

The background image is a photograph of a church interior. It shows rows of wooden pews on either side of a central aisle. The floor is made of polished wood, and a prominent, dark, jagged crack runs down the center of the aisle, extending from the foreground towards the back of the church. In the background, the altar area is visible with some religious symbols and a blue wall.

spanz

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

JUNE 2011, ISSUE 47

Canterbury earthquake

Church joins together in support

www.presbyterian.org.nz

COMMENT: Janet Sim Elder

Punitive or restorative justice: which do we want for New Zealand?

A crucial question this election year is how do we do justice honourably with both victims and offenders? How can recidivism continue to trend downwards? How do public attitudes change to being solidly evidence-based? How do we face the challenge of changing the justice landscape? Can we provide the moral courage to help our society take steps towards a more just and merciful society?

The biblical pillars of doing justice and loving mercy (Micah 6:8b) are heavily strained in New Zealand. We rush to apportion blame rather than ask who has been hurt by crime. We mete out a retributive “justice” which perpetuates further injustices. We legislate for three strikes and there is no more mercy. Have we the moral courage to do the harder task? To ask the restorative questions: together, how can we put this right? Are forgiveness and reconciliation possible?

Voices which have shaped New Zealand’s increasingly punitive justice have come from a minority. Populist politicians listen to these voices above others. Shameful stripping of citizenship for all prisoners is the latest in punitive legislation in the news as I write.

Voices we might listen to more attentively as we prepare to vote this election year include chief justice, the Rt Hon Dame Sian Elias; judge Sir David Carruthers who is chairperson of the Parole Board¹; and chief family court judge Andrew Becroft; all of whom have intimate knowledge of our justice system.

They all firmly support evidence-based change and a better informed wider society, alongside the Silverstream Declaration soon to be released by the organisations that wrote the Declaration at the “Breaking down the Barriers” conference in October 2010.

1 A recent survey by the Board over the last ten years on serious criminals released on parole showed the number re-offending in any one month over that time was reduced from 100 incidents per month ten years ago to the most recent average of 45 incidents per month.

Sponsors of this landmark conference in Upper Hutt were the Prison Fellowship New Zealand [PFNZ], Prison Chaplaincy Service of Aotearoa New Zealand, Pathway Trust, Pillars Inc. and the Salvation Army. National and international research was shared by experts in their fields, showing conclusively that there are alternatives that do work to get prison numbers down.

The conference affirmed the need to do more work together about the impact of crime on victims; it confirmed that restorative justice works positively for both victims and offenders alike; and that when prisons treat people with more dignity and compassion, re-offending goes down. We could benefit from having open prisons like Norway where dislocated families have visiting rights over a weekend with their parent. Children see their dads in the weekend. Imagine that!

With an incarceration rate soaring over most other OECD countries², the most painful question is - could we become a less punitive society? There’s been a 35 percent increase in population in New Zealand prison sites in the last five years! The Department of Corrections is now the largest government department. Fiscal sense? The Silverstream Declaration suggests it’s “fiscally irresponsible” to be building more prisons.³ Reputable international evidence is mounting that incarceration does not work for most offenders.

Working in restorative justice, I gain the growing conviction that victims’ stories of crimes (from burglary to rape and brutal murder) are stories to be told to offenders. To stand in their victims’ shoes is the darkest place to be, but easily avoided. Courageously telling stories, in a safe place, face-to-face, is what can turn both the lives of victims and offenders around toward a life no longer dominated by a painful past. The best apology victims say they want is when they know the offender will never commit the crime against anyone, ever again.

2 NZ has the fourth highest rate of imprisonment among OECD countries behind USA (1), Mexico (2) and the Czech republic (3). Communication from Barry Matthews, CE Corrections [07/10/10]
3 The average cost p.a. to keep one prisoner incarcerated is \$90,000. It costs an average \$3,600 for a year’s community service sentence.



Offenders, male and female, find it very difficult to rehabilitate. Creative, hopeful ways forward were outlined at the conference: projects bringing together church and community group resources to address reintegration, as people return to life in the complex world outside prison.⁴

What does the gospel story teach about God’s justice and mercy and how we act towards other human beings? The supreme example comes from Jesus on the cross.

“Revealed in his dying prayer, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” is the conviction that justice in itself is not enough, that the humanity of the perpetrators of injustice must be upheld alongside the humanity of the victims, and that justice must serve still higher goals of reconciliation, healing and rehabilitation...”.⁵

If we want to change the justice landscape, say “no more” to quick-fix legislation and to the knee-jerk, non-evidence-based reactions embodied in flaky legislation. We must seriously become better informed. In the light of God’s generous giving to us in Christ, we cannot do less.

By Janet Sim Elder Spanz

Janet Sim Elder is an elder of Knox Presbyterian Church, Dunedin, and convenor of their Social Justice Workgroups.

4 See www.pfnz.org.nz

5 Graham Redding: Crime and Justice: a Biblical and Theological Perspective, from *Crime & Justice* (pub. PCANZ October 2010)

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New Zealand,
PO Box 9049, Wellington, New Zealand

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Editor

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

Advertising

Jose Reader
spanzadvertising@presbyterian.org.nz

Subscriptions

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

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Image courtesy of Rev Martin Stewart.
Centre aisle of St Stephen's Presbyterian
Church, Bryndwr, Christchurch.

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

Moderator's Musings



Scientific observation of a colony of apes has revolutionised our understanding of species survival. This particular colony was renowned for its vitality and robustness. Numbers increased steadily, largely because of the fertility of their adults and the careful nurturing of their children and adolescents into adulthood. Generation after generation, the health and vitality of the colony continued. For the apes themselves, it was clear that their growth was a source of considerable satisfaction, and reproduction was celebrated. Every new birth was accompanied by a party.

However, over a period of some years that changed. Some of the leading adults discouraged reproduction. It seemed they thought the whole topic was somewhat unseemly. In their view, reproduction received too much attention when there were other activities that were much more dignified. They gradually devoted more and more of their time to their jungle, to building relationships with other colonies and to caring deeply for each other. Scientists marvelled at the quality of their environment, their relationships and the strength of their community. Time was given to discussing the major issues of the day, but anyone wanting to raise the issue of reproduction was increasingly regarded as somewhat immature and simplistic. The other apes looked down their noses.

To be fair, there were also difficulties with reproduction. The approach of any ape towards another might be spurned and scientists observed considerable psychological pain after any such rejection. Some apes soon decided they would no longer try.

Also, some irresponsible actions had given reproduction a bad name.

With the growing antipathy towards reproduction, the psychological barriers became even higher. Increasingly it was apparent that reproduction was frowned on.

It was remarkable how rapidly things changed. The birth rate dropped immediately. Consequently, the average age of the colony increased. With fewer young adult apes, the birth rate dropped still further.

Many of those of child-bearing age were still interested. It felt natural to them to reproduce and they couldn't understand why it was out of favour. Some were brave enough to actually do it and it did have that old fantastic thrill, but the birth celebrations were muted to the extent that they felt they had almost done something wrong.

It got to the point where most of those who were young and enthusiastic simply left and joined other colonies where reproduction was encouraged and celebrated, certainly not stigmatised.

Others listened to the tales of their leaders about how difficult and complicated reproduction was. They became too afraid to try lest they fail and let down the whole colony. Or they listened to the talk of their leaders and adopted the view that there were more lofty things than reproduction.

The decline accelerated. Each shift in attitude compounded the problem. The colony became elderly with much smaller numbers of younger apes. Colony meetings involved much head-shaking and hand-ringing. Older apes remembered the good old days and discussed at length how to recreate what they had once had. If only they could improve their jungle and care for each other better. Then the colony would be strong again.

The day came when the colony consisted almost exclusively of aged apes. Many simply gave up any hope of colony renewal and contented themselves with the prospect of dying amongst peers who cared for them.

It was when there were only a few old female apes left that one of them realised what the problem was!

The observation of this colony has caused a considerable rethink amongst zoologists studying species survival. It spawned huge amounts of research all adding to the scientific understanding. There is now wide-spread consensus amongst scientists. The surprising, but now universally held, conclusion is that any species that fails to reproduce itself will die out!

Christchurch Earthquake

In this issue of SPANZ, Redmer Yska and Angela Singer report on the effects of the devastating Canterbury earthquake of 22 February 2011, how churches are dealing with the ongoing problems at a local level and how the Church has responded nationally. We hear in their own words remarkable stories of faith and resilience from Church ministers, youth and community workers and parishioners.

The banner outside the severely damaged Knox Presbyterian Church in central Christchurch probably says it best: *'Broken, but still beating. The heart of Christchurch is people like us.'* Two months on from the devastating 22 February 2011 earthquake, Christchurch people are still literally picking up the pieces of their shattered homes and communities. They are dealing with a double blow: when the second quake struck, many were just getting back on their feet after the September 2010 quake.



The Rev Martin Stewart, moderator of the Christchurch Presbytery, says his team was more 'on the ball' when the second quake struck and able to respond to the relief effort almost immediately.

"In September, it took us about six weeks to figure out what our role was. This time we were able to get straight onto the vital welfare side and also deal with the urgent issue of damaged church buildings."

Martin describes Christchurch as a deeply strained community. People from the Presbytery are battling personal fatigue from working across many fronts to help the city and its people recover.

The task before them looks daunting. Entire suburbs, especially on the city's poorer eastern side, are still struggling to come to terms with two quakes in six months, the second particularly savage and harrowing. Everyone knows or knows of someone who was killed, injured or had a narrow escape on 22 February. Portalooos, boiled water and smashed roofs open to the elements remain daily realities for many thousands of people. Official estimates suggest that as many as 10,000 homes will have to be replaced. What Christchurch people call "the new normal" is daily traffic problems combined with disrupted and, in many cases, suspended services. Presbyterian youth worker Rachel Bacon says that while the families she sees show great resilience, there is mounting frustration at the continuing daily hardships.

The onset of the harsh Christchurch winter will bring a range of new challenges and no-one has any illusions that things will get easier in the short term.

One way the Church has been able to assist is through the special offering for Christchurch*. Over \$300,000 has been raised thanks to the generosity of individuals, congregations and overseas churches, says the Rev Martin Baker, Assembly Executive Secretary.

"We are grateful to PSDS for kicking-starting the fund with \$30,000 and to the Uniting Church of Australia for boosting it by \$AUD 50,000. We have had generous donations from the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK), the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK), the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar and the Christian Church in Thailand. We have received donations from churches that have no relationship with us, and individual congregations in the US and Scotland have

taken up special offerings. It's times like this we know we are part of a global community of churches."

Martin says it is outstanding to see presbyteries have taken the initiative in finding ways to help. "Many churches around the country are providing accommodation and funding holiday breaks away from Christchurch. Liz Whitehead of CWS has been kept very busy coordinating offers."

Funds are being allocated through Christchurch Presbytery to support the congregations most affected by the earthquakes, Martin says, and also to help those supporting outreach and ministry.

While many deeply appreciate the difference such generosity can make it does not stop the continuing heartbreak and grief felt across the city.

Some congregations have to cope with the loss of their familiar and beloved churches. Severely damaged St Paul's Trinity Pacific has been demolished. Due to its location inside the inner city cordon, the wrecking ball came down on the 1876 building without its parishioners getting a final glimpse. New Brighton Union Church's building was seriously damaged so parishioners initially met on the beach and have since moved to a café. The list of the Church's damaged churches across the city makes sobering reading:

St Paul's Trinity Pacific. Built 135 years ago, it was the oldest church in the city centre. Its congregation is now worshipping at St Andrew's Rangi Ruru.

St John's Lyttleton is to be demolished. It was the city's oldest church building.

St George's Linwood has been demolished. The congregation is meeting with other nearby parishes and will possibly be able to use their hall in due course.

St Alban's Berwick Street building was up for sale before September 2010. It has been demolished.

Mt Pleasant Church and manse is very badly damaged. The remaining congregation from this hard hit community is meeting with the Sumner Redcliffs parish. Their minister has relocated there.

Crossways (Presbyterian/Methodist) has had major damage to their church and hall (St Columba North Avon). They have been meeting with the North Avon Baptist congregation.

New Brighton Union. The church has suffered significant damage but the hall might soon be useable.

Knox Church, Bealey Ave. The church building has lost almost its entire fabric but is structurally sound. Its halls are okay but not able to be used until they are repaired following the lifting of the city cordon. Parishioners are meeting in a school hall.

St Giles, Papanui. Significant damage to the church from both quakes. Parishioners are able to meet in their hall.

St Stephen's, Bryndwr. The church is significantly damaged. The hall is being used for worship.

*** The special offering for the churches of Christchurch**

is not intended as a substitute for the many appeals for funds to support rescue and relief efforts. It is intended as a simple way for congregations around New Zealand to support and share ongoing and special costs our Christchurch churches may face in situations where their own offerings and other income, including income from the use of buildings, will be significantly depleted. Release of these funds is being coordinated through the Assembly Office and the Christchurch Presbytery. The Assembly Office will, if necessary, add to appeal funds to underwrite the payments of any regular costs such as stipends and wages for church employees for any Christchurch congregation that may otherwise be unable to pay these.

How can you make your offering?

Congregations and individuals can make an offering by direct bank credit to the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, account number 02 0500 0086963 00

Please include the reference: CHQUAKE

To mail your offering post to, Financial Services, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, PO Box 9049, Wellington 6141.

Please enclose a note to let us know that your offering is for the Special Offering for Christchurch. If you would like a receipt please make sure you supply us with your details. For individual donors, donations are tax deductible provided you obtain a receipt. In the case of payment made by direct bank credit please email you details to katrina@presbyterian.org.nz





When SPANZ spoke to the Rev Geoff King, minister of the severely damaged Knox Church, he was enjoying a few rejuvenating days with friends in Dunedin. But even away from his broken city, Geoff found it hard to shut out the memory of events back home. During a reflective moment in Knox Presbyterian Church, Dunedin, the church where he was ordained, he was suddenly flooded with emotion. As Geoff put it, "No-one expects to be a minister in a church that is almost completely destroyed".

"Our church, on the edge of the cordon may have become a media icon of the quake but we have not been able to use the premises since that time. The wooden pillars are intact and we are fairly certain we can rebuild but the weather is rushing into the church and the organ is likely to have been largely destroyed. The hall is also exposed where bricks fell through. We still don't know when we'll be back in there.

"We are a city church and the congregation is made up of people from all over the city. It is difficult to deal with a geographical spread like that when the power goes off and the phones are not working. It took a week to 10 days before we knew that the people on our parish roll were okay. But we are now getting people back together again with gatherings in a school auditorium. Clearly there is a need for people to gather. A little Bible study group has also been going in peoples' homes.

"On a personal level, it is very hard being in a place where it sometimes seems like everything is broken. It is a weird thing to get your head around this quake. You go out to Lincoln and you'd think nothing had happened but as you come into town, suddenly things get so much worse, and as for places like Sumner, I just haven't been brave enough to get out there yet. It is tiring to see that unceasing brokenness, and I'm aware that I could get into a depressive cycle. A bit of black humour with my colleagues goes a long way at a time like this.

"I still don't have a fully functioning toilet in my own house. When you flush it, you don't know where it goes. I'm not too worried about using a bucket: I was an army chaplain for 12 years. But it was strange to be spending my wife's birthday shopping for a chemical toilet and an industrial sized wheelbarrow. I realise that much of the city is still in survival mode and will be for some time.

"The footage of the Japanese tsunami was very hard to watch, I felt almost paralysed. As that news broke I was preparing a marriage blessing for the son of our organist and his Japanese bride. They decided to go ahead with their celebration. The service, held a week later in one of Christchurch's few remaining traditional churches, was a truly heart-warming display of the power of human love to bring people of different cultures together in the face of tragedy. It was something I will never forget.

"There are so many learnings to be gained from an event like this. You do your own small bit, keeping the focus on what you are doing, not what you're not doing; remembering where you were, and not where you weren't. For me, some of my training as a counsellor has been helpful, encouraging myself and others to take action according to our values, even if it is just showing compassion and being available to people. I'm also noticing the signs of growing fatigue in myself and others and think self-awareness and self-care are really important. As someone said, this is a marathon and not a sprint.

"In my opinion, I think a different Church will emerge from the rubble of Christchurch. A number of our buildings have been damaged and we may rebuild them if the site is okay. But some will not be rebuilt and looking ahead, it may be that we'll need to support and resource those congregations as a team ministry as we evolve to the next stage. And the rebuilt churches themselves will have to be different; the buildings that emerge will have to place human safety above everything else.

"Over recent weeks, I have been so touched by the courage, compassion and humility of those around me. These are people that deepen my faith in the unfolding mystery of love that somehow sustains us at times like these. One story stays with me. An elder of our church, stuck in the Pine Gould building, had to have his two legs amputated. He sent me a message from hospital, a message that moved all of us profoundly. He said he was sorry but he would not be available for flower roster next month. I don't know when he'll be back in Christchurch or where we'll be meeting

for worship when he does return with his family, but I do know that it's people like him, and not the bricks and mortar that injured him and killed others, that build strong church and communities."



Robyn Burnett is youth director of the Christchurch Presbytery. Since 22 February, she and her fellow youth workers across the city have been working tirelessly to support the quake recovery effort, with a special focus on the needs of young people.

"The city's young people have been badly affected by the massive disruptions following the quake, especially the closure of schools. Most of them are now glad to be back at school. Some have to attend different schools, sometimes travelling long distances through chaotic traffic and not getting home until 6.30 or 7pm - this is hard on families used to eating together. Dinner at weekends is becoming really important. The citywide cancellation of sports has also been hard on young people.

"We've been busy running events trying to keep them occupied, including local events at churches. We ran a citywide event at Middleton Park in Riccarton, where 5,000 gathered to play sport, listen to music and eat free food. We released red and black balloons in honour of those that had died.

"We're planning an Easter camp at Spencer Park, where we hope to attract 4000 people. The Christchurch City Council is keen for us to run it and so are we. So much has been cancelled and our young people need something that will not be, something to give them hope and to look forward to. The wife of one of my youth leaders has just lost her job and he wasn't able to afford to come and help run the event so we're sponsoring him. Their rental property is munted and they're thinking of moving away.

"I do see things gradually returning to normal with people getting back into routines. But life in the city is still a bit of a weird unknown. All that accumulated tension and grief is starting to show. I

predict it will increase as we get through the year. But there are some real positives. When you line up in a bank, for example, everybody talks to each other, total strangers. And in traffic, people actually let you in. This kind of behaviour gives me hope, makes me confident we are going to get through this.”

Former Moderator the Very Rev Bruce Hansen recalls a sudden ‘vertical kick’ as the quake struck the sixth floor Christchurch offices he was visiting on 22 February. After exiting down the back stairwell, he found himself in the middle of Hereford Street, in the heart of the so-called Red Zone. As debris fell and the ground continued to shake, Bruce and others attended to a 28-year-old man with a serious head injury. With no time to lose, Bruce transported the man and his mother to hospital, in the back of his station wagon. His dramatic journey took him through heaving streets strewn with rubble, in places ripped apart and flooded.

“The injured man was visiting from London and had been having lunch with his mother and aunt. He was hit on the back of the head by a piece of falling scaffolding and was lying prone in the middle of the road, where half a dozen people were attending to him.

“We decided the important thing to do was to get him into an open space where it would be safer. I went and got my car, stupidly heading down an alleyway (where debris could have fallen on me) to get it. People pulled down the back seat and we got him in. It was a very communal experience with everyone pitching in.

“With masonry still falling around us, I put on the hazard lights and headlights and set off. I sat on the horn at intersections. His mother was in the back looking after her son and helping with navigation as we made our way through the blocked streets.

“Groans were coming from the back. We realised pretty soon that hospital was the place for him. After getting some advice, we took a roundabout route via Fitzgerald Avenue and along Kilmore Street, which was being used by emergency services. Fitzgerald Avenue was grid locked, but we kept moving forward, the man’s mother encouraging him to hang in there.

“As we headed into Kilmore Street, I saw that it was flooded from liquefaction and I had no idea how deep it was or whether there might be a big sinkhole in the middle. Some helpful people waded through for me to test the depth and assured me it was safe.

“From there to the hospital, there were police on every corner and when I told

them I had an injured man in the car they told me to keep going. On Rolleston Avenue there were these great gaps in the tarseal. In the end a policeman took over the driving. By the time we got to the hospital a team with a trolley was waiting for us.

“It took me a couple of hours to get home. His mother rang later that day and said her son’s condition had stabilised. Once they sewed up the scalp the bleeding had stopped. They let him go home a few days later and he is now back in London. His sight is still a bit blurred but he has come through it. He sent me an email thanking me. Looking back, I have to say that there were moments that day when I felt really lonely, moments when the obstacles seemed so great that I didn’t think we would get through. Above all, I am just so happy that he survived. If he hadn’t I’m sure I would be experiencing very different feelings.”



The Rev Sue Fenton, Pioneer Mission Ministry coordinator of Wellington Presbytery, helped get 600 care boxes from Wellington to Christchurch. The project became known as Operation Hope. Over half of Wellington Presbytery’s 31 churches participated.

“On Thursday 24 February, two days after the earthquake, a few of us were having a conversation after an evening prayer service for Christchurch. Never underestimate God’s ability to work through something as simple as a casual conversation over coffee! Sorrow was expressed, dreams and visions were shared, questions were tossed around, common ground was found and a plan of action was hatched.

“Just four days later 600 boxes were packed and ready to be taken to Christchurch.

“What a tumultuous journey those four days were! First, we liaised with the moderator of Christchurch Presbytery and two other ministers in the area as to what the immediate needs were and to determine whether there was anything practical that we could do to show our love and concern.

“The need for care boxes was identified by a minister in Aranui. Items requested included hand sanitiser, toilet paper, canned food, rice, pasta, chocolate bars, cereal, noodles, snack food, matches, biscuits, tuna, muesli bars, crackers and tissues. Each of the churches in the Presbytery was invited to choose one item to collect on Sunday 27 February.

“The shortfall was ordered from Pak n Save Lower Hutt on Monday morning, paid for by the people of Knox Church. Handy Rentals donated two trucks and 600 boxes. Other people and businesses from the community saw and heard about what we were doing and donated money. On the Monday afternoon a van load of chocolate bars arrived from PIC Porirua, pasta from Wadestown, tea, coffee and milo from Khandallah, muesli bars from St Aidan’s, St Anselm’s and Island Bay, UHT milk from Ngaio Union, biscuits and baking from St John’s in the City, home baking from Wesley Multicultural Church in Petone (they started at 11pm Sunday night!), tins from Tawa and a variety of goods and monetary donations from other churches in the Presbytery.

“At 7pm Monday night a large team of volunteers from Presbytery churches and the Girl’s Brigade at Knox Church packed the boxes; it was all finished in two hours - over four tonnes of supplies packed..

“On Wednesday 2 March eight of us in two trucks and two cars travelled to Christchurch to deliver the boxes to the Aranui ministers who had arranged to distribute them to people in their churches and in the community.

“It has been wonderful to get a small glimpse into the incredible power and love of God’s Kingdom in a time of such need. We hope and pray that the love and care that has gone into preparing and delivering these boxes will bring some comfort to those who receive them.” (See <http://vimeo.com/20661680> for more on Operation Hope)

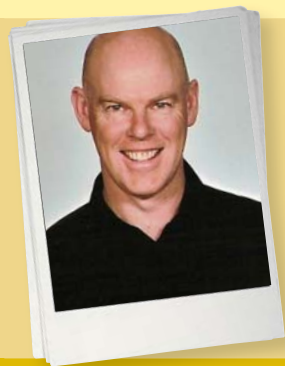
A week after the 22 February quake, **Moderator the Right Rev Peter Cheyne** flew to Christchurch. His immediate aim was to participate in a session with all ministers to discuss and begin coordination of the Church’s response to the crisis. Peter returned to the shattered city in March and was pleased with the clear progress underway. Peter says he is very conscious of the long, difficult road ahead for Christchurch, stressing that it is vital the rest of us don’t forget how tough life will continue to be for some.

“During my times in Christchurch it was very clear to me that the Church is pulling together but we have never faced anything

of this magnitude before. Our ministers, like all the people of Christchurch, are dealing with something horrendous. Some congregations don't even know if they have a suburb, let alone a church building. Nobody really knows what normal is any more.

"One of the real challenges we face are the emotional attachments to buildings that have been worshipped in for years. But among many other things, this quake is already forcing us to ask questions about the rationalisation of the Church in the city. We may need to be a bit more strategic, even hardnosed, about how things might look in the future.

"The churches are getting through this together, but a profound sense of loss remains. The more we love people, the more we grieve when we lose them. The stronger the church fellowship has been, the greater we grieve when we lose that sense of family."



When the quake hit on 22 February, Darryl Tempero had just finished ministering at Hornby, on the west side of Christchurch, and was working out his annual leave. His summer holiday ended abruptly, however, as Darryl stepped up to become a citywide welfare coordinator with a focus on supporting the devastated east side congregations, handling urgent tasks like food distribution. Six exhausting weeks on, Darryl is still at the sharp end of the Church's relief effort - an effort now entering a new phase and a new range of needs.

"Over here on the west side, some of us felt really guilty. The eastern part of our city was broken; out in Lincoln where I live, we were barely affected so we decided to volunteer to help.

"Each congregation's recovery is at different stages. Some are still in crisis. My focus is on supporting the east side ministers, meeting with them on a regular basis. The pastoral care load varies on the size of the congregation. Another focus is on

organising resilience-building activities like a family fun day in Linwood Park. The job is massive; there is not a lot any one person can do. All you can really do is talk about today; maybe talk about tomorrow a little bit.

"I still recall what it felt like when the quake first hit. Many of us felt like we needed something to do; a reason for being, if you like. Many of us got out and shoveled silt - you can't just sit there and watch TV.

"Christchurch people have many levels of grief to deal with. Many have left town, including a number of elderly taken away by their families. I know of one 80-year-old woman from the now demolished St George's in Linwood who has worshipped at that church for 50 years. I think of her personal grief at losing the only church she has ever known; I think of the grief of her fellow parishioners who miss her. And when some of these people do return to the city, the grief is prolonged as they have to clear up their broken houses.

"Every journey of recovery is different. I particularly feel for the people who worshipped at St Paul's Trinity Pacific who have not been able to see their church. Other congregations have been figuring out what they can do without a building.

"So many things have become unknowns for families in these congregations. When will our toilet be working again? When will we stop having to boil water? When will we be able to walk the dog on the beach without it getting sick from the bugs? When will we get our house back to ourselves? For those with lots of extended family staying in homes across the city - when will it stop being groundhog Christmas Day?

"Yesterday a cold front came though and it is still early April. We have harsh winters here and families continue to face many disruptions.

"The traffic is chaotic. But this is what life is like now. Things will never be the same. I do get a strong sense that God is at work here, and there are wonderful opportunities for us to serve our communities. Many of us have asked at times: 'Why has it taken a disaster like this to get people to talk to their neighbours?'"



When the 4 September quake struck, Ian and Janice Cundall, parishioners of St Stephen's in Bryndwr, had to leave their damaged house on River Road, Richmond, where they ran a flourishing bed and breakfast business. By February they were ready to move forward with their insurance company. The second quake put paid to that plan, their beloved house broke in half, every room out of kilter. From their rented home in Richmond the Cundalls have been patiently adjusting to the "new normal".

With their business gone, Janice has taken a job on the other side of the city, involving a journey by car that at times takes more than an hour. She is grateful to have full time employment. Janice is someone used to adversity: she had an arm amputated 20 years ago from a streptococcal infection. Ian has meanwhile returned to selling real estate. He admits he has never prayed as much, especially for others.

Ian: "Our house is not a pretty sight. It looks fine from the street but is a write-off. And our beautiful garden is a mess. At first, we came back to work in it because we wanted to save the plants, but when the water got cut off after the second quake, there was no longer any point. The land is badly damaged and our swimming pool, garage and sheds destroyed. We have just had a visit from the Earthquake Commission and it is now a waiting game. Our plan is to find a section to build on. Everything, however, hinges on the upcoming geotech report.

"So many people are in the same boat as us - just having to wait. Some people are not coping well; we try to be supportive of each other. I spoke to a 93-year-old from our church last Sunday. He left with his son after the second quake. They are not good at all. What has got us through is trying to keep doing the same things we used to do. So I still play golf on a Saturday and we still see our friends. I did have a bad period after the first quake; I didn't handle it well,

but I got busy. Now most people don't talk about it much; they just get on with it.

"I have challenged my faith on many occasions since 4 September. However by challenging it, I've become even more prayerful, especially for others. I strongly believe that the power of prayer gives the strength to look ahead with confidence and patience, but also it ensures that the lifelong beliefs of being a Christian override the challenging thoughts of 'why did this happen?' Nature alone created the islands of New Zealand and we just happened to be here when those forces of nature decided to rearrange themselves. Our beliefs should not be changed because of it; they should be strengthened by it."

Janice: "Life is tough, but we are very grateful to be where we are now. It was hard losing the bed and breakfast business and we were touched by the messages of support we got from people who had stayed with us. For me, the biggest thing is that I didn't expect to have to go back to fulltime work at this stage in my life, but I was very fortunate to be offered a fulltime job doing accounts. With Ian being in real estate, there has been very little happening in that area."

"I am very grateful to have a faith at a time like this. It is something to call on in a time of need. The people of St Stephen's have been wonderful. Just being together with them, feeling safe with them has been such a comfort. It makes you realise that human life, family and friendships are more important than anything else. A blessed distraction for us has been Lily, our 18-month old granddaughter. Lily took our mind off things after the September quake when we moved in with the family; she needed to be fed and bathed, the routines had to continue."

"You just have to look at the positives at a time like this. So many people are worse off than us. Ian and I believe that if we didn't stay positive, we wouldn't be able to get out of bed in the morning."



Presbyterian Church Wellington Assembly Office staff Margaret Fawcett (right), Senior Finance Administrator, and Katrina Graham, Finance Administrator, both had family in Christchurch at the time of the quake.

Margaret says she learnt of the quake and began fielding insurance calls. "Not long after I got a call from my husband - he'd read on Facebook that my mother-in-law and my sister-in-law and her family were okay."

Margaret says they are concerned for her mother-in-law "as she is in her 80s and her home in Kaiapoi was really badly damaged in the first quake with massive holes and liquefaction and the problem of a sewer on her boundary. She's elderly, and she's coping but she can't take in the detail; when inspectors and the like call round she does not know who they are, all she can tell us is that a man came to her house. She says there's only one other

time she can remember being scared like the earthquake scared her - in Newcastle during the WWII Blitz."

Katrina Graham returned from lunch to a text from her husband who was in Christchurch on a training course. "I still have it, sent 1.17pm 'Earthquake. I'm okay'."

Katrina says "the enormity of it all didn't sink in until he rang an hour later and told me it was bad and lots of people around him were hurt. The next day he was flown back home. That evening he told me he'd been on the 8th floor of an inner city building when the quake struck and everyone on his course was thrown around, ceiling tiles raining on them and their building hitting into the building next to it. He thought he was going to die".

"Helping the injured women in his course down the stairwell he could see cracks in the walls big enough to put his fist in. The power was out and it was pitch black; the noise of alarms was deafening. Coming out of the building and hearing people crying for help he felt helpless because he had to help the people he was with."

"We are truly grateful to have our family safe. We think a lot about how fortunate we are."



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Neighbours Day connects communities

Neighbours Day Aotearoa at the end of March gave New Zealanders a chance to make new friends and turn their streets into communities.

First run in Auckland in 2009, the initiative was coordinated nationally this year by Lifewise, Methodist Mission Aotearoa, and Inspiring Communities. Presbyterian Support Northern supported the day with a financial contribution towards its marketing campaign.

Presbyterian churches throughout the country were also encouraged to support the day by embracing the idea that no neighbourly act of kindness was too small or insignificant.

In Ngatea, the Hauraki Plains Cooperating Parish invited everyone to a barbecue. In spite of wet weather and other events on, about 30 people attended. Parishioners were delighted to meet several new families, especially those with children in tow. The event was a first for the church, but they are already thinking of ways to advertise and organise for next time.

“We’re an older congregation and we were so lucky to have about eight children turn up and to meet people we hadn’t met before. Everyone enjoyed it. They commented that we must do it again when the weather is fine,” the Rev Alofa Asiata says.

St David’s Church, Rotorua, used the event to reach out to their local neighbours as well as those affected by Christchurch’s earthquake. Parishioners sold red ribbons at a shopping centre and knitted and baked to raise funds.

For East Taieri Presbyterian Church in Mosgiel, Neighbours Day was an opportunity to strengthen already existing links with the community. Using grants from the Synod of Otago and Southland and The Presbyterian Foundation, the church employs a community facilitator who is building on research done in 2008 to find out the needs of the local community and how the church can help meet them.

“I am trying to discover more about our community assets and needs. How do we



On Neighbours Day local residents gathered in Awatea Street, Rotorua, to get to know each other over a shared meal.

match them up? What are the priorities? What is God already doing and where does East Taieri fit in all of that?” community facilitator Joy Davis says.

Their minister, the Rev Martin Macaulay, says collaboration with other agencies and groups is a key factor in the church’s approach to community development. National initiatives like Neighbours’ Day also highlight the opportunities for people at the grass roots to contribute in a positive way.

In Dunedin, Presbyterian Support Otago joined Lifewise, Neighbourhood Support, the Dunedin Council for Social Services and others to help promote Neighbours Day. They distributed information packs and liaised with community newspaper “The Star” on a series of features. There was a special emphasis was on welcoming “refugees” from the Christchurch earthquake.

The quake also provided a good reason for neighbours in Auckland’s suburb of Kohimarama to get together.

“We now have a neighbours’ contact list,” says Anne Overton, community mission liaison for Presbyterian Support Northern. “We talked about what we would do if there was a crisis. Who has a water tank? Who has a vegetable garden? And what skills and resources could we offer each other? There is definitely good energy in the streets.”

Also in Auckland, Nicola Brehaut, General Manager for Presbyterian Support

Northern’s Community Initiatives, hosted an informal backyard gathering at her house in Onehunga. In spite of threatening skies, about 40 people showed up, including a new family who had recently moved into the street.

“We discovered that their eldest is the same age as my daughter, so we’ve arranged a play date. We’ve had street barbecues before, and it was good to get to know the newcomers. There was a wide range from grandparents to single people living on their own plus a few families with littlies. Everyone was very appreciative and keen to mix and mingle with others.”

In Rotorua, Family Works staff were involved in a number of successful events, including fundraising activities for the volunteer fire station at Lake Okareka, a cleanup of the Manuka Cres reserve and a networking meal in Awatea Street.

Children and Young People’s advocate Annette Jenkins says the day was a great way to connect small pockets of community on the city’s east side, where she works.

“Not everyone is aware of what’s going on with all the different agencies and services and things happening in the area. The recession has hit people hard too, so we needed something to reinvigorate the community and put some hope back into people’s lives. People are looking for ways to get together, have fun and get to know each other. Neighbours Day is good for that.”

By Andrea Candy [Spanz](#)

Making good sports into good leaders

In January 2011 around 100 people turned out every evening for the popular Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church (PIPC) Newtown Summer Slam sporting tournament.

Started in 2007 as an eight week sporting competition for the parish and community, the tournament now runs biennially over three weeks "due to the amount of time it takes for our volunteer committee to organise," says Alisa Belford, convenor of the PIPC Newtown social, sports and recreation sub-committee.

Alisa explains that the idea for the sporting competition came from the church "wanting a recreational programme for families and friends to participate in over the Christmas and New Year holidays. The sports were chosen to cater for different age groups and physical abilities, and to utilise our church hall."

A huge number of people take part in the competitions as both players and spectators explains Alisa: "We have approximately 100 people through the hall each evening, including eight teams each in the volleyball and the netball, four soccer teams, 22 teams in the indoor bowls and 12 card teams."

The success of this year's tournament is partly due to the commitment of the organising sub-committee, the volunteers and the parish says Alisa. "Organising and running the games takes many hours but God gives us the strength and the belief that this is another form of outreach and ministry."

With games beginning around 5.45pm and ending around 9.45pm each evening the committee often does not get to their homes until late. "As soon as the games end the committee starts setting up for the next evening's games. We work well together and respect each other because have grown up together so we are aware of each other's strengths and skills. We are willing to help out where needed; this is the strength of our committee."

Tauiliili Nari Auelua, a member of the organising sub-committee, says that by example, they are helping to train young leaders. "The committee is role modelling and teaching good sportsmanship and team work, time management and organisational



skills. We encourage the youngsters in the teams to help manage their teams."

Another member of the social, sports and recreation sub-committee, who also took part in the competitions, is Tuanu'u Pisa (Joe) Alaifea. "My father Alaifea Alaifea, who is 87 years old, and I were competitors and finalists in the indoor bowls and Pele Suipi, a Samoan card game. The card game keeps the mind sharp and many of the elderly play it well because they have good memories."

Tuanu'u Pisa says his father took part in the full three weeks of competitions: "It gave him the opportunity to get out of the house and share the fellowship of his generation. As one of the older members he helped the younger ones learn the sports they weren't used to such as bowls. He tried to show them how one side of the bowl is heavier and when to release the bowl."

Brothers Jaziah Sila and Junior Sila formed one of the youngest teams in the competition. They teamed up with their grandfather for the bowls and came second. They named their team Lou Loto, which in Samoan means "my heart" because, Jaziah says, "we had to follow our heart in the way we played".

When their grandfather asked them to take part in the indoor bowls with him Jaziah says, "we were quite nervous because we

hadn't played before and our team took it really serious and we got told off if we did it wrong. But bowls is good and it was good coming second. Our grandfather was really happy."

Junior describes the games as really competitive and says he was "really nervous in the finals being watched by everyone. I learnt not to be shy of old people and to speak to them. It was much better than regular church."

Tuanu'u Pisa says the Summer Slam has proved to be a great way to bring more young people into the church. "We are filling a gap in the community. We have young kids coming along who are not part of our church. We have kids from other churches and visitors from Samoa and Auckland here for the holidays. But it's not just sports; we begin and end the games with devotions led by our minister the Rev Tauinaola Tofilau."

The finals night awards presentation on 28 January was also very popular with the younger people, Tuanu'u Pisa says. "About 9pm, after the devotion, prize giving and the buffet meal, the older people all left so the younger ones could dance to the DJ. They were happy about that!"

By Angela Singer [Spanz](#)

New moderator focused on the history and future of his people

A passion for ministry among his people motivates the new moderator of Te Aka Puaho, the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa.

His installation as head of the Presbyterian Maori Synod took place on 26 February at the Ohope Marae when he replaced the retiring moderator, his mother, Mrs Millie Amiria Te Kaawa.

Wayne has been involved in training, mentoring and nurturing Maori in the Presbyterian Church for a long time. He has been Te Ahorangi (director) of Te Wananga a Rangi (Maori Theological College) since 2005 and will continue in that role while overseeing the 13 parishes throughout the North Island that make up Te Aka Puaho.

“My hopes are that the Church will grow and we will become more unified and focused on our mission, which is to give hope to the hopeless and protect the needy. I take my lead from the Beatitudes in that regard,” he says.

Describing himself as “a proud descendent of the Tuhoe people”, Wayne has a special interest in ministry within Ruatahuna and Maungapohatu where the religious leader Rua Kenana established a religious settlement and fostered links with Presbyterian missions early in the 20th century.

Wayne continues in that tradition both through his ministry and his research into Maori church history. Born and raised in Onepu (between Rotorua and Whakatane), he pursued a career in nursing before following his call to train for the ministry. Once qualified, he returned to pastor the small communities of the eastern Bay of Plenty. Currently he is minister in charge of St Columba Church in Rotorua, and one of only two fulltime Maori ministers within the Presbyterian Church.

In 2007 Wayne completed negotiations for the return of Church-owned mission land in Maungapohatu back to the Tamakaimoana hapu. While researching the land’s history at the Whakatane Museum, Wayne came across stored taonga that had been gifted by



New moderator of the Presbyterian Maori Synod Te Aka Puaho, the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa.

Tuhoe to pioneer Presbyterian missionaries the Very Rev John Laughton and Sister Annie Henry. These were put on display as part of a major exhibition at the museum.

Two months later, when armed police invoked the Terrorism Suppression Act (2002) to raid Ruatoki, Wayne wrote an open letter to Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand appealing for support to protest against the raid. The Ruatoki raids evoked Tuhoe memories of the 1916 invasion of the Urewera, he said, when armed police arrested Rua Kenana and shot and killed two others. Wayne Te Kaawa’s own grandmother was married to Rua’s son and witnessed his killing.

“The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has maintained good relationships with the Tuhoe people primarily through the good relations between John Laughton, Rua Kenana, Sister Annie Henry [and others]. These relationships have, for us, become a covenant relationship serving as a model of biculturalism within the Presbyterian Church and a model of partnership for the entire country. The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand has a covenanted relationship with the Tuhoe people that is both historical and in good faith.”

In 2008, Wayne put together a booklet, “Hihita and Hoani: Missionaries in Tuhoeland” for the Whakatane District Museum and Gallery’s exhibition about Sister Annie and John Laughton. The exhibition coincided with the premiere of

Vincent Ward’s film “Rain of the Children” which Wayne also helped research.

More recently, he assisted the late Dame Professor Judith Binney with research for her book “Encircled Lands”, which won the New Zealand Post Book of the Year award last year. Further writing on the history of Presbyterian Maori mission work in the Manawatu is in the pipeline.

Wayne is often called upon to give advice internationally about relationships with indigenous people. He continues to assist the Uniting Church of Australia and the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America in re-negotiating their partnerships with the Aboriginal Congress and the Native American National Congress respectively.

In 2011 the Ohope marae will host the first indigenous moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. And, as moderator of Te Aka Puaho, Wayne will convene the Komiti Moananui, part of the Pacific Conference of Churches, and represent Maori at Church leaders’ conferences throughout the Pacific over the next three years.

His heart may be in the Urewera, but Wayne’s vision stretches far beyond that misty hinterland. He believes Te Aka Puaho could eventually extend to the South Island, or even to Australia.

“More Maori live there than in the whole of Aotearoa. They’re asking ‘Where’s our church?’ So perhaps we need to work with the whole Church to extend our pastoral care to include them in future too.”

By Andrea Candy Spanz

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New Northern Presbytery brings unity to diversity

Those who attended the final worship service to mark the closure of the Presbytery of Auckland found it to be an inspiring occasion.

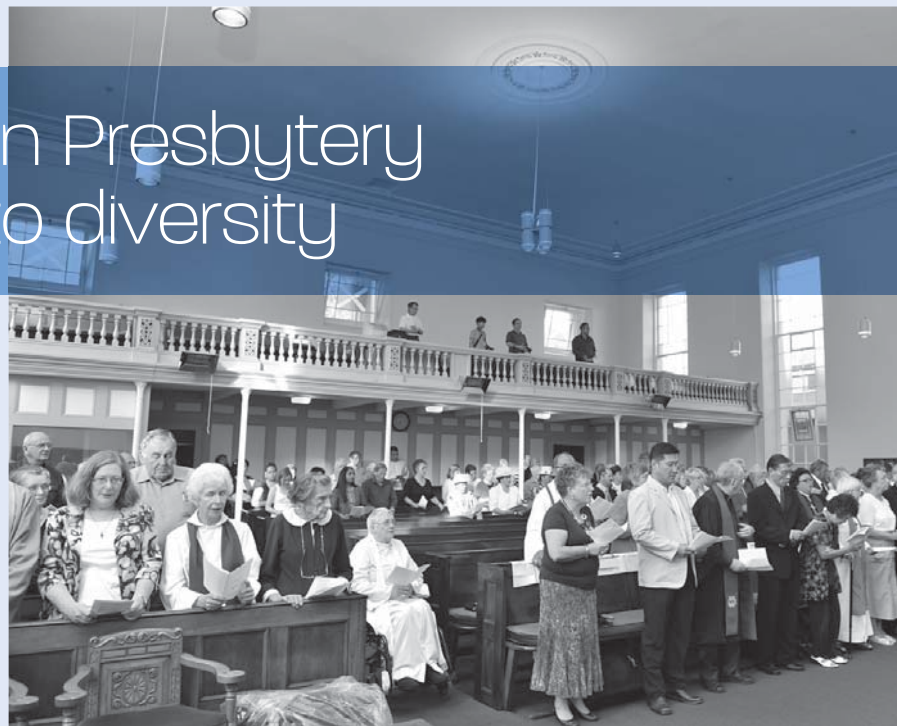
Auckland Presbytery merged with Northland Uniting Church Council territory and South Auckland, North Shore and Auckland Presbyteries to form the new Northern Presbytery.

St Andrew's First Presbyterian Church hosted the 20 February closing service, which included some historically significant elements. Presbyters met for the final time before proceeding into the church behind a piper and a copy of the Bible. The congregation sang traditional Presbyterian hymns, accompanied by the organ, and the Rev Margaret Reid-Martin, one of the first women to be ordained into fulltime ministry, administered communion using a liturgy from Iona of St Columba.

Speaking on the theme of unity, the Rev Dr Allan Davidson, one of New Zealand's foremost church historians, spoke about the challenges faced by the Presbytery of Auckland when it was first formed in 1856. Schism in the Church of Scotland was a fairly recent memory, but it was another 45 years before the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand embraced all Presbyterians throughout the country – Free Church, Reformed and Irish.

Unity was not an end in itself, however. At their very first meeting, the Auckland presbyters declared that they "regarded the work of missions as the chief design of the Church of Christ". They committed themselves to sharing the love of God in Jesus Christ by supporting foreign mission, church extension through home missions, and Christian education. Later, in 1884, Auckland Presbytery responded to the social deprivations of the time by appointing Duncan Macpherson as Auckland's first city missionary. His vision for transforming society through practical service led to what is now Presbyterian Support Northern, one of New Zealand's largest social service providers.

Allan challenged his audience to consider the Auckland Presbytery's achievements of the last 155 years alongside the



St Andrew's First Presbyterian Church hosted the 20 February closing service of the Presbytery of Auckland.

Church's current effectiveness in ministry and mission.

"As a Church we have been most effective in undertaking the pastoral and teaching roles and equipping people to undertake ministry in these areas. We have been less effective in cultivating the prophetic gifts and offering the word in season to address some of the pressing social, economic, racial and environmental issues which confront our society.

"In our own day how does the new Northern Presbytery respond to the huge social and pastoral challenges facing our region, where poverty still haunts many families and individuals, where even buying two litres of milk challenges some family budgets?

"Our evangelistic success has also been somewhat limited. In 2011 we face indifference and hostility towards institutional Christianity. A second generation of Presbyterian descendants is growing up with little or no knowledge of what their parents and grandparents have rejected."

Allan says that the Presbytery has been much more successful in bringing first generation migrant and ethnic groups into the Church, although the new Northern Presbytery would include an even greater, more diverse population.

"The ethnic and religious diversity is far greater today than could have been envisaged in 1856. What will be the Presbyterian legacy in Auckland in 100

or 150 years time? How far will these buildings continue to be centres for lively communities of faith – living out their witness in the world?"

Outgoing moderator, the Rev Andrew Norton, says Allan's historical insights were "timely and challenging".

The new Northern Presbytery covers a huge area, including Auckland's super-city of 1.4 million people alongside small towns and tiny rural communities.

Andrew believes presbytery reform was needed, and that wrestling with the changes took time and a lot of hard work by many people. The challenges will continue for some time, he says.

The new moderator of the Northern Presbytery, the Rev Taimoanaifakaifo Kaio, is from Onehunga's Cooperating Parish. He agreed that thinking about the task of merging four units into one was daunting, but it was an honour to be involved with other leaders in the transition process.

"Most people are positive and for it. It's exciting to be actually doing it. Our work is about building trust and confidence in something new for the benefit of local churches and freeing resources so parishes can focus on mission and a shared vision. It is a very diverse and large place, but as moderator I see and experience the richness of the whole church working together as a body. It's quite a privilege."

By Andrea Candy [Spanz](#)



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PSDS funds Big Day In to draw community out

Not even threatening rain could put a dampener on the festival atmosphere at Otangarei's "Big Day In" community event.

Held on Saturday 16 April at Te Kotahitanga, the local marae, an estimated 400 people turned up to the community festival organised by Gini Shephard from St Andrew's Uniting Church as well as others from the Whangarei community. The main funding for the day was provided by the Presbyterian Savings and Development Society.

"It was just amazing to see people come together and work together in unity," says Gini, a community worker for St Andrew's. "We wanted whanau/families to be united and enjoy a day of interaction. We also wanted local agencies to be united and for the churches to be united for the sake of the gospel, to bless the community so that the Lord would be acknowledged and glorified. Our ultimate aim is for people to come to know Jesus Christ and be transformed."

Church congregations across many denominations were invited to participate, pray for the event or join in regular prayer walks around the Otangarei suburb. Other churches contributed food for the hangi and helpers on the day.

Besides the massive hangi, there were family games on the sports field, competitions, lots of music and a free sausage sizzle. Members of The Redeemed, a Christian motorcycle club, gave rides for children and their parents. Forty families registered for the day which included seminars with couples Ngahau and Debbie Davis, and Hayward and Jane Norman, who talked about the issues families face.

Gini knows first hand how tough it is for the families of Otangarei. Her own background featured gangs, alcohol, drugs and living on the streets before she met some Christians and decided to "give this God thing a go". Now a qualified social worker, she is employed by St Andrew's to look after the spiritual well being of families in the area and help build the kind of relationships that meet deep needs among

Otangarei's young people. A good number of families responded positively to a survey she conducted in the area last year, and the Big Day In was the result.

"I took Isaiah 61, verses 1 to 3 as our theme and had it on posters around the town in both Maori and English – 'The spirit of the sovereign Lord is upon meto bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of a spirit of despair'."

"I felt the day was a success because it strengthened the connection between the church and the Otangarei community so much. There's more acceptance now and the community was blessed," Gini says.

Funding and donations of food meant the organisers could reduce the cost of the hangi. Leftover food was given away to the community and any extra proceeds will go to Christchurch to help struggling families there.

Major funding for the event was provided by a \$3,200 award from the Presbyterian Savings and Development Society. To celebrate its 40th birthday, PSDS is offering four annual awards of up to \$10,000 each for innovative ministry and mission projects.

Manager Paul Walker said the Big Day In was the best of 10 applications this year, which ranged from music events to tree-planting restoration projects. St Andrew's application met the criteria for the award by being a new project idea that demonstrated leadership, involved others and expressed well the mission of the Church to reach out to those not normally involved in church activities.

"The idea of the awards is to encourage churches to be adventurous and innovative and find new ways of reaching out to the community," he said.

It was also an exercise in faith for Gini and the church, who were "absolutely thrilled" with the award. News of their success came late in their preparations for the Big Day In, when Gini was busy canvassing local churches, agencies and businesses for sponsorship and support.

"There was an awesome response at the time. Churches supported us with money and food, and other local agencies provided material resources, but the award meant we didn't have to go begging any more but could actually go and buy what we needed. I knew God would come through somehow!"

By Andrea Candy [Spanz](#)



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THEOLOGYMATTERS

You can tell a lot about a church by its worship

You can tell a lot about a church by its worship. The physical setting and layout, what is included in the service, how the various components of worship are arranged, the way in which the service is conducted (and by whom), what precedes and follows the service – all these things tell you a lot about what a congregation believes is important not only about the act of worship, but also (more importantly) about God, about themselves, and about the world in which they live.

How would you describe your experience of worship in a Presbyterian church?

Here's how one person described his: "It's like a dreary variety concert that just drifts along from one thing to another. All bits and pieces that have got put in to try to make it a good show, or to keep it going long enough for people to feel that they've had their money's worth. But there's no particular point about it. It has no 'grip', as we say."

Thus wrote the late Harold Turner back in 1950. Harold's name will be known to many readers. He was a Presbyterian minister, a colleague of world-renowned missiologist Lesslie Newbigin and a leading religious studies scholar in his own right. He was one of the most able theologians and academics our Church has produced. In his retirement, Harold and his wife Maude were members of the church in Auckland where I began my parish ministry. Around that time he founded the Gospel and Culture movement, paralleling what Newbigin was doing in the United Kingdom.

Sixty-one years on from the publication of Harold's critique of Presbyterian worship in the *Outlook*, I wonder what has changed. Musical styles, certainly. But, anything else?

From the many personal conversations I enjoyed with Harold about the nature of Christian worship, I came to understand the importance of three things: balance, integration and flow.

Balance refers to the weighting given to each component of worship in relation to the others. Someone recently used the image of an ocean liner surrounded by a handful of liturgical tug boats to describe the relationship of the sermon to other elements of worship in the Presbyterian tradition. There is a lack, he suggested, of proportionality and balance. Too often music, prayers, the reading of scripture and the celebration of the sacraments are treated

as mere adornments to the "main event", which is the sermon. This is evident in the casual manner in which music is often led, prayers are prayed and Scripture is read in many of our churches, as compared with the careful preparation and delivery of sermons.

Integration refers to the relationship between the various components. Do they serve a common theme? Do the scripture readings inform the wording of the prayers and the selection of music as well as the sermon? Is there a sense of cohesion about the service?

Flow refers to the overarching movement in worship, often described in terms of gathering, attending to God's word, responding to God's word, and being sent. The various elements of worship, including the selection of music, typically fall under each of those headings; they are not just randomly thrown together and shuffled around or omitted from week to week for no apparent reason. Observing biblically and theological informed types of worship does not negate the value given to freedom in worship. As we see from the Apostle Paul's instructions on worship, form and freedom belong together.

You can tell a lot about a church by its worship. What does your experience of worship tell you about your church and what it believes is important?

By Graham Redding, Principal of the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership



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Support and Church share common past and goal for children

The manager of PresCare, Thomas Mitchell, is convinced that children, young people and their families will benefit from PresCare, a five-year partnership between the Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Support begun earlier this year and aimed at caring for communities by focusing on the wellbeing of children and families.

Thomas says it makes sense for two organisations that share a common past and significant resources to work together from their shared values and goals. He has spent the first two months in his newly created role following through on PresCare's first project - Lent resources for parishes - and seeking ideas about how to link Kids Friendly, Presbyterian Youth Ministry and Presbyterian Support services, especially Family Works.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing new community initiatives between Presbyterian parishes and Family Works benefit children and young people in need. Hopefully we can also get the Presbyterian schools involved."

PresCare's Lent project involved developing resources for parishes to use during the 40 days of Lent, these included a collection of meditations and worship aids focused on those whose lives are affected by violence and poverty.

Jean Wong of the Chinese Presbyterian Church in Auckland said the Lent resources fitted in well with their Children's Day service.

"The Lenten booklets were ideal because of their theme around children who are less fortunate. We stood together as one big group within the service to pray for our children, we gave everyone an envelope with the name of a church child to pray for during the week and handed out booklets to the adults. It all came together really well."



Thomas Mitchell

Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser says many churches had taken up the opportunity to help children observe Lent.

"Giving up something reminds children what Jesus gave up for them, and giving out something can benefit others. This year we invited children to reflect on those who don't have as much as them and find ways to bless others during the season of Lent."

The Lenten materials were designed to link with Presbyterian Support Family Works Guardian Angel campaign, however this campaign was delayed for two months due to the Christchurch earthquake. It has now begun with television commercials and other publicity aimed at raising awareness and funds for Family Works services.

Guardian Angel invites people to become guardian angels by giving regularly, preferably \$30 a month, to help children and their families flourish. The donated gifts are directed to the donor's Presbyterian Support region.

The Guardian Angel campaign aims to attract individual donors to help fund the increasing needs of distressed families, and expand Family Works' services further. Current services include counselling, social work, parenting programmes and acting as community advocates.

Parishes also have a key role to play in caring for their communities, particularly their local schools, Jill Kayser says.

"When a church approaches its local school with a genuine offer to help, it is mostly met with warmth and enthusiasm and a mutually beneficial relationship can develop. St Aidan's in Northcote found

its local school very eager to get to know its community, including a rest home and the church.

"A principal from Paeroa Primary School told me that her decile one school couldn't survive without the town's churches. She told me that the Anglicans read with our children, the Catholics teach them to knit, the Baptists do our gardens and the Uniting Church runs wonderful after school and holiday programmes."

Jill is exploring ways to link specific parishes with Family Works' social workers in schools (SWiS). Ideas include praying for the social workers, treating them to a special morning tea, or offering to help where needed. Church young people could help lead community holiday programmes run by social workers.

"The seed has been planted and I'm confident it will germinate and blossom in mutually beneficial ways as Christ's love is demonstrated and trust is built between local families and the church. After all, Presbyterian Support's Family Works mission to nurture the wellbeing of children and families in Aotearoa should be our mission too as people of faith."

The Church's Presbyterian Youth Ministry are also partners in PresCare, and it is hoped that the 15 Presbyterian schools in New Zealand will also become involved. PresCare will continue to provide annual Lenten resources and establish other projects over the coming five years.

By Andrea Candy 

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Letters to the editor

It was great to read about opportunity shops in the March issue of SPANZ. The article raised a number of issues which have been hotly debated within this organisation. Presbyterian Support Otago opened its first Op Shop in St Andrew Street, Dunedin in the 1970s and still operates on the same site today. It provides clothing and household items at family-friendly prices.

Where people are genuinely in need we are able to supply clothing and household goods gratis through our welfare department. In addition to this we have two other Op Shops. Having three stores enables us to customise the goods sold to the needs/wants of our clientele.

If we had not been able to develop the other two stores to create niche markets we would have found it increasingly difficult to run the original Op Shop at a profit. As our volunteer base has aged and the work has become more technically and physically difficult, we have had to recruit paid staff for roles formerly fulfilled by volunteers. And increases in rent, power, rates etc have meant that our overheads have grown. Couple this with the price-resistance of customers, the fact that there are more competitors than in the past (we not only compete with other Op Shops, but discount chains, commission sales outlets and Trade Me) and it is easy to understand why we can not sell items for more than we did in past years.

The only strategy left to increase revenue to support our work is to increase customer numbers, which further stresses the remaining volunteers because the store becomes even busier. So the future is not bright for traditional Op Shops.

Shop on Carroll has been our real success story. Donors tend to drop off their items at the store and often comment how pleased they are we can sell their treasures for a good price and thus provide substantial revenue to our welfare services. This is a different motivation from many of our Op Shop donors or those who put items in collection bins. For them the primary motivation is to dispose of unwanted goods, the secondary motivation is to contribute to recycling and the philanthropic motivation comes last.

Presbyterian Support Otago is very aware that we are part of the circle of generosity in our community. Donors give, customers buy, so that we can support those in need.

Thank you for opening up such an interesting topic to your readers, I would love to read more about this in future editions because Op Shops are so intrinsically linked with charity and it seems that the nature of charity is changing in New Zealand today.

Lisa Wells

Director of Communication
and Fundraising

Presbyterian Support Otago

Your article in the December SPANZ, titled “Church Heads Refute CV Rumours” does the letters to the editor a disservice by dismissing the views expressed.

All that the writers are suggesting is that there is a need for a reform of cooperating ventures.

CVs may have been set up forty years ago, but does that mean that we have to continue with the same model? It is time that CVs had more say in our future, and more control of our destiny.

It is a bit rich for the writer of the article to criticise the CVs desire for change. The Presbyterian Church is going through a number of changes at the present: presbyteries are being reformed; the new focal identity statement has been adopted, and Press Go is up and running.

The latest newsletter from Council of Assembly talks of “developing a longer term strategic view of the church’s future directions and priorities”. The strategic planning task group’s report to the GA10 Assembly talks about “mission in a time of organisational transition”, “reforming our structures”, and “structures that have served us previously may very well be the ones which are barriers to us in the future”.

If change and reform are okay for the Presbyterian Church, why not for CVs? All the letter writers have expressed is a desire for reform of CVs; something that will take us into the twenty first century. Areas that need reforming are: property, church oversight, membership of UCANZ’s standing committee, and how the CV joint mission fund is administered.

It is time for us to walk in the sunshine with the partnership churches, not in their shadow.

Dennis Mundt, Newlands

I consider myself an ecumenical Christian and worship where I feel led to do so. I have also been a member of both a cooperative venture (CV) and a single-denomination parish and have naturally followed with interest current discussions over CVs. I believe both one denomination and CV congregations are genuine expressions of Christian faith, neither needing to be seen as excluding the other in terms of valid outreach or ecumenism.

Frustrations within CVs, I believe, are partly symptomatic of disappointment in the inability of several national churches to unite in previous decades. This is pragmatically accepted as a reality, but the dream has not been forgotten. Of course, church membership trends may possibly bring about a union at some point.

In the meantime, at least some CV members feel that they have developed a distinctive identity apart from the national churches, which needs fuller recognition. The question is how this can be achieved

if the denominations do not wish to unite at a national level?

There seems to be different schools of thought emerging at present. One is that an oversight structure centred around UCANZ will provide the united focus that CVs desire. Another is that ecumenism is an evolving process and rather than create new structures which may undermine the ecumenical ethos, “fine-tuning” of current procedures will be sufficient to meet CV needs.

Both perspectives appear to have merit, particularly given that neither congregations, national churches nor UCANZ seem to want to create another denomination. The key issue would seem to be how to provide satisfactory autonomy for CVs while retaining ties to the denominations.

Throughout the current discussions, CV parishes will need to keep in mind that the interest of the national churches in their congregations is a legitimate mixture

of spiritual, historical as well as material investment. The denominations for their part will need to remember that the sense of identity forged during decades of union in CVs is often genuinely distinct from their own traditions.

Healthy Christian communities are open to constructive feedback about themselves and should not need to feel their reputations, status, interests or assets are threatened by other viewpoints. I hope this will be the approach from all participants during the current consultation process on CVs and trust they “seek, serve and follow Christ” over coming months.

Jed Baker, Wellington

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

Pike River: ministry during trauma

On 19 November 2010 a radio report alerted Lyn Heine, lay minister at Greymouth District Uniting Church, to the news that there had been an explosion at the Pike River mine.

"I work for Workplace Support, an employee assistance programme that Pike River had a contract with, so I was asked by them to go to the mine. Initially, I found things there to be quite confused. There was much uncertainty around who was underground at the time of the explosion. Families were contacting each other to find out where family members were and if after much trying they couldn't find someone, they were contacting the Red Cross centre to register the person as missing."

As the seriousness of the situation at the mine located north-east of Greymouth became clearer, Lyn describes her role as being present at the Red Cross centre where the families were gathered and supporting the Pike River staff as part of her Workplace Support role.

Many staff felt bereft explains Lyn - they went regularly to the Pike River families and spoke of their missing 'mine brothers'. But after a time, Lyn says, they started to feel pushed out to the edges. "There were regular staff meetings at which they questioned the Pike River company; they asked some very hard questions because they had a working knowledge of the mine and because they knew the people underground."

As part of the Greymouth Ministers Association, Lyn and her fellow Greymouth District Uniting Church lay minister Thelma Efford, organised prayer vigils and email information updates "for those who were praying for the miners and those who needed to know what was going on."

Fortunately the Greymouth churches are ecumenically minded, Lyn says.

"With Greymouth being a small area we have smaller congregations, and this allows us to embrace a wider range of peoples and theological perspectives.

"We have an ecumenical youth group and the Greymouth churches had previously worked together during the Cave Creek



New Zealand Herald

Churchgoers light candles at the Holy Trinity Church in Greymouth during a special service in the wake of the second explosion at the Pike River coal mine.

tragedy. We have had people from many different nations and faiths move to Greymouth to work at the mine. The Afrikaans Church has really become established in the community; they lost four of their members in the tragedy. Within our church one of our older members lost her miner son. Thelma remains in regular contact with her."

Lyn and Thelma were present at the vigil Memorial Services held at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Greymouth from 22 to 26 November.

"Thelma and I ran the Wednesday vigil service; this was held after the second explosion destroyed hope of survivors. The symbols we used, alongside candles, were a piece of gifted Tangiwai stone - the stone of weeping, a bowl of salty seawater from the Tasman Sea to represent our tears, and an empty waka that had contained the yellow ribbons of hope worn by the local community."

Over the weeks there were many different kinds of memorial services. At Greymouth Uniting, Lyn says 29 children each wrote the name of a lost miner on a stone "and then we placed them in piles around our church. Many churches used stone piles to represent the lost miners".

In April 2011 Lyn and Thelma attended a training course for ministry to traumatised communities led by the Revs Ian and Margaret Stehbens.

"The focus was on self-care in caring for others and looking at new opportunities

arising out of traumatic situations. A lot of the conversations were around how the Christchurch earthquake had affected people, but a lot of it was also relevant to Pike River."

Lyn says that the course was a welcome reminder that "most of the New Testament scriptures were written in times of traumatised communities, and for traumatised communities. They were written to help us make sense of it all."

Another reminder Lyn received during the course was how much those affected by the Pike River tragedy do not want to be forgotten. "The affects of this trauma are widespread. Contractors and workers have lost their jobs and our whole community has been affected because we are so small. You cannot live here and not be aware of how much suffering there is, that it's ongoing, and that the people here want to be remembered."

One way parishes can assist Greymouth, Lyn says is by donating to the Focus Trust. "Focus is assisting the people who have been laid off and the families that are struggling to cope financially and emotionally. Anyone affected by the Pike River Mine tragedy can access their services."

To contact the Focus Trust see <http://focustrust.org.nz/pike-river-coalmine> or phone (03) 768 9835.

By Angela Singer Spanz

St Luke's youth leader recognised in national award

Early this year Geoff Cooper, a member of the St Luke's Remuera parish council was named as one of three finalists for Young New Zealander of the Year.

Geoff was nominated for his volunteer work with charitable organisations and for co-founding (with Andrew Colgan, also a member of St Luke's) the not-for-profit development organisation Aotearoa Development Cooperative working with disadvantaged communities in Myanmar.

Aotearoa Development Cooperative (ADC) provides funding to a bank owned and operated by local Myanmar people. Loans of up to US\$150 each are made available to people for business purposes like buying a rickshaw or loom. The microfinance bank has been a great success and has a 96 percent repayment rate.

The drive to help others has always been in him Geoff says. "I enjoy finding ways I can assist. I was really interested in reading about Gandhi when I was young."

Geoff became involved in charity work with the church he attended at age 18. He has always looked to the Bible in a social justice way.

"It's all well and good to read the Bible but I feel you need to have good works come out of that. It has benefited me greatly to have a closer connection with people who are not well off. The drive to have more gadgets diminishes."

Geoff started attending The Community of Saint Luke in 2005 where he has assisted church youth workers and youth groups. The Rev David Clarke has been a huge influence on him. "David is the reason I began attending St Luke's."

In 2006 Geoff travelled with Andrew Johnson and Global Mission to Myanmar. It was an eye opening experience. "We saw the need for Aotearoa Development Cooperative during the trip."

"If the Myanmar coffee growers lived next door to us and earned next to nothing, we would all be concerned, but because they are far away and out of sight the concern isn't there."

In June 2010, Geoff's microfinance work with ADC led to him being awarded a much sought after 10 week United Nations internship. His time in New York provided



Young New Zealander of the Year finalist Geoff Cooper at the United Nations in New York with former Prime Minister of New Zealand and current UNDP administrator Helen Clark.

him with an experience of international institutions including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and a selection of member state permanent missions.

Geoff also experienced Catherine Zeta Jones shooting a movie near Times Square! However that was not the biggest highlight of his internship. It was spending over an hour one-on-one with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) administrator Helen Clark "talking about development issues including microfinance, the political will of countries to eradicate poverty, her disagreement with renowned Columbia University professor Jeffrey Sachs on the role of aid in development, and the difficulty in convincing Hillary Clinton of the need for social safety nets."

"I was able to discuss the work of Aotearoa Development Co-operative with Ms Clark at length – which proved to be an ongoing Facebook discussion right up until her talk at Christchurch Cathedral on the 13 August 2010 where she spoke of Aotearoa Development Co-operative."

During his UN internship, Geoff's idea for insuring farmers in poor, post-conflict

nations against natural disaster was selected for the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' 8th Tranche Development Fund and received a \$550,000 investment. He says that as amazing as the United Nations experience was "it isn't comparable to what we are doing in Myanmar as that has tangible outcomes alleviating poverty. I'm keen for parishes to become involved as sponsors. I know there are many other development projects parishes can give money to and then walk away from but with microfinance you can give and then watch it work."

Because he is busy with his work as the Auckland Council's interim chief economist and studying part-time for a Masters of Economics, Geoff says he is unable to give as much of his time as he would like to charity volunteer work.

"Last year I was involved with the City Mission and I will be again later this year. One thing I do try to do consistently is be intentional in making time to stop and talk with homeless people. If I didn't stop and chat or have a game of chess how would I ever get to meet the people on the streets in my city? I'm not necessarily making a connection to try to change the person; I'm standing in the mud with them."

By Angela Singer Spanz

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GLOBAL MISSION

Kiwi farmers lend their expertise

In July 2003, the Rev Dr Robyn McPhail journeyed to Tana Toraja, a mountainous region in the island of Sulawesi in eastern Indonesia, home to a largely Christian population of around 500,000.

Her visit followed an invitation to speak to a synod in her capacity as chair of the International Rural Church Association.

During her visit Robyn learned that much of the Torajan economy was based on tiny farms with low levels of family income. The most important cash crop is coffee. Everywhere she visited, Robyn faced the same request from local farmers when they learned she was a Kiwi: “Can you be our partners?”

From the smallest congregations to the Bupati (elected head of regional government) in Tana Toraja, Robyn says the question was the same.

The Toraja farmers wanted New Zealand farmers to look at their situation, teach them better methods, and help obtain technology that would match local needs and resources. She says they wanted to build on traditional ways, and use modern farming skills to improve their situation.

Eight years on, that challenge has been met. A farmer to farmer, grass roots project aimed at lifting the cash income of Torajan coffee growers is now bearing fruit. Self-funded visits by former Federated Farmers national president Graham Robertson, and farmer Dick Davison, led to the establishment of the Toraja Rural Development Charitable Trust (www.toraja.co.nz), with Robyn as one of the patrons.

The Trust has funded local agronomists to upskill farmers’ groups in agronomy, harvesting and post-harvest management. It brought in a consultant to help them produce coffee in greater quantities and to a higher quality. Graham, Dick and other New Zealand farmers continue to provide active and practical assistance.



Graham Robertson and Dick Davison take part in a village meeting with Toraja coffee growers

Most of the Trust’s \$46,000 annual budget comes from NZ Aid, with the balance being met by local farmers and donations from New Zealand.

The Trust has funded 12 coffee peeling machines to Toraja farmers’ groups. According to Graham, these are hand operated and cost around \$150 each.

“By having enough machines the farmers are able to get their coffee peeled and dried promptly, which assures higher quality levels.”

Rather than donating the machines outright, farmers were asked to contribute 50 percent of the cost, with those funds returned to the overall project. Graham says this ensured those who had been hiring their own machines to others were not undercut unfairly.

Graham and Torajan William Sabander jointly helped activate the Kiwi coffee connection, Robyn explains: William completed a PhD at Canterbury University and during his time in New Zealand, he envisioned Kiwi farmers linking with farmers in Toraja to provide practical assistance. Robyn then raised the idea with Graham, an elder in the Methven Presbyterian Parish.

“Graham’s initial response was to ask how can we teach these people anything. There

are so many differences in climate, soil type and in the kinds of crops they grow,” explains Robyn. “But as we talked, we realised that it was more about the know-how and can-do attitude that we bring as New Zealanders. Another vital thing is knowing the right questions to ask.

“Whether they live in Southland or Sulawesi, farmers all over the world face so many of the same challenges. Most have to deal with a lack of market security as well as uncertainty in areas such as climate and changing levels of government intervention. That makes farmers everywhere highly resilient people.

“I keep hearing good reports about what is happening in Tana Toraja, and I remain excited about the progress being made there. I love continuing to offer support in the background and sincerely hope we can continue with the work underway. One thing that really struck me about the Torajan people was how spiritually rich they were despite their obvious material poverty. They have such faith in community life, and have a lot to teach us Kiwis.”

If you would like to contribute to the Toraja project, email clarefreeth@xtra.co.nz.

By Redmer Yska **Spanz**

GLOBAL MISSION

MISSION TO Empower Women

Wearing two of her "Church hats" the Very Rev Pamela Tankersley represented Presbyterian Women as their United National convenor in New York in February, and attended the Presbyterian Women of Myanmar's 50th anniversary as Global Mission coordinator in April.

You might not think the two events would be connected, however they were. At the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Pamela says she was involved in advocating for women's right to education. "Then I went to Tahan in Myanmar to take part in the women's conference and that was walking the talk of the work we did in New York."

The difficult political situation in Myanmar combined with lack of transportation are two contributing factors to why there had never before been a women's conference in Myanmar explains Pamela.

"This was the first...in 50 years! Many of the 300 women at the conference had to walk for days to attend. Even we who could afford to travel had to allow extra time, as you have to wait days for a flight. It was wonderful to see how the effort of getting to the conference did not faze the wonderful, resilient and resourceful Myanmar women; that they could gather with so many other women was empowering."

The conference was funded by the Church's Global Mission through the Myanmar oversight group. Attending with Pamela was Angela Norton from St Columba Presbyterian Church in Manukau, the oversight group's Myanmar partnership coordinator. Angela's air fares were paid for by Presbyterian Women New Zealand, because, Pamela explains, "the conference was all about sisterhood and finding ways we can support each other. This was one way Presbyterian Women could help".

As key note speaker Pamela spoke on "the women in the Bible who were around Jesus and the ways Jesus empowered women. Although some at the conference were illiterate they knew the Bible stories I spoke of and they were very receptive

to hearing stories instead of listening to a lecture. I had an interpreter and it was wonderful to hear the translation and then see the women really respond to stories they knew. Telling our stories is how women communicate best. For the women to see other women standing before them and showing leadership was novel and empowering because there are no ordained women in the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar. It was also very humbling for me because I'm a white woman, and I can come and go".

Listening to the women share something of their lives during the question and answer session was very insightful, Pamela says.

"Their lives are very different to ours. Maternal mortality is far higher than it should be. There is violence against women and armed conflict.

"We heard how there is an amazing group of young theologically trained women teaching at Tahan Theological College, many who feel called to ordination but find the barriers too great, even though we were assured there is no constitutional reason within their church why women can't be ordained."

The Myanmar conference brought home to Pamela just how important the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women's work is in promoting the rights of women.

"In New York we recognised, again, that working for women's rights is not only for the sake of women, but for all of society. We all benefit when women participate fully in education, politics, science, in economics and business as well in their traditional roles. Women do hold up half the sky! But for many or even most states, especially developing ones, the paradigm shift that allows men to share power is too big a threat."

Pamela says it is rare for a national, rather than international, non-governmental organisation to have UN consultative status, something Presbyterian Women has had for 15 years. The New Zealand delegation was led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. "Only the government delegations could speak at the main sessions but they did seek our views and



Mary McIntyre, left, and the Very Rev Pamela Tankersley.

the views of the other NGO representatives each evening."

Accompanying Pamela to New York was former Presbyterian Women UN convenor Mary McIntyre. "I was very glad to have Mary there to show me the ropes and to introduce me to those she had formed connections with. There were 2,500 women at the Commission so it was helpful to have assistance navigating to the many different sessions. It wouldn't have done to get lost!"

By Angela Singer Spanz

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GLOBAL MISSION

Life-changing mission experience

Discovering what mission means in practice was the goal for Kirstin Harray when she flew to Johannesburg in February 2010 to meet up with ten strangers from ten countries as part of the Training in Mission (TIM) youth leadership development programme run by the Council for World Mission (CWM).

For the next ten months, in urban South Africa and rural Southern India, Kirstin and her new “family” shared their lives in daily pursuit of learning to understand what mission means in practice.

The TIM programme brings together young Christians from 39 partner churches around the world who come together to discover their own role in the mission of Christ’s church through practical work and study.

For the 2010 intake, the participating 11 people (aged between 20 and 30, six men and five women) hailed from such diverse nations as the Netherlands, South Korea, Taiwan, North and South India, Zambia, Guyana, Samoa, Kiribas and New Zealand. Kirstin, 23, recalled that she was one of just three people on the programme who spoke English as a first language.

“Even though the programme was run in English, communicating was not that easy. In fact I was one of the hardest to understand! We all had to find new ways to communicate, and that helped us get to know a whole lot about each other.”

Now in its 29th year, TIM utilises a tried and true blend of the practical and theoretical in an international and multicultural context. In South Africa, for example, Kirstin undertook a fortnight of theological study, and then had a five-week placement with an HIV/AIDS hospice and a refuge for abused and destitute women.

Kirstin says she gained much from mission work in Johannesburg, serving in an urban setting with some similarities to New Zealand cities. She also found her



Kirstin Harray, left, with the TIM team and coordinator, felt like her “heart had been ripped out and scattered all over the world” when she had to say goodbye to her TIM family.

faith sorely tested when she and two fellow female participants were robbed in their rooms. Though no harm came to the women and security has since been overhauled, Kirstin describes it as an experience “that changed me forever”.

“My new family was totally there for me and we got through it together with the help of counselling and a lot of support. It both tested and confirmed my faith in God and I can now look back on the experience in a positive way. I know I can do anything, anywhere, and be assured of God’s protection.”

From Johannesburg, Kirstin and her group travelled to Madurai in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. There they were accommodated at the local theological seminary. The colour, vibrancy and squalor of India were not entirely new to her; she had traveled to the sub-continent in 2007 as part of a Tear Fund Insight Tour.

As in South Africa, Kirstin combined theological study with longer placements within a chaplaincy at a local hospital and work at a home for young girls who were at risk of becoming prostitutes. She still feels overwhelmed by what she saw there during her five month stay.

“India is such a challenging place. It leaves me with so many questions: How do we as Christians calling for justice and peace manifest the love of God? What is an act of love? And how do express our solidarity with the poor and destitute?”

At the end of November 2010, it was time for the TIM participants to return to their homes. Having spent 10 continuous months with her new family, cooking together, doing laundry together, Kirstin found it devastating to say goodbye.

“It truly felt like my heart had been ripped out and scattered all over the world. Over 10 months we had come to share our sorrows and our joys. We are all doing our best to stay in touch, but differing time zones and different access to the internet and so forth makes it really hard at times.

“But, I would recommend it to anyone. The chance to join a family like ours for a continuous time, sharing ideas, insights and experiences from different cultures, countries and churches was a life-changing experience. I am committed to finding ways to make a difference in the lives of the poor and marginalised, whether in New Zealand or somewhere else in the world.”

By Redmer Yska [Spanz](#)

GLOBALMISSION

Korean congregations welcomed into Church

Eleven Korean congregations from across New Zealand were welcomed into the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand in a special service during April.

The occasion, held at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church in Auckland on Saturday 2 April, marked the welcome of more than 1000 men, women and children from congregations in Christchurch, Wellington, Palmerston North, Hamilton and greater Auckland.

More than 250 people attended the service including the Moderator, the Right Rev Peter Cheyne and the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK), the Rev Dr Seong Gi Cho, who travelled to New Zealand for the event.

Dr Cho describes the PCK as a large church with strong a commitment to education and ecumenical relationships. "We have a long history of helping the Korean people in times of difficulty. We are there for those living on the margins and we are also seeking peace and reunification for the Korean peninsula."

Dr Cho is in his seventh year as General Secretary and is based at the Assembly Office in Seoul where he works with a large staff of 70. Before taking up his role Dr Cho was a church minister for 33 years.

"A focus of my ministry at the local level was social responsibility, the role of the church in its community. My church 12 years back built a welfare centre to offer services to children, the disabled and older people. It was a very active ministry.

"We have seen the Korean churches in the United States and Australia grow strong and have the ability to offer support to their local communities. While the Korean churches in the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand are growing their focus will be on supporting the people who come to live in New Zealand, but as time goes on they too will be able to offer support to the wider community."

The decision to join the Church has been a considered process, explains the Rev Stuart Vogel, who together with the Rev YH Kim (a retired Korean minister based in Auckland), led discussions with the congregations about joining.



From left, the Rev Martin Baker, the Very Rev Pamela Tankersley, the Rev Hyeun Kim, Mrs Ahn Sang Lan wife of Dr Cho, Dr Cho's interpreter, Dr Cho.

"These congregations have had little or no formal involvement with the New Zealand Presbyterian Church, and we've spent some time discussing with them what it means to be part of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand."

Stuart explains that this involved him and the Rev Kim visiting each of the congregations at worship. Then there were discussions with church leaders about the essential elements of congregations as described in the Book of Order. The congregations have all made a formal request to join the Church, he says.

"These congregations are saying they want to belong to something greater than themselves. They want to become part of New Zealand society, and become part of the wider church family."

During the April service Stuart says two Korean ministers were also welcomed, having provided all the necessary documentation to be received. Another nine ministers who are part way through the reception process were also acknowledged.

A series of workshops is planned later in the year to support ministers, elders and treasurers to build their understanding

of New Zealand employment law, book-keeping regulations and other legal and compliance issues that are relevant to church administration.

Stuart describes the congregations as having added to the diversity of the Church, and having brought with them a vibrant and vital approach to mission.

"They expect to grow. They expect to succeed," he says. Stuart uses a church planting example to illustrate his point.

The Grace and Truth Presbyterian Church in Auckland, started in 2006, and was one of those received into the Church in April. It now has around 350 people associated with the church and 150 baptised members. The congregation increasingly recognised a need to minister to people in the North Shore, so an assistant pastor was sent to establish a church in the Forrest Hill area. That congregation now has several families who regularly attend and a good number of students. The congregation's emphasis is on "worship, preaching and discipleship" and it has set itself a "prayer 7,000" target - that is, in God's time, to build a church of 7,000 people.

By Jose Reader Spanz

GLOBAL MISSION

QSM for elder's dedicated service to Tokelauan community

When Foai Suka Foai's name appeared on the 2011 New Year Honours list, the citation for his Queen's Service Medal referred to his three decades of service to Auckland's Tokelauan community.

At 69, Foai isn't slowing down; he is continuing to contribute to his community across a formidable number of fronts. Not only is he vice-president of the Auckland Tokelau Society, he is the Tokelauan kaumatua for the Pasifika Festival, and an official Tokelauan interpreter.

He is also an elder and treasurer of the Grey Lynn Presbyterian Church, on the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs reference group, sits on the board of the society translating the Bible into Tokelauan, and serves as the Tokelauan coordinator for the ASB Community Trust. By day he manages and acts as treasurer of the Mataliki Tokelau early childhood centre in Mangere, the only one of its kind in south Auckland.

Foai recently spent four days at a Tokelauan/Tuvaluan synod at Porirua near Wellington, attended by Moderator the Right Rev Peter Cheyne. He says a highlight was a rally on the Saturday night, attended by more than 200 young people from the Tokelauan/Tuvaluan community.

Foai has long been interested in supporting Tokelauan youth. He recalls how he and wife Feagai founded the Mataliki Tokelau preschool in their Mangere garage, working day jobs to pay the sole childcare worker. The centre has moved several times, having expanded from five children to a current roll of 50, and has 15 staff.

"We've got a big waiting list and are looking for a second centre to cater for the kids turned away."

"These days my daughter does a lot of the administration work at the preschool. I'm passing it on to her and she is good on the new technology, something I'm not so good at myself."

All children attending the preschool learn and are taught in Tokelauan, a language

Foai is determined to revive within the New Zealand-born generations. And last year the Education Ministry funded the centre's first Tokelauan language programme.

Another sign of Foai's commitment to keeping his native language alive is his active involvement in the work of translating the Bible into Tokelauan. In 2009, 13 laborious years of work bore fruit when a Tokelauan version of the New Testament was published. It is one of the very few written documents in that language.

"We are now working on the Old Testament and are currently doing the Book of Samuel. It is a big job and is proving to be harder than the New Testament. When we started out we had funding to pay translators but that has run out. Now we are doing this further translation on a voluntary basis and whoever wants to help is welcome," he explains.

"It is a very thorough and time-consuming process. We send out copies for review, and some of these reviewers are back in the islands. We hope to get the whole thing done within five years."

When Foai received his QSM in April, 17 supporters including family members and ministers representing Tokelauan churches, attended the ceremony at Auckland's Government House. Foai asked for the investiture to take place in Auckland so his guests would not have to pay airfares to Wellington.

"I specifically wanted some of our ministers to be at the ceremony. They are at the heart of our community and are important vessels to pass on the message to our parents and our young people about what can be achieved in life, how we can make progress."

Foai admits that he was very surprised at the announcement that he would receive the Queen's Service Medal.

"I felt privileged to receive such an honour. I really don't feel I have done anything special – just the normal chores."



Manukau Courier

Foai Suka Foai, QSM, outside the Mataliki Tokelauan early childhood centre he founded.

He credits much of his achievement to the love, support and teamwork of wife Feagai.

"I still need to continue to serve our people in whatever way I can. After you do something for the people, it's a good feeling."

By Redmer Yska **Spanz**

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GLOBALMISSION

Haiti: many small steps to progress

For Anouk Noel life is starting to look brighter. Haiti's earthquake was especially tough on the thirty-year-old, an achondroplastic dwarf confined to a wheelchair. But she was one of 600 people living with disabilities in Port-au-Prince who were given special grants from ACT (Action by Churches Together) Alliance after the quake. She used it to purchase cosmetics that family members re-sell. Now with an independent income and after months of living in a tent, her family home has been repaired by ACT. "I didn't think we'd be able to come back," Anouk says.

Enormous challenges still face Anouk and her country, but these small stories of hope are growing. "In the communities where we work, we see people trying to move on with their lives," explains Burton Joseph, a project manager for one of ACT's programmes in Haiti. This is despite the piles of rubble that remain in the streets 15 months on from the January 2010 quake. There are few new houses to replace the 315,000 destroyed and 1.3 million people still live under canvas or in temporary shelters. Cholera and a hurricane have further hampered recovery. Yet the people are determined to get on.

"I hope people will have faith in the country," says Prosperity Raymond, a Haitian managing another of the ACT programmes. "I hope professional people in Haiti will stay and others will return to continue to rebuild. There are still nice people, honest people, people living with dignity. I still love them and I want to be there for them."

ACT Alliance, CWS's global network for humanitarian assistance, is making that commitment to stay and help Haiti recover – not only from the earthquake disaster but from the underlying crisis of poverty. The goal is not simply to rebuild, but to address people's vulnerability to disasters, such as their lack of money, jobs and connections.



ACT's work in Haiti, which CWS is supporting, is one of the largest, funding a US \$100 million programme of humanitarian assistance. A total of 600,000 survivors have received support as wide-ranging as food, water, medicines, cash grants, home-building, shelter, schooling and counselling. The response has been as inclusive as possible: from providing tent classrooms and school kits that enable children to return to their education to supplying medicines, medical equipment, wheelchairs and crutches to the elderly, wounded and disabled; from distributing thousands of seeds and seedlings to rural dwellers to providing water supplies for people in 22 urban camps.

Haiti has had to deal with new challenges since the 7.0 earthquake. When cholera spread at the end of October, ACT was quick to act. Although 3,650 people were killed, ACT's community approach is credited with saving more lives and preventing the epidemic's spread. Volunteer health workers hit the streets with loudspeakers, explaining methods for stopping cholera. Eight million water purification tablets, 15,000 jerry cans, and a quarter of a million oral rehydration salts were distributed and hygiene kits were given to 35,000 families.

In November, Hurricane Tomas brought widespread flooding, forcing ACT to evacuate many camps. They then repaired

damaged latrines and showers, pumped flooded areas, and provided counselling.

Now the focus is on housing. ACT is building permanent homes that can withstand earthquakes and hurricanes. Home-building, though, depends on sorting out land tenure and that is the stumbling block. If a family owns land (about 5%), rebuilding is straightforward. If a family used to rent (about 95%), then land has to be found. Land ownership is increasingly contested. Where the landlords did have clear title there are now problems finding the records with so many government buildings still in ruins. The homes built so far have been on land donated by the state or individual families. ACT is working on strategies for securing more land.

The situation in Haiti is in stark contrast to broken but supported Christchurch where CWS is based. More than ever, we in New Zealand understand the time it will take to recover and rebuild. Extreme poverty, lack of infrastructure, and few social services meant the country was already ruined. Haiti relies on our financial support and the spirit and resilience of its people.

The CWS Haiti Appeal remains open and is being supported by the APW/MWF special project. See www.cws.org.nz or phone 0800 74 73 72 for further resources.

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