently District Health Boards (who substantially fund residential services for older people) have introduced flexible use of rest home rooms. This means that as a resident's needs change, for example from rest home to hospital level care, they can often stay in the same room. This is significant as it enables change to be minimised when people are at their most vulnerable.

Two sites where this is working particularly well are The Croft in South Canterbury and Holmdene in Balclutha.



Volunteers continue to be an important part of our residential services – willing and friendly people who can pop in to read the paper, play a game of cards, share a craft activity, or even take someone for a drive. Volunteers of all ages are very welcome.

We are for people, not for profit

Your bequest can help improve the lives
of thousands every year.



Since the beginning of last century, Presbyterian Support has been providing services to meet the social needs of New Zealanders in your community.

We help vulnerable children and families and support older people through our positive ageing services. Every year gifts from people in your community positively affect the lives of over a hundred thousand people.

Why not make your gift count too? Leave us a bequest and help us continue making a positive difference in your community.

Free Phone 0508 86 4357

www.ps.org.nz



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