

Spanz

The New Zealand flag is flying on a tall pole in front of a building. The flag is blue with a white Union Jack in the canton and four red stars on a white field.

Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

WINTER 2014, ISSUE 58

Election 2014: Presbyterians name key issues

A large bronze statue of a man in a suit, pointing his right hand towards the left. He is standing on a pedestal in front of a large, curved building with many windows. The building has a distinctive architectural style with vertical slats.

www.presbyterian.org.nz

Indian mission

Can you recall the last time senior officials from the Church were arrested and incarcerated for protesting about the institutional injustice being meted out to members of their community? Such an event would be extremely rare in New Zealand's history, but this was the reality for officials of the Church of North India (CNI), and other major denominations, in New Delhi in December last year.

The General Secretary of CNI, Alwan Masih, other members of the CNI Executive, and National Council of Churches in India representatives, were protesting about the poor treatment given to the class of people known as Dalits – those who, in the former Indian caste system, were officially outside the caste system – “outcastes” – and were known as untouchables.

Although the caste system is officially no longer recognised, and constitutionally abolished, it remains deeply ingrained in the Indian mindset and impacts on daily life for most Indian citizens. A book on Dalit theology begins by saying: “Despite its proud entry into the post-colonial, politically democratic twenty-first century, India continues to straddle structural inequalities and functional hierarchies based on its age-old caste system... Dalit movements struggle against insidious forms of caste-based violence and violation.” The protest Alwan Masih and his colleagues participated in was violently broken up by police who sprayed the protesters with water cannons, charged them with canes, and locked church leaders up for several hours.

In October last year I attended a meeting of the CNI's overseas church partners. There I heard the constant refrain, “The CNI is a Dalit church. Most of our members come from poor, rural, Dalit communities.” We heard many stories of violence and persecution against the church as well as incidents of state harassment of church officials. While the leaders of the CNI recognise that these are their problems and

that they must be fully independent and fight their battles themselves, there was a clear desire for support and encouragement from their global church partners. India's rising economic star can mask many of the social inequalities that still exist there. It can be a lonely and difficult place for minorities, including the Christian community.

Last year our Church hosted a Council for World Mission Training in Mission programme, which included three young Indian men. Through no fault of their own their passports went missing while they were in New Zealand. I accompanied them to the Indian High Commission in Wellington to help complete the paperwork for emergency passports. They were interviewed by an official who, noting the surname of one of these young men, asked “Are you Hindu or Christian?”

I was surprised at this question. Despite the young man's reply that he was definitely Christian he was asked again, “Are you sure you are Christian? I know people by that surname and they are Hindu. How is it that you say you are Christian?” Later the young man was asked to accompany the official into his office. I asked him what had happened there. “He asked me again if I was Christian or Hindu.” I couldn't understand why the official didn't believe him, But for some reason the question mattered, and provided a small insight into the challenges Christians face dealing with Indian bureaucracy.

Our Church has a long and deep partnership with the church in India extending back well over a hundred years. Some people have questioned our ongoing commitment to CNI in light of India's economic development. But an understanding of the complex nature of Indian society and of CNI as a Dalit church should inform our mission partnership with them going forward. There remain huge areas of need in India which the church, despite suffering persecution and harassment, addresses on a daily basis. They take courage from our ongoing support for them.

Indian mission need not be confined to India itself any more. Tens of thousands of



Rev Phil King

It can be a lonely and difficult place for minorities, including the Christian community.

Indians now live here in New Zealand. The latest Census shows that Hindi is now New Zealand's fourth most common language after English, Maori and Samoan. This surprising statistic highlights the extent of Indian immigration in recent years.

There are missional opportunities for our congregations to befriend Indian migrants who live and work in our neighbourhoods and to explore and understand Indian life, culture and religion. Perhaps if we respond to this opportunity it will further develop and extend the long and proud history the Presbyterian Church has in mission with India.

- The Rev Phil King is the Presbyterian Church's Global Mission Coordinator. In October 2013 he travelled to India where he represented the Presbyterian Church at a meeting of the Church of North India's overseas church partners.

Spanz

Presbyterian Church of
Aotearoa New Zealand

WINTER 2014, Issue 58

Who we are

Spanz is published quarterly by the
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa
New Zealand,
PO Box 9049, Wellington, New Zealand

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

ISSN 1175 5202 (print)

ISSN 1179 3473 (online)

Next issue

Spring 2014
Advertising deadline
24 July 2014

Design

Tangerine

Printing

Lithoprint

Copyright

The contents of *Spanz* may not be
reproduced without permission of the
publisher. Opinions expressed in *Spanz*
are not necessarily those
of the Presbyterian Church of
Aotearoa New Zealand.

Cover Photograph

istock

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

The Right Rev Ray Coster contributes a regular column to *Spanz*



At the beginning of April, New Zealand was privileged to host the 7th Congress of Bridgebuilders International. Bridgebuilders was founded in 1996 when women representing 16 Presbyterian and associated church women's groups came together from around the Asian-Pacific Region, together with South Africa.

One of the workshops at the 7th Congress was on human trafficking. This is one of the worst institutional sins or crimes in the world today and I can only honour the Presbyterian women at the congress for working on strategies to help bring about its demise. As I write this article the *New Zealand Herald* reports of another 100 girls kidnapped from a school in north-eastern Nigeria.

In 2013 the U.S. government estimated that at any given time, approximately 27 million men, women, and children may be victims of human trafficking. I understand that in 2014 it is estimated to be 29 million people. In 2010 it was reckoned that human trafficking represents US\$32 billion of international trade each year. Globally this is a greater income earner than drugs. Drugs can be used once – not so with people!

Human trafficking is the trade in people, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labour or commercial sexual exploitation, or for the extraction of organs or tissues, including surrogacy and ova removal. There are more slaves today than at any other time in human history. The average victim is a 12 year-old girl.

In 2000 the United Nations adopted a Trafficking Protocol to help all nations stand against this gross injustice. As of February 2014 it has been ratified by 159 states.

Can I encourage our whole Church – not just the women of Bridgebuilders – to take a holistic approach to fighting this great evil? Look for ways to educate people in your community. Work with the many groups world-wide and the NGOs like Nvader, Share and Care, International Justice Mission (IJM) who are seeking to rescue and rehabilitate innocent women and children held in bondage. For more details on groups like these search the web.

Give money to these agencies to help empower vulnerable young women to become self-sufficient. Globally we have to find ways to stop human trafficking happening in the first place and we need to prosecute the traffickers responsible. Implementing real change requires real action.

Always remember right around the world wherever there is a brothel there is also a Christian church. The heart cry of God today is just as loud as in ancient Egypt, "Let my people go so that they may worship me!" Let us as a Church raise our prayers for the freedom of the growing millions of women and girls – and men – who are being held in slavery and suffering through human trafficking.

Having recently celebrated Easter we are reminded that Jesus came to set people free from sin and everything that holds them back from the full life of God. As his followers we are driven by the conviction that all of humanity has the right to live a life free from slavery – a life of freedom and opportunity.

Election 2014 –

Presbyterians name key issues

On 20 September New Zealand goes to the polls for the country's 51st general election.

Voters will consider many issues important to them before casting their ballot. Joan Begg asked some of the Presbyterian Church's leaders to expand on one issue they particularly want to see addressed this election. Three issues were repeatedly named – poverty/income inequality, housing, and climate change.

Poverty – income inequality

"Poverty" is the key issue for Rev Wayne Te Kaawa, the Moderator of Te Aka Puaho.

"I see more and more people living below the poverty line," Wayne says. "It's incredible the number of people who go without the basic necessities of life. The worst part is seeing the elderly going without, or seeing children going to school hungry."

Rev Hone Te Rire, Māori Advisor for Presbyterian Support Northern, shares his concern. "Child poverty should be an election focus or at least a key area that should touch the hearts of all political parties," he says. "It's a topic that in some way affects all walks of life in New Zealand."

"New Zealand fulfills the Biblical description of 'a land flowing with milk and honey'," says the Rev Andrew Norton, Moderator-designate. "Yet while our resources are plentiful there is a huge gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'."

"Our high rates of child abuse, kids going to school hungry and poor housing leading to health problems, are preventing many of our citizens from having their chance at a fair go."

"Who is the milk and honey for, a select few or for all?"

The Rev Wayne Matheson, Convenor of the Council of Assembly, is also concerned about the income gap, about those on benefits and seemingly stuck or trapped in the system, the unemployed and under-employed struggling to meet basic living costs and turning to food banks and school breakfast clubs.

"Just communities are likely to result in better communities for all," Wayne says.

He pinpoints education, employment, and better housing options, and government working in close partnership with social agencies, individuals and communities as a means to change.

Affordable quality housing

The poor state of rental properties and lack of affordable housing for first-home buyers are highlighted by the Rev Perema Leasi, Wellington Presbytery moderator, and Anne Overton, Community Mission Advisor for Presbyterian Support Northern.

Perema, minister of Pacific Islanders Church of Christ the King in Porirua, sees families at risk of contracting serious respiratory illnesses such as rheumatic fever and asthma because they live in overcrowded, cold and damp properties.

Anne, who is based in Auckland, sees the same. "Single-parent families and low-income earners are being charged high rents for houses where mould on the walls is prevalent and leaky bathrooms the norm. "Many landlords do not want to spend money so avoid doing even the minimum of repairs. Tenants are often reluctant to let their landlords know of the maintenance issues they face so their rents will not be increased to cover the cost of repairs."

She would like the warrant of fitness currently being trialed by Housing NZ extended across the private sector with standards and maintenance plans set for all rental properties.

Perema is keen to see the Church get involved. He's part of a small group (including former church ministers) that has developed a proposal for the church to help families in Porirua make the shift from renting to owning a home. Rotorua's Presbyterian churches are already involved in accommodation, Anne says, providing support for people like newly released prisoners to find accommodation.

"Emergency housing is limited and for people wanting to move into a more stable supported environment there are very few options," she adds.

Climate change – caring for the environment

The need for immediate action on climate change is an overarching concern for Rev John Howell and Jonathan Boston, Professor of Public Policy at Victoria University's School of Government.

"The issue of climate change will come to haunt us and our grandchildren," says John. "It is the defining issue of our century."

Jonathan is just as vehement. "Human-induced climate change is one of the greatest challenges currently facing New Zealand and the global community. "If we fail to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions significantly over the coming decades we will cause severe, widespread and in some cases irreversible damage to critical biophysical systems and make this planet much less hospitable for human life. "As Christians we have a clear mandate to be good stewards of God's amazing creation. We also have a responsibility to protect the interests of those who are yet to be born."

New Zealand should be at the forefront of international efforts to mitigate climate change and engaged in the quest for a post-carbon economy, he says.

"Instead, current policies are, at least in part, designed to expand the old economy based on fossil fuels, via an accelerated programme of oil and gas exploration. This approach is incredibly short sighted and ill advised."

The Rev John Howell will lead a workshop on the issue at GA Assembly Week in October, says, "At the moment the only party with any realistic or prophetic vision on this is the Green Party."

"The Presbyterian Church, compared with the Anglicans, has myopia," he adds. "There is much that can be done in divesting from fossil fuels, positive screening to invest in a green economy and advocacy to challenge business-as-usual complacency. We all need to examine our consciences."





PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES' POLICIES ON POVERTY, HOUSING, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

This is a brief summary of the main political parties policies supplied to *Spanz*. For more details check their websites. Parties are expected to release more policies in the lead-up to the election.

ACT NEW ZEALAND

www.act.org.nz

Poverty – income gap

Education is the only lasting, effective solution to the relative poverty in New Zealand. Educational choice and enrichment is a cure. Everything else is a placebo.

Act's partnership school policy is providing choice for those parents who don't normally get any opportunity.

Affordable quality housing

The best way to achieve affordable housing is to clear the log-jam of regulations and controls, restrictions and costs that are making homes unaffordable now.

Climate change

Agrees with those scientists who say we should not regard climate change as a sudden unexpected novelty. There have been thousands of ice ages and warm periods in our planet's history. What's happening now is not the most severe change Earth has experienced. We can adapt. We should adapt. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report advocates that. So do we.

GREEN PARTY

www.greens.org.nz

Poverty – income gap

Raise minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Encourage employers to adopt a living wage.

Extend "Working for Families", invest in schools, set up standards for housing.

Implement "Schools at the Heart" – cluster health, welfare, other support services in decile 1-4 primary and intermediate schools.

Affordable quality housing

Implement 'Home for Life' package – progressive home ownership, warrant of fitness for all rentals, more secure tenancy.

Build more state and community houses.

Expand home insulation scheme for rentals.

Implement capital gains tax to curtail property speculation.

Climate change

Support New Zealand taking a constructive role to achieve a fair, effective, binding and ambitious global agreement on reducing greenhouse gas pollution. Do fair share at home – reduce emissions.

Invest in public transport such as CBD rail link in Auckland (and reduce need for more motorways).

Solar homes policy.

NZ Power policy – strengthen energy efficiency and green energy within electricity system.

Plan for the impact of climate changes that are already happening.

Help vulnerable communities in the Pacific already affected by rising sea levels and increasingly severe storms.

LABOUR PARTY

www.labour.org.nz

Poverty – income gap

Extend paid parental leave (PPL) to 26 weeks (then eligible for Best Start).

Introduce Best Start payment for those not eligible for PPL (up to three years for low-income families).

Child Poverty Reduction and Eradication Bill.

Boost free early childhood education to 25 hours a week (3 -5 year olds).

Establish single state-owned electricity purchaser = lower power prices.

Raise minimum wage. Living Wage for core public service workers.

Affordable quality housing.

Healthy homes guarantee for all rental homes.

Build 100,000 affordable homes, and restrict foreign buyers.

Implement capital gains tax (family home exempt).

Exempt first-home buyers from loan-to-value ratio controls by the Reserve Bank.

Climate change

Economic development and environmental protection go hand-in-hand.

Future-proof New Zealand economy by transitioning away from heavy reliance on greenhouse-gas-polluting fossil fuels to a high-tech low carbon economy that takes full advantage of technologies and solutions (now available) and renewable resources.

Fix Emissions Trading Scheme and restrict cheap international units which have collapsed our carbon price. Support the position of "Wise Response" and other groups calling for the development of a cross-party risk-assessment framework to dispassionately ascertain New Zealand's exposure to key global threats such as climate change.

Will release full climate change policy closer to the election.

MANA PARTY

<http://mana.net.nz>

Poverty – income gap

Abolish GST, tax financial speculation, investigate and eliminate corporate tax loopholes. Make \$27,000 earned tax-free then implement progressive tax.

Raise minimum wage and benefits to liveable levels.

With higher tax take provide free public health and education services, meals and health services in low-decile schools, job-creation and whānau wellbeing schemes.

Reduce cost of living – abandon market-based provision of key services such as electricity and water.

Affordable quality housing.

Stop sale of and build 10,000 new state houses a year till needs met. Keep rents at 25% or less of income.

Warrant of fitness for all rental housing.

Help first-home buyers through Kiwibank Home Ownership Scheme.

Help Māori first-home buyers through no-deposit Māori Home Ownership Scheme.

Require all new housing developments of 10 or more homes to include at least 50% affordable homes.

Impose tough capital gains tax on property investors.

Increase government support for third-sector quality social housing providers.

Climate change

Develop plan to regulate farming practices to reduce environmental damage and greenhouse gas emissions, improve quality of waterways and increase localised food self-sufficiency.

Work towards a coal-free Aotearoa within 20 years – invest in alternative sustainable power sources.

Replace Emissions Trading Scheme with regulations that will reduce carbon emissions in a just way.

Keep power companies in public domain – help with roll out of renewable energy technology.

Invest in development of small-scale sustainable energy generation such as solar, wind and micro-hydro by households and communities.

Public affordable transport system – include rural areas.

MAORI PARTY

<http://maoriparty.org>

Poverty – income inequality

Under Relationship Accord, established Ministerial Committee on Poverty to improve Government co-ordination in response to poverty. Supports these ministerial priorities.

Encourage employers to pay at least a living wage of \$18.40.

Part-time and flexible healthy-working arrangements, training and upskilling, subsidised childcare.

Similar benefits to the Family Tax Credit by some other form of IRD contribution.

A public service that respects clients' needs and provides information on full entitlements.

Recognises need to help whānau manage debt repayment to ensure that debt owed, especially to Government, does not lead to financial crises through:

- » Micro-financing with Credit Unions and community groups
- » Whole-of-government approach to help families owing more than one government agency
- » Investment in financial literacy and budgeting capability programmes for families.

Affordable quality housing

Ensure rental housing meets minimum health and safety standards under an agreed warrant of fitness.

Progress options for iwi housing providers/ Māori social housing providers through capability and capacity building.

Support the repair and rebuild of rural housing.

Help families respond to their own housing needs consistent with Whānau Ora.

Climate change

Balance the needs of people with the needs of the environment through:

- » Continued investment in sustainable solutions to power and petrol reliance
- » Government leadership to dis-incentivise fuel consumption
- » Continued funding for Enviro schools
- » Support for communities and local kaitiaki to restore the quality of their waterways.

NATIONAL PARTY

www.national.org.nz

Poverty – income gap

Economy growing around 3 per cent, average wages growing faster than inflation, 66,000 more New Zealanders employed in past year.

High level of income redistribution through tax system and cash payments to lower-income families and individuals.

Extra \$900 million in the 2013 Budget targeted to vulnerable children and families for rheumatic fever prevention; early childhood education; support for grandparents raising grandchildren; welfare reforms.

See work as pathway out of poverty – focus on supporting more people into work and lifting incomes.

Affordable quality housing

Focus on freeing up land supply, reducing compliance costs, containing building material charges and improving productivity in the building industry to get more homes built.

280,000 houses insulated through government programmes (another \$100 million over three years for low-income households).

Accords with local governments to free up land supply and fast-track new housing developments.

Investing \$2.9 billion through Housing New Zealand (HNZ) for appropriate state homes for those in need – 500 new homes to be built and 3000 bedrooms to be added to existing properties.

Trialling “Warrant of Fitness” scheme on HNZ properties

Increased “Welcome Home Loan” house price and income caps so more first-home buyers can use more of their KiwiSaver toward a deposit.

Climate change

Agreed to reduce emissions to 5 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, a conditional 10–20 per cent target by 2020, and a target of 50 per cent reduction by 2050.

Actively working towards a binding international agreement, which accounts for 85 per cent of global emissions and includes many major economies.

Developed: Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (40 member countries); Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre (consortium of nine research organisations); Sustainable Land Management and Climate Change research programme.

More than \$80 million over the next three years in climate-related support to the Pacific including \$65 million for renewable energy initiatives.

NZ FIRST

<http://nzfirst.org.nz>

Poverty – income gap

Jobs with decent pay for Kiwis first.

Upskill workers and train others in needed skills.

Support local business and industry.

‘Royalties for the Regions’ – share of mining royalties to communities for job creation and new enterprises.

Overhaul the Reserve Bank Act.

Raise minimum wage.

Keep superannuation at 65 without means testing.

Affordable quality housing

Land bank sites for new housing and reasonable construction costs for new homeowners.

Boost building of affordable homes.

Restrict foreign, absentee ownership of housing in New Zealand.

Climate change

Accepts overwhelming scientific evidence of climate change. Has policy for our economy to respond proactively to this challenge and play our part internationally.

UNITED FUTURE

<http://unitedfuture.org.nz>

Poverty – income gap

Income sharing – each partner in a relationship caring for children taxed at 50 per cent share of combined income = reduced tax paid by family.

Assess unemployed (one year and more) for work readiness. If ready – wage-subsidised employment/part-time community/voluntary work of choice. If not – help them get ready (training, health service, etc).

Encourage under 25-year-olds not at school to be “earning or learning”.

Establish regional employment initiatives.

Affordable quality housing

Let families capitalise their ‘Working For Families’ entitlements to help purchase or build a home, extend existing homes, or increase equity in a home.

Extend provision of community housing.

Review Housing NZ tenancies on an annual basis – encourage long-term tenants into home ownership.

Promote co-housing as an option for older people.

Adopt home insulation strategy.

Climate change

Promote measures that will provide both environmental and economic benefits.

Seek solutions that offer positive alternatives to otherwise punitive measures – rather than just a carbon tax on coal used to generate electricity (and higher costs for consumers), sequester the carbon or encourage the generator to plant a new forest.

Promote public and private climate-change initiatives, such as work with the banks to finance home insulation and retrofitting.

Support creation of CO² emissions trading mechanisms to provide economic incentives to reduce greenhouse gases and boost carbon capture and other greenhouse gas reduction/mitigation efforts – no to general carbon tax.

Gospel Manifesto 2014

A Christchurch-based group of church people has prepared a Gospel Manifesto for 2014 focusing on what they see as the five main priorities for this election.

You can access papers on the Church’s website www.presbyterian.org.nz/speaking-out/resources-for-speaking-out/discussion-papers: Every Child Counts by Mike O’Brien & Susan St John, Associate Professors at Auckland University; Healthy Homes Lead to Healthy Lives by the Rev Sheena Dickson, Convenor of the Christchurch Presbytery’s Church & Society Group; and Gross Inequality Costs Everyone by the Rev Rodney Routledge, Community Development Worker and minister at St Andrews, Rangi Ruru, Christchurch.

Other articles to be written and added before the election are: Correcting a Punitive Society by Kim Workman & Kevin Clements; and Being a Better World Neighbour by Jane Kelsey & Jill Hawkey; and an overview of all five Manifesto priorities by Vaughan Milner, Chief Executive Officer of Presbyterian Support (Upper South Island).

Brian Turner of the Gospel Manifesto Planning Group says, “This election year the Gospel Manifesto holds out the hope of what life should be for all in Aotearoa New Zealand, not just a privileged few”.

Spiritual Exercises

If you happen to be in the vicinity of Wellington's Pacific Island Presbyterian Church in Newtown on a Tuesday morning, expect to hear Beyonce and 60s rock and roll instead of the usual hymns coming from the Constable Street building.

That's because every Tuesday at 10.30 am around 40 elderly church members get together to exercise. They're part of Mafutaga Tagata Matutua, a multicultural exercise group that's been keeping senior church members fit and healthy for more than 15 years, says group coordinator Lafulafu Vanila Ekenasio.

"It started out as a walking group but has grown into an ongoing support and education programme to help elderly Pacific people continue to live a healthy and active lifestyle," says Lafulafu. "It's really taken on a life of its own. Not only is it an easy, practical way for older people to keep healthy but it also helps with their mental and spiritual health. Members tell me it gives a routine to their week and sometimes a reason to get up in the morning. They love it."

In Pacific culture the elderly are treasured as they have worked hard all their lives and deserve to enjoy their retirement, Lafulafu explains.

"As our newest member, the Cook Island High Commissioner Tiki Matapo, likes to say, 'We are not retired, we are rewired'."

Each week the group is led through its paces by qualified aerobics instructor Helene Kaye, who specialises in teaching older students. Along with the usual aerobic moves Helene incorporates hand weights to ensure those who want to can "feel the burn".

Members also enjoy a healthy lunch after finishing their workouts. In winter, that usually means soup and in summer, sandwiches.

The classes have expanded to include visits from a community nurse who gives members regular check-ups.

"She will do things like take members' blood pressure, monitor their weight and offer suggestions to attain, and maintain, a healthy lifestyle," Lafulafu comments.



Some of the 40 strong Mafutaga Tagata Matutua multicultural exercise group at Wellington's Pacific Island Presbyterian Church in Newtown.

"Because she knows them all well by now she will also answer any queries they might have or talk through issues they might not want to talk to their doctors about. It's a really useful service in an informal setting and many of them feel comfortable with that in a way they might not at a medical facility."

Another draw-card is regular visits from various public educators who Lafulafu invites to the group to talk about anything from nutrition, diabetes, arthritis, gout or stroke prevention, to more practical issues such as legal issues and how to access community services such as the Curtain Bank.

"We had someone from the Electoral Commission who came along to go through electoral rolls and ensure our members are registered, and we recently tapped into the Curtain Bank, via the Wellington City Council's Pacific Advisory Group, to get curtains for some of our members. It all goes to the heart of healthy living and people are very keen to talk to the group."

So proud are members of the group that many have taken to wearing their "uniforms" – black sweatpants and black and yellow polo shirts, Wellington rugby colours – outside of class, reports Lafulafu.

As with all non-profit groups, finding funding to cover the venue hire, personal

trainer and food for lunches is an ongoing struggle. Over the years the group has received support from the Capital and Coast District Health Board, as well as Wellington City Council when they perform at public events such as the annual Pasifika Festival.

The coffers also received a welcome boost earlier this year as a result of a research study by Victoria University student Emma Skudder which focused on how living as a Pacific person in New Zealand influences diet and health. Twenty-four members were interviewed about eating-related values and practices within the Pacific community.

Ask the members how they feel about the exercise group and you'll get an overwhelmingly positive response. Lamakai Pita, for example, says the group "has helped me a lot, especially with my leg", while Grace reports the group is "my main weekly outing and I look forward to socialising rather than staying at home by myself".

Members' children are equally enthusiastic and, according to Tagaloasa Kirisome, the group "provides peace of mind that our parents are taken care of. Praise God for the exercise group for looking after our parents".

Sharon Stephenson [Spanz](#)

St Paul's Ashburton loves to serve

The parishioners of St Paul's Presbyterian Church in Ashburton love to serve their local and church community. For more than ten years they have honoured their seniors with a regular lunchtime event.

Called "News and Chews" the lunch brings parishioners over 75 years old together to share a meal, a discussion and a spiritual activity.

Event organiser Mary Harrison says, "We have a congregation of more than 200 and a large proportion are older people. News and Chews provides them with a time of warm fellowship and a tasty meal. It's also a chance for us to tell people about what's going on within the church as some of our members can't attend. So this enables them to maintain a connection".

News and Chews was originally called Munchies with the Minister. But when Ministers Luisa and Malutafa Fruean left St Paul's it was renamed. The lunch the parishioners share is donated by church members and some of the News and Chews group. On average, 20 people attend each lunch.

Mary says, "At first we asked everyone over 75. But it turned into such a large group that we split it into a 75-80 years group and another for over 80. Everyone enjoys the events and it's a great way to show our appreciation of the time and service older members have given to the church, and their hard work in making the parish what it is today".

Delivering sustenance

News and Chews isn't the only way the St Paul's congregation serves the older people in its community. Many parishioners also help deliver Meals on Wheels to local elderly people. Organiser Sandra Thomas says, "We have 30 parishioners helping with Meals on Wheels. The church has been involved in the service since the 1970s and we deliver to many people in need.

"The parishioners who do Meals on Wheels really love it. We have congregation members who are happy to do it two or



News and Chews volunteer Margaret Chapman and organiser Mary Harrison prepare lunch for parishioners.

Photo: Ashburton Guardian

three times a week. They love giving back to the community in that way."

Highly hospitable

The St Paul's hospitality and fellowship committee also runs events for people who live on their own. Jennifer Marks has been part of the committee since its inception. "We once overheard a congregation member saying how nice it was to come out to a meal – much better than staring at the four walls at home alone. So it's clear that the events do serve a great purpose," she says.

The committee's current project is to organise a mid-winter Christmas meal to raise money for Cholmondeley Children's Charity in Christchurch. "Many of our Ashburton children have benefited from Cholmondeley. So we want to give something back," Jennifer says.

The committee's big success of last year was a Christmas extravaganza. "I'd always wanted to do a big garden walk event," says Jennifer. "Another committee member wanted something related to Christmas flowers and music, and another wanted to do Christmas lights. So we thought why not do a big two-day event?

"We had some detractors who said we'd never pull it off. But we did! It was a whole community affair and there was so much great support from businesses and individuals. We were stoked. We ended up raising over \$10,000. This was our original goal but we thought it was a pipe dream."

Jennifer says St Paul's is a true community church. "It's not just about the bums on seats. People feel they belong and support us even if they don't actually come into services. They're there for us and vice versa. There are a lot of very kind people in the community. We're lucky!"

The church also runs an annual fair with the support of the Hampstead community. Five per cent of the proceeds go to a local school or kindergarten. Parishioners also help local children with reading and writing, assist local parents, and teach Bible in Schools.

Former Minister of St Paul's, the Rev Luisa Fruean says, "The parishioners of St Paul's do good work quietly and diligently, without fanfare. We're proud and thankful to God for the work they do and the people they are".

Kate Davidson [Spanz](#)

Neighbours Day

way to Love thy Neighbour

Parishes and Presbyterian Support regions around the country embraced this year's Neighbours Day with neighbourly acts of kindness that reached out into their communities.

Neighbours Day is a national campaign that aims to get all Kiwis to go one step further in getting to know their neighbours. On 28-29 March there were hundreds of events up and down the country including many led by parishes.

The goal of Neighbours Day Aotearoa – to build strong communities – is well aligned with the mission of the Church which is why PresCare encouraged parishes and Presbyterian Support to get involved.

PresCare is a partnership between the Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Support that looks for ways our shared faith and commitment can respond to the needs and nurture the wellbeing of children and families. Thanks to funding from the Presbyterian Foundation PresCare was able to provide financial support for more than 15 Neighbours Day events up and down New Zealand. And many more parish-led events took place independently.

Anne Overton, PresCare champion, believes our social networks are often our greatest asset.

"If we can share those networks with our neighbours trust is built or, in some cases, rebuilt. There are isolated people in all neighbourhoods and communities and I feel the parishes and Presbyterian Support have the resources and skills to jointly make a difference to the lives of many families, children and older people. It is through conversation that safe, vibrant communities are developed."

Gisborne – Family Fun Day and Block BBQ

It was the first time Gisborne Presbyterian Parish had worked together with Presbyterian Support on an outreach initiative and it was a real success, says parish member Marie Burgess.

Two events – one at Family Works on Friday and the other at the church on Saturday – attracted more than 200 people.

Despite the parish taking up a weekly collection of food items for Family Works ties between the parish and Presbyterian Support had loosened in recent years and Neighbours Day provided an opportunity to re-kindle connections, says Marie.

Parish members helped out with the Presbyterian Support lunchtime block BBQ which was held in a carpark beside their offices in central Gisborne on the Friday afternoon. Family

Works Manager, Shona Munro, says invitations were extended to surrounding businesses and around 100 people from nearby organisations as well as passers-by stopped for something to eat and say hello.

Packs containing information about Family Works and the parish's services were handed out and lots of conversations were had, Shona says.

Presbyterian Support staff and their families also helped out with the family fun event hosted by the parish the next day. As well as marketing the family fun event to Mainly Music and Family Works families, fliers were also handed out at a nearby supermarket on the Saturday morning. All of which resulted in more than 100 people joining the parish for some hospitality and family fun.

"The bouncy castle, face-painting and games like guess-how-many-jellybeans-are-in-the-jar were very popular," says Cathy Porter, the co-ordinator of the parish event. "It was a successful collaboration and such a positive way to connect with the community around us."

Marie describes the closer links between the community, the parish and Presbyterian Support as one of the highlights of their Neighbours Day outreach.

"There are now closer links between us and Presbyterian Support and now we can build on this. We're already thinking about other things we might be able to work on together. We also connected with those in the wider community. The people who came to the events and the connections we made were the biggest highlight for us."

Whanganui – Community BBQ

Roast lamb, salads, balloons and a bouncy castle proved difficult for the neighbours of St Andrew's in Whanganui to pass up, with around 80 people from the church family and wider community coming together for a community BBQ.

Jenny O'Leary, St Andrew's session clerk, said Neighbours Day presented an opportunity to build relationships beyond the church.

"We want people in our community to mix with the church family in a social setting. We wanted to begin building relationships with people so they can see that Christians are normal people who have God in their lives."



Young women from the Caversham Community Group designed a Caversham logo and printed it onto T-shirts.



Eating donuts hands-free was among the many fun activities on offer at East Taieri Church's community fun day.

"The church and community people mixed really well. A lot of people said 'this is fun, we should do it more' and we do plan to do that."

Community Day Out – Welcome Bay

For the second year running Welcome Bay co-ordinated a range of community service organisations and staged a Neighbours Day event suitable for the whole family.

The event included art and craft activities for children, a hangi, the St Peters youth Band and the obligatory bouncy castle. Families were also given vouchers they could use to get things from the Welcome Bay Church op shop.

Rev Mike Uttley says, "Our aim was to connect and provide food for the spirit, soul and body of those who came as well as to provide opportunities for people to get to meet and interact with each other."

Heather Beddie, Family Works Family Violence Response Coordinator, attended this year's event and thought it was great.

"The day was a credit to Mike and the team he had supporting him. It might have been considered work but I enjoyed myself and was able to have some interesting discussions with some of the public who were brave enough to talk to me."

Community fun in Dunedin

Presbyterian Support Otago worked together with several Dunedin parishes on Neighbours Day outreach.

Coastal Unity ran a community fun day in the western suburb of Caversham. Early on the parish identified that the Caversham Community Group was also keen to do something around Neighbours Day. So they joined forces and produced a fun, free community event.

Amanda Reid from Presbyterian Support Otago organised a large aerial map of Caversham on which people could place stickers to show where they lived. This produced quite a few conversations and connections, she says.

There was also a street shield activity where people from the same street designed a shield that represented their street. People from Caversham's South Road used a large curvy piece of wool to depict their road. There were also hand-drawn images of trains, ducks and trees – all things found on their street.

East Taieri Church ran a family fun day at a local school they had worked with previously. Among the activities on offer was a 25 metre long bouncy castle obstacle course which proved a big hit.

St Mark's in Pine Hill ran an open home at their new community rooms in partnership with Presbyterian Support Otago. A postcard with a photograph of the building frontage was designed, printed and used as an invitation asking the neighbourhood to come and visit.

Waitaki parish used a neighbours day postcard produced by Presbyterian Support Otago and modified it to include some suggestions for being neighbourly. Parish members were invited to pop it into mailboxes near their own homes.

Carolyn Simms, community missions liaison at Presbyterian Support Otago, worked with these and other Otago parishes on their outreach.

"Overall I think having a vehicle such as Neighbours Day was great to hook into and give parishes a reason for creating an event to engage with their community."

Community garden development for migrants

Mahurangi Presbyterian Church in Warkworth continued building their mission ties with local migrants by organising a working bee and providing resources to add some raised garden beds to the existing Ransom Wine Kiribati community garden.

Jose Reader Spanz

Initially launched in Auckland in 2009 by Lifewise and the Takapuna Methodist Church, Neighbours Day Aotearoa (NDA) became a nationwide initiative in 2011.

The NDA campaign is about turning streets into neighbourhoods, strangers into friends, and turning every street in New Zealand into a fun, friendly and safe place to live.

Through fostering better connected neighbourhoods and more everyday neighbourliness NDA organisers believe Kiwi communities will be stronger and more resilient, and that the wellbeing of individuals, family/whanau and community will be significantly enhanced.

They also believe more connectedness may be part of the antidote for some of the social problems experienced in our communities.

Presbyterian Support Northern appoints minister Maori Advisor

Some people collect stamps, others rare first editions.

Rev Hone Te Rire has chosen to collect university degrees. The 54-year-old holds masters degrees in Indigenous Studies, Maori and Management, and Maori Laws and Philosophy and is currently planning a PhD through Otago University where his thesis will focus on the relevance of marae in the 21st Century.



The Rev Hone Te Rire, Presbyterian Support Northern's Maori Advisor.

When I suggest it might have been easier, and cheaper, to collect stamps, Hone, who was appointed Presbyterian Support Northern's (PSN) Maori Advisor in January laughs. It's the laugh of someone who believes in whanau transformation through education.

"I'm an unashamed promoter of education and believe it is the key to all your dreams," he says. "It sets all of us up to achieve bigger and better things, including better positioning our whanau for the future."

The father of eight, Hone commutes to offices in Hamilton and Auckland from his home in Te Kuiti. As an ordained minister of Te Aka Puaho, the Maori Synod of the Presbyterian Church, he follows a path previously walked by his paternal grandfather, father and uncle.

For Hone, being named PSN's Maori Advisor was a real honour.

"My moderator, Rev Wayne Te Kaawa who also happens to be my cousin, encouraged me to apply for the role. And although I loved my job as a Curriculum Designer at Te Wananga o Aotearoa, this new role combines my twin passions for education and service. My job is to support PSN's work from a Maori perspective and to provide an environment for all staff to achieve cultural competency."

One challenge Hone is particularly looking forward to is moving from a bi-cultural to a multicultural perspective.

"PSN's region encompasses probably the most ethnically diverse population in New Zealand. In my role I'm working with Maori, Pakeha, Pacific Islanders, Asians and other new migrants. I believe my ministry has given me the experience to increase the standing of all these people."

Hone believes the best way to meet people is through face-to-face meetings. Since the start of the year he's been clocking up the kilometres meeting with PSN members and offering his personal perspective on Maori culture.

It's been a long road from the armed forces where Kawerau-born Hone spent 11 years. He joined the Army after four years with the NZ Forest Service straight out of college in Auckland.

"My parents wanted me to go to university but I wanted to get some life experience. It wasn't until 1999 that I was inspired by my friend Nephi Prime who was studying law at Waikato. He encouraged me to go to university but I remember saying, 'I'm too dumb. I couldn't do that'."

However, Hone decided to take the plunge thinking that if things didn't work out he could always step back into mainstream employment.

"I've never looked back. I love learning and don't think I'll ever get tired of it."

It's a passion Hone has passed onto his children, four of whom currently live with him and his second wife.

"They've all gone through total immersion Kura Maori and I'm very proud of how well they've done. I believe that children have to find their own path, but I'm able to guide and nurture their growth."

Until recently Hone chaired the Board of Turakina Maori Girls College in Marton, an experience he calls "utterly rewarding".

"It's great to see young Maori Presbyterian women doing well academically and gaining self-confidence."

Ask Moderator Wayne Te Kaawa about Hone and he'll jokingly call him "the nerd of the family".

"Hone's commitment to education is amazing. He doesn't just talk about it, he walks the walk. That's why this role is so perfect for him, because it combines his educational background with his ministry."

"Hone's other great strength is a belief in the importance of family. Everything starts with a strong family unit and that's the position he comes from. It's why he's so successful at everything he does and why the Church is so fortunate to have him in the role of PSN's Maori Advisor."

Sharon Stephenson Spanz

"It was awesome to see how the students I caught up with had already got involved in a church close to where they were studying. And a few were discovering passions that were totally God-given but they were not yet sure how they could pursue them."

Reaching church youth at university

For many young people leaving home to attend a university in another part of the country can be daunting. It's a time of great change, excitement and many new challenges. Home, and your home church, can feel very far away when in an unfamiliar place surrounded by lots of new people.

When Christina Patterson of Knox Presbyterian Church, Waitara, left her home to study she was very aware that other church members were often struggling to stay in touch with the church they left behind. This gave her an excellent idea. At her own expense she made visits to Hamilton and Wellington to spend time with her church's youth who were studying in those cities.

"I felt that these visits were something that God wanted me to do," Christina says. "I noticed that students would go away and wouldn't hear much from the church during their time at university which would make them feel out of touch with what was going on at home. So the visits are a good chance for me to keep the students informed about events at our church and also to talk with them about anything else they're facing, for example any new or strange ideas that have been challenging them."

Christina believes that the first challenge the students face is choosing a new home church in their new city. She says, "I think it would be awesome if the people from our provincial churches could introduce their university students to people in their new cities who are solid in faith. Connections like that would make a massive difference, especially at the beginning. We all know someone!"

Last year, Christina made several visits to her church's students studying away from home. "We had a weekend together, shared dinner and hot chocolate and chatted about what was going on for them," she says. "It was awesome to see how the students I caught up with had already got involved in a church close to where they were studying. And a few were discovering passions that were totally God given but they were not yet sure how they could pursue them. I supported them and guided them toward people who could help or who were also feeling the same passions."

Christina is only 22 years old herself, and recently finished studying to become a pharmacy technician. She went straight from school to full-time work at a pharmacy and has decided to continue studying from home with the Open Polytechnic while working full-time.



Christina Patterson is travelling to universities to visit Knox Presbyterian Waitara's students.

She has been attending Knox Presbyterian Church since she was 10 years old and says, "What I like most about the church is the people. They have huge faith which helps God reach into the lives of our community. We show the community what the church does through all the children's and youth ministries, and the events the church holds." In addition to her full-time work and her university visits Christina helps out as a small group leader on Wednesdays at the Knox Church youth group and attends CityLife Church in New Plymouth with her boyfriend Aaron.

Knox Presbyterian Church has about 10 young people who have recently left Waitara to study away although lately more and more are choosing to stay at home and take courses extramurally like Christina. "It's a big change," says Christina. "It used to be that young people would go away to uni and not come back to Waitara because there weren't jobs locally. But that's not the case so much anymore. Many of our youth stay in the area now."

But the good news for those who do choose to go away to university is that Christina definitely plans to continue with her visits. She will be heading to Wellington again soon. "I think the visits are a great way to encourage and support the students," she says.

Kate Davidson [Spanz](#)

NEW COORDINATORS BRING PASSION FOR YOUTH

Earlier this year new regional youth coordinators were appointed by the Christchurch Presbytery, Northern Presbytery and the Pacific Islands Synod. They have a range of experience they all share a passion for youth ministry.

Kate Davidson *Spanz*



Mike Dodge
CHRISTCHURCH PRESBYTERY

Mike has been working with and for young people for over 30 years. He started out with Youth for Christ child welfare and youth support services in Auckland. After taking a role at a church in Christchurch he established Canterbury Youth Services, a Christian organisation that has trained and provided resources to youth workers and ministries for 20 years.

Mike started as the Christchurch Presbytery part-time regional youth coordinator in February 2014. "It's going well. I'm going to each church in the region and catching up with the leadership teams and the young people," he says. "I'm getting to know them, assessing their situations and seeing what we can do to help them grow."

And there's never a dull moment. "Recently, we organised an Easter camp youth event for all denominations," Mike says. "More than 4,600 young people attended. Unfortunately, there was torrential rain and it was rained out. People's tents were floating away! So we had to clean up the site and run the event in church halls instead. We had 800 people per service and had to run services back to back to meet demand."

Canterbury Youth Services's goal is healthy youth leaders developing healthy youth ministries in healthy churches in healthy communities, and Mike brings this vision and passion to his work for the Presbyterian Church. He says, "We're encouraging what's going well and looking at what can be done differently if need be. I have a great strengths-based team who work alongside me and I'm very hands on!"

"I'm getting to know them, assessing their situations and seeing what we can do to help them grow."



Emma Payne NORTHERN PRESBYTERY

Emma became a youth leader at Howick Community Church in Auckland when she was 15. She says, "I'm passionate about youth and confident leading youth activities. Initially I was only leading within my church but then I felt God guiding me to youth ministry. I looked further, prayed, and decided to see what was out there. I saw the Northern Presbytery regional youth coordinator role was available and went for it!"

Emma started in March 2014. Working on youth events is a major part of the role. "I facilitate and help in any way I can. It's exciting to work on events that young people can look forward to, like the national youth gathering at the General Assembly, a youth leadership day and the monthly regional youth services," Emma says.

Emma's ultimate goal is to ignite passion for God in youth and youth leaders. "I'm looking forward to networking more with our youth and strengthening the Northern Presbytery group so no one feels isolated.

"It's going great," she adds. "I've got a good team. I talk to the youth leaders and ministers about what is going on at their churches, produce a newsletter, work on the database – the list goes on! Each day is different which I enjoy. It's good to be taking ownership of the role, learning from others but making it my own too."

"I've got a good team.
I talk to the youth leaders
and ministers about
what is going on at their
churches..."



Naama Ine PACIFIC ISLANDS SYNOD

Naama got involved in youth work more than 20 years ago at her home church, Mount Eden Pacific Island Presbyterian Church. "My dad is minister there and his passion to serve the Lord inspired me," she says.

In her regional youth coordinator role, Naama works with youth representatives from each Fono: the Uapou Fellowship, Niue Fono Motu, Samoan Fono, and Tokelau/Tuvalu Fono Tahi. She's currently preparing for the first Pacific Islands Synod youth gathering at Tamaki. "I'm really excited," says Naama. "It's a new journey in a new presbytery. The Pacific Islands Synod was only established last year so it's very fresh and that gives more flexibility. We're working vigorously but we have to build the foundations first and we're learning along the way.

"I love my role, because I work with a fabulous team," she says. "I pray and hope that together we'll build a good relationship with our brothers and sisters from the Youth Regional Presbytery and that we'll serve Christ as one. It's an awesome opportunity."

"I love my role, because I
work with a fabulous team."



Why have Church Property Trustees?

The Presbyterian Church Property Trustees are a group of up to 20 people who volunteer their considerable knowledge, skills and time to serve our Church and protect its assets.

All Presbyterian-owned property north of the Waitaki River and a variety of financial assets are held in trust by the Church Property Trustees.

There are two main reasons why the Church has Trustees:

The first is a practical one of ensuring continuity of title-holder. In the early days, property was often put in the names of individuals who then left or died, thus creating real problems. The result was the Presbyterian Church Property Act 1885, which is the legislation the Trustees still work under today.

The second reason is that there are many groups that have an interest in any church property. Obviously congregations do, but so also do the Presbyteries. They need to consider the regional needs of the Church and of course, the Church as a whole since we are a national Church formed through a network of parishes. This is why the Trustees place great weight on the advice they receive from Presbyteries when considering any property transactions. They are also guided by the decisions of the General Assembly.

The Trustees are bound in law to adhere to the principles of trusteeship. These include prudent dealings in property and the investment of trust funds, keeping proper records and financial accounts and establishing policies for the management of all areas of their responsibilities.

The Church Property Trustees are fully committed to good stewardship and its importance for future generations of the Church.

Any enquires for the Trustees may be made to:

The Executive Officer, Kos van Lier
Presbyterian Property Trustees
PO Box 9049, Wellington 6141

PH: (04) 381 8296 or
EM: kos@presbyterian.org.nz

THEOLOGYMATTERS

In her book *Moving Forward, Looking Back: Trains, Literature, and the Arts in the River Plate*, Sarah Misemer describes the trains of Argentina as symbolising “the dialectical influences of the forward trajectory (progress/future), while at the same time embodying the backward glance (regression/past)”. When travelling on an old train in particular, despite being aware of the technology that makes such eccentric carriage possible, one can have a sense that even though one is moving forward, there is also the sense that one “travels into a quaint and less mechanized” world, escaping backwards in time.

The same theme is picked up by artist Michael Flanagan in his brief essay “The Backward Glance”. He explores the intersection between time and memory, suggesting that our vision of the past operates akin to the view of a disappearing landscape glimpsed from within a moving train: ‘How can the Past ever be anything but a mystery... We see life as if from the end car of a speeding train, watching through the rear window as the tracks slip away beneath us... everything passing, receding, disappearing into a point on the horizon’.

Insofar as this is true of our experience of train travel, the same might be said of our thinking about Christian community – we can lament that our past ebbs too quickly. Such lament can encourage the creation of romanticised images, like those of nineteenth-century artists George Angas and Gottfried Lindauer who Europeanised the New Zealand landscape. Flanagan calls this the “nostalgia problem”.

At the other end of the train are those who seek to drive on, aware only of what lies in front. Like perpetual teenagers, they are those for whom the past is forgotten and irrelevant; indeed, it is not even part of their being today.

But here the analogy breaks down, particularly for those of us who profess to be concerned with the project called “Reformed”: we have no tracks upon which to travel, and even the existence of the train itself is not a sure thing. Entirely bereft of the familiar and the certain, the reformed – ie. that churchly tribe of which Presbyterians form the largest part – are concerned to live entirely dependent upon God’s speech, upheld solely by the Word

“To be reformed is to be always open to the risky possibility that what one hears from God tomorrow might be entirely at odds with what one heard yesterday.”

who continuously calls us into being. To be Reformed is to be always open to the risky possibility that what one hears from God tomorrow might be entirely at odds with what one heard yesterday.

Such a situation poses a real challenge – and opportunity! – for a tradition concerned to confess the faith by way of formal statements. One of the hazards of writing confessions, for example, is that institutions are then tempted to build upon them, to trust in them, to look to them to do the work of safeguarding whatever it is that the institution most values – to turn the living Word of God into a “thing”. Even the desire to confess and embody our unity in Christ can mask efforts which are at core idolatrous: namely, to locate the unity of the Body of Christ in something – in a “thing” – rather than in the person of Christ himself and his claims upon us, claims which precede and bring under judgement all our efforts.

The Christian community is called to be at once more free and more bound than a train. It is called to be entirely unburdened from all efforts to keep it from falling off the rails. And it is called to be entirely bound to him who alone brings it into love’s true freedom.

The Rev Dr Jason Goroncy is a lecturer at the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership, Dunedin.

EDUARD KLASSEN with the Paraguayan Harp



**Touring both the North
and South Island**
from 11th February to
8th March 2015

To find out about concert details
contact Colin and Jean Sampson.
Phone 06 751-0633 or 0275755786
email: colinsam24@gmail.com
P.O.Box 5131, Westown.
New Plymouth 4343

Spiritual Direction Formation

*Do people approach
you to talk about
their spiritual life?*

*Would you like
to train as a
Spiritual Director?*

**Spiritual Growth Ministries offers a
well-regarded and comprehensive
two year, part-time programme,
designed to inspire and form you as
an effective Spiritual Director.**

The programme includes:

- » study of the theology and
prac-tices of Christian
Spiritual Direction
- » deepening spiritual formation
- » regular workshops conducted
by experienced practitioners
- » supervised one-to-one
spiritual direction practice

**Applications for 2015/16 due by
20th September 2014**

For all enquiries please contact:
Barbara McMillan
sgmtp@xtra.co.nz
or visit our website
www.sgm.org.nz



EVERMORE BOOKS

Specialists in Second hand
Christian Books

Christian books
bought and sold



Evermore Books Ltd
9 Ellis Ave
Mt Roskill
Auckland 1041
Ph: 09 626 2256
www.evermorebooks.co.nz
Email: cbooks@xtra.co.nz
Mon - Fri: 9.30 - 5.30
Sat 10.00 - 5.00

Open everyday except Sunday
and public holidays

ST ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HASTINGS



CELEBRATING 125 YEARS
as a city centre parish in October 2014

11th – musical pageant at 10am,
formal dinner at 6pm

12th – celebration service at 11am

Further details at 06 878 8247
or info@standrewshastings.org.nz

MINISTERIAL VACANCY

Clevedon Presbyterian Church is looking for a new Minister!

Our beloved minister is retiring and we're looking for a vibrant person to take over the vacant position. We are offering a full time Minister's position with full terms of call. Clevedon Presbyterian is a mission-focused people on a journey to the heart of God, and we're looking for someone who is passionate about God and his people, both in the church and in the Clevedon-Kawakawa Bay area. We anticipate an overlapping transition period alongside our current minister until he retires around the end of 2015.

Clevedon is a rural community where the church stands as a place of kindness, generosity and acceptance. We have a

number of exciting programs running each week, and we need someone who has a vision for growing all of these different aspects of Clevedon Presy. We feel called and commissioned by God to share the gospel message and offer unconditional love to those around us and wherever God may lead us.

We are the church where anyone is welcome.
For more information and/or to indicate expressions of interest please contact the convenor of the Ministry settlement Board, the Rev Margaret Anne Low.

E: ClevedonMSB@stjp.org.nz or
P: 09 2501764, by May 31st 2014

Contribution for the Noticeboard?

Please contact: Jose Reader
spanzadvertising@presbyterian.org.nz

Computerise your Church records with

Membership Made Easy Church Register Envelopes Made Easy Offerings Manager

See them at www.cel-software.co.nz

54 Callum Brae Drive,
Rototuna Hamilton 3210
P: (07) 855-5170 E: celeme@paradise.net.nz



Rev Wayne Te Kaawa the 27th Moderator of Te Aka Puaho.

Strengthening Relationships within Maoridom

The Rev Wayne Te Kaawa is putting into action the Maori Synod's plan to develop stronger relationships within Maoridom.

Much of the work he has done as the 27th Moderator of the Te Aka Puaho was started while he was working with the 26th – his mother Millie Te Kaawa – and has really borne fruit this year.

“About 10 years ago we sat down and said, ‘What do we want to achieve?’ We decided we wanted to be more involved at Ratana, at Waitangi and in the King Movement,” says Wayne.

“At Ratana, we wanted to be involved on 25 January because we have historic connections with the Ratana Church; there were Presbyterians involved in the heyday of Ratana.

“This year they broke with tradition and asked me to give the sermon at the main service to celebrate the foundation of the church.”

At Waitangi on 6 February, Wayne was also pulled in to participate. “Because they’ve seen me there so many times before they said, ‘We know you. You don’t come as a visitor. Come on our side and help us welcome the Prime Minister’.”

At the dawn ceremony in the meeting house, Wayne was asked to say a prayer, as was the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Rev Ray Coster.

Te Aka Puaho has had a strong relationship with the King Movement, particularly since Dame Te Atairangikaahu took part in the opening ceremonies of the wharehau at Ohope in 1977.

This year Presbyterians led the service at the commemorations of King Tuheitia's coronation. “Traditionally Catholic, Anglican and Methodist ministers conducted the service but in 1971 the Maori Queen broke with tradition and asked the Moderator of the Presbyterian Maori Synod, Charlie Maitai, to give a sermon, and in 1984 she invited Tame Takao, Moderator of the General Assembly, to preach.

“This year we were asked to lead the entire service. Hone Te Rire led it and Ray Coster did the Benediction at the end while I delivered the sermon.”

Wayne is closely involved with King Tuheitia's plan to give Christianity a more prominent role in the King Movement, serving on the new Kahui Wairua, the Council of Maori Church Leaders, an advisory body the king set up this year.

“He wants Christian ideals to be at the forefront,” says Wayne. “I said to him, ‘All kings have crowns, but you have the Bible’. That’s because when the first Maori king was crowned they placed a Bible on his head and said, ‘This is your crown’.”

Wayne's interest in history has been evident in recent interviews on Radio Rhema and Shine TV and in articles on the Presbyterian Church website.

He says Presbyterian Church history in New Zealand predates the usually accepted beginnings. The first Presbyterian missionary to Maori, James Duncan, arrived in 1843. However, John Dunmore Laing, a Presbyterian missionary based in Australia, called in to the Bay of Islands for 10 days in 1839 and wrote articles about it.

“He argued for the right of pre-emption for the Crown in land transactions because he saw evidence of land sharks and shady deals, and that was reflected in the Treaty of Waitangi. So I am arguing that the Presbyterian Church was here in 1839 and had an impact on the treaty.

“Also, James Macfarlane arrived in 1840 in Wellington with Scottish settlers and he held services for local Maori and became an advocate for them.”

A number of congregations have asked Wayne to talk to them about this history.

Wayne and his wife Helen have six children, and he was “a manse kid” himself.

He initially trained as a nurse. “But when I asked myself, ‘What do I really want to do with my life?’ I realised I wanted to work for the Church.”

He became administrative assistant when his mother was clerk of the Maori Synod.

“Then in 1994 I put my hand up. I had never been to the South Island when I went down to Otago and did my training at Knox College. I was out of my comfort zone and my cultural safety zone, but I look back now and say I think that was the best time of my life.”

Wayne's first parish was in Auckland. His second was the Putauaki Maori Pastorate, and he is now looking after the Opotiki Maori Pastorate.

Jane Tolerton Spanz

Worship, Music & Arts Enabler helps churches think creatively

The Rev Malcolm Gordon has taken up the newly created role of Worship, Music and Arts Enabler for the Presbyterian Church.

“My responsibility is to help churches think creatively and contextually about what worship should look like in their particular neighbourhood,” says Malcolm.

“This new role is a recognition that if we focus on mission without paying attention to worship, that’s of limited value if the very thing we are trying to draw people to is neglected in the meantime. The event of worship must be authentic and meaningful.

“I think we’ve been guilty in the past of looking at churches we’ve been taught to call successful, and wanting to adopt what they are doing. But often they are from overseas and they don’t transplant here well. The soil is different in our part of the world, and the needs and the stories of the people are different.”

Malcolm will work directly with parishes and hold creative workshops to demonstrate what changes could work well. “We’ll reflect on what they do and why. It’s often been developed in an ad hoc way. That doesn’t mean it’s deficient but it is helpful to say, ‘What do we do and why?’ That can be invigorating and bring a sense of meaning,” says Malcolm.

He is inviting parishes to undertake a period of reflection and reformation – “a 12 or 18 month journey on which their leadership and musicians and congregations will be thinking, discerning and praying through what they do on a Sunday morning.

“I’m not just talking about what’s been called an ‘attractional’ model of church where you build your worship service round the people who could fill those empty seats. To be meaningful it has to connect with the people who are there. These are our faithful people. Others will be drawn in if they see people meaningfully communing with a living God. I am convinced people are attracted to a group living an authentic expression of connection with God.”

Malcolm, his wife Vanessa, three-year-old Sam and new-born Lucy arrived in Auckland from the Bay of Plenty in March to take up the new role.

But Malcolm had already started several projects, including identifying songwriters

and poets in the Presbyterian Church community – “finding people who have a particular creative gifting and giving them a platform to bless the wider church.”

Part of this mission was a roving service, Lenten Reflection, which he took round various parishes during Lent with Adrian Taylor from Katikati.

Malcolm is continuing the One Voice Project which involves a community of Presbyterian musicians and songwriters around the country he has been working with for a few years now. It is about to bear fruit in the form of a compilation album. “*Songs for the Road* will be a wonderful celebration of talented young people who have a voice in song which is distinctive to our Presbyterian culture. We have the beginnings of something exciting – our people writing songs for our faith communities,” says Malcolm.

His own song writing is also flourishing. His latest album, *Into the Deep*, spent five weeks in the New Zealand album charts.

Both Malcolm and Vanessa have strong Presbyterian backgrounds. Malcolm grew up in a farming family that was part of the Tokomairiro Co-operating Parish in Otago and Vanessa is the daughter of the Rev Ken and Cheryl Harray.

After leaving school Malcolm worked for Youth for Christ’s performing arts touring team, then studied theology at the University of Otago and trained for



The Rev Malcolm Gordon will work directly with parishes and hold creative workshops.

Ministry at Knox College. His first parish was Katikati, from 2008 to 2012, followed by a stint as music director at St Peter’s in the City, Tauranga.

He began singing lessons at six after his teacher told his parents he had a good singing voice and learnt saxophone and the bagpipes. He has recently taken up guitar and piano – “a bit more useful for song writing and contributing to services.

“But my real joy has been being involved in musicals,” he says.

“I have that musical theatrical background and that comes through. At one of our recent Lenten Reflection services, I found myself introducing the evening as ‘a piece of liturgical theatre’. That’s what excites me, seeing people drawn in to telling the story of God.

“I thought how God had woven all the pieces of my own story together and put me right where I feel I’m meant to be.”

Jane Tolerton Spanz

You can help us save a life

Mission Aviation Fellowship services 2500 airstrips
supporting 1500 organisations with 136 aircraft
in 30 countries worldwide



Support our life-saving work today
www.maf.org.nz 0800 87 85 88

MAF
Flying for Life

Where flying is not a luxury but a lifeline

Inspiring Mission

GA Assembly Week offers inspiring programme

The new-look Assembly Week is inspired by imagining what could be and will have a bigger focus is on inspiring, equipping and resourcing the Church in mission.

Among the biggest changes are that Assembly Week is for the whole Church, not just commissioners, says Moderator Designate, the Rev Andrew Norton. This year business sessions, which have historically been the General Assembly's primary focus, are now just one part of the conference which features almost 50 different resourcing sessions across five days.

As well as the General Assembly, Assembly Week which runs 3 to 7 October, will also incorporate a separate Inspiring Mission programme which is open to all members of the Church family. Because these run concurrently commissioners to General Assembly will not be able to attend the Inspiring Mission streams or workshops. But they will be able to join other parts of the Inspiring Mission programme including the daily addresses from keynote speaker the Rev Dr Steve Taylor, the evening programme and networking with other delegates.

Despite the wider focus on resourcing mission at this year's Assembly Week, Andrew says the General Assembly's core business of making decisions remains important and the same amount of time is available for business sessions as in previous years.

However, one difference from previous years is that there will be no business sessions in the evening. Instead this time will be dedicated to inspirational speakers.

It is hoped the General Assembly's new format will offer more time for discernment

and more opportunity for meaningful conversations and seeking God's guidance and wisdom than in the past.

Enrol Early

Assembly Week is expected to attract more than 600 people. Enrolling as early as possible will be important to secure a place in your preferred accommodation, workshops and streams.

The Inspiring Mission programme has been designed so that people can attend all or part of the conference. People who can only attend on weekends, for instance, can register just for workshops on Saturday or Sunday.

Enrolment closes on Friday, 1 August. But Assembly Week organisers are encouraging people to enrol as soon as they are able to help ensure all behind-the-scenes preparations for this year's much larger event go as smoothly as possible.

Enrol Online

This year both commissioners to General Assembly and delegates to the Inspiring Mission conference are invited to enrol online. For those who prefer, or are unable to enrol online, phone enrolment is available through the Assembly Logistics team who will complete the online form on your behalf.

Offering online enrolment is one of several key changes to the logistics side of Assembly that have made the process of organising Assembly more efficient and less costly.

Online reports and news

This year commissioners have the option of receiving all Assembly papers online. This is one of the ways people attending

Assembly Week can help keep costs down and demonstrate our care for creation.

The Whitebook, which contains all Assembly reports, proposals and recommendations, will be mailed out on request, rather than automatically being mailed to all commissioners. When enrolling you will need to select your preferred option.

There will be full Wi-Fi coverage at the Assembly Week venue so commissioners are encouraged to bring a tablet or notebook to access Assembly papers during business sessions.

Other materials like daily news bulletins, take home information about decisions made at General Assembly and keynote speaker addresses will be published and available for download through the Church's website.

Travel to Assembly Week

This year a travel subsidy replaces the previous travel reimbursement for commissioners.

All commissioners whose home parish is more than 150 kilometres from the Assembly venue are able to claim a subsidy. This option will appear automatically on the online enrolment form of those who qualify. Unlike previous travel reimbursements, the subsidy will be calculated and deducted from your total registration fee.

Those attending the Inspiring Mission programme are not eligible for a travel subsidy.

If you are arriving at Assembly Week by plane a free airport shuttle is available provided you enter all your travel details when you enrol. The Assembly Week website also lists a range of public transport options.



The Assembly Week website was launched 30 April 2014.



Moderator Designate, the Rev Andrew Norton, outside the Saint Kentigern sports centre where business sessions and the Inspiring Mission programme will be held.

Inspiring Mission Conference

The Inspiring Mission programme includes inspirational speakers, streams that allow in-depth dialogue around key issues, and more than 30 practical hands-on mission-focussed workshops.

Workshops run for a couple of hours in the afternoon on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and cost \$25 per session to attend.

Each day, there are around 10 workshops to choose from and they offer an opportunity for facilitated discussion on a diverse range of topics including how to use an iphone to tell stories, climate change, evangelism, discipleship, sustainability in leadership, prison ministry, fresh expressions of church and many more.

Streams offer the opportunity for in-depth examination and conversation on matters of enduring significance to our communities and the Church.

Led by recognised experts in their respective fields, the streams cover topics as diverse as social transformation (led by Presbyterian Support), spiritual practices (facilitated by Rev Dr Lyn Baab), and strengthening ecumenical relationships led by current Moderator the Rt Rev Ray Coster. There are 10 different streams for delegates to choose from.

Streams run for three hours over three mornings of Assembly Week. Streams cost \$210 and those registering to attend any stream may also attend any of the afternoon workshops at no cost.

National Youth Gathering

The Church's young people also have the opportunity to be involved in Assembly Week. Presbyterian Youth Ministry will be hosting the first ever National Youth Gathering which will focus on inspiring young people in mission.

The NYG caters for those aged 15 years or older, and young people must enrol as part of a youth group.

The NYG programme costs \$99 and includes a variety of activities including a sports afternoon and a servant project in the community.

Inspired and Body and Soul

Evenings at Assembly Week will be an opportunity to be reinvigorated by the Inspired programme. Traditionally General Assembly business sessions have dominated the evening. This year people will listen both to inspirational short stories of people and churches making a difference and to guest speakers. Inspired will also include music.

Andrew has set the goal of at least 1000 people attending. "As soon as we reach 1,000 people we'll sing Oh for a thousand tongues," Andrew says.

Guest Speakers

Principal Youth Court Judge, Andrew Becroft is one of the guest speakers on Monday evening. A strong advocate for youth issues, Judge Becroft has been asked

by Moderator Designate the Rev Andrew Norton to share his vision for New Zealand and to challenge the Church about what we can do.

Glenn Colqhoun, a doctor, poet and children's writer, will speak on Sunday evening. A multiple Montana New Zealand Book Award winner, Glenn is also an advocate for providing medical care for at-risk young people. Andrew invited Glenn to give an address to "help us move out of neat and tidy boxes to catch a glimpse of a renewed imagination".

Margie Apa will give the keynote address on Saturday. Margie will be a familiar face to many as she is also the convener of the Assembly Business Work Group. Margie has more than 20 years' experience in the public sector and has been in roles that span social policy, health funding and delivery.

Body and Soul occurs in the morning before Assembly business sessions and streams start and will offer a range of opportunities for prayer and reflection.

Jose Reader Spanz

GA Assembly Week Fees*

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| » General Assembly Commissioner | \$590** |
| » Streams | \$210 |
| » Workshop | per workshop \$25 |
| » National Youth Gathering | \$99 |
| » Ministers' Day | \$75 |

See more information
on the Assembly Week website www.pcangassembly.org.nz

* Some fee packages include meals. See Assembly Week website for details.
** This base enrolment fee will reduce if you are eligible for a travel subsidy.

Doctrine Core Group resource will help Church discuss marriage

Just over a year ago, Parliament passed the Marriage Equality Act. On April 17, 2013 Parliament supported the proposal that would enable gay and lesbian couples to be married in New Zealand.

This was not something the Church could ignore. As Professor Murray Rae, Head of Theology at University of Otago and a member of the Presbyterian Church's Doctrine Core Group observes, "the Church has to respond in some way because the Church is in the business of marrying people. Now that gay people can be married, this is something we have to work on together."

"The problem is that, despite a number of different and strongly held views, there isn't a clear-cut position for the Church."

The Doctrine Core Group's convenor, Rev Dr Bruce Hamill, sees the focus of strongly held views on same sex issues moving from leadership to the nature of marriage.

"The General Assembly has made a statement about marriage and the government has made a law that has changed the definition of marriage. As a result of the tension between these, there are a lot of questions to be asked about how marriage is to be understood."

Significantly, both the Council of Assembly and the Church's Presbyterian Youth Ministry approached the Doctrine Core Group wanting answers to some of those questions.

"The Council asked for a resource to help the Church discuss marriage from a Christian perspective", Bruce says. "The hope was that this would provide a framework to stimulate respectful discussion."

"We thought it most helpful to gather a range of voices rather than to try to speak authoritatively ourselves. We wanted to create conversation. That's our job."

Murray agrees. "We've gathered together in a booklet a diversity of views from within the Church. I think it invites us to respect the fact that there are serious, intelligent people in the Presbyterian Church on all sides of the debate."

"While we've looked at cultural mix, a gender mix, theological diversity, we can't cover all the bases", Bruce continues. "Most importantly we were looking for intelligent and insightful voices that will provoke thought rather than simply bore! We want them to be people who have something to say rather than just representing a party view. We hope we have something that will enable a conversation, a questioning."

At the time of writing the booklet was expected to include seven or eight essays addressing the question, what do you believe lies at the heart of a Christian doctrine of marriage, and what are the key biblical and theological considerations that inform your position?

The Core Group hopes that putting these voices alongside one another will allow readers to be part of the dialogue between the writers.

"We each need to recognise that none of us has a complete picture and we have need of each other in the Church to correct and to

guide us. If we could admit that, we could recognise that insisting on our own way is not very helpful," Murray says.

The booklet will include an introduction outlining why it's needed, how it might be used and what it hopes to achieve, along with some questions for discussion and reflection.

"Hopefully it will help people think more deeply than they had about questions they have already formed an opinion on. What is the nature of marriage? Can institutions like this be reconfigured?" Bruce says.

"I hope the Church will come to treat the structures and institutions in which it lives its life in the way Jesus did."

In preparing the booklet the Core Group has also discussed whether a doctrine of marriage can be considered a fundamental doctrine of the Reformed Church.

"The Core Group has had discussion about this", Murray says. "In response to a question from the Council of Assembly the Core Group provided the Council with the opinion that, based on the confessional heritage of the Reformed tradition, marriage cannot be considered a fundamental doctrine of the Reformed Faith."

The booklet is due to be distributed within the Church at the end of May. It will go to parish councils and presbyteries for consideration to stimulate discussion before Assembly and help inform debate there.

Chris Nichol Spanz



**FERGUSSON
HALL**

50th JUBILEE 2014



BE A PART OF THE CELEBRATIONS
4-5 OCTOBER 2014

We warmly invite former residents of Fergusson Hall, Palmerston North to join our 50th Jubilee Celebration.

Come and catch up with old friends and reminisce about your uni years.

For more information and to register go to the 50th Jubilee Reunion page at: www.fergussonhall.co.nz

Encourage friends and former residents to be part of the celebration activity.

THE ENGINE
OF THE NEW
NEW ZEALAND



50
YEARS



MASSEY
UNIVERSITY
TE KUNINGA KI PŌREHURUA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Ministers' Gathering at Assembly Week a first

Ministers have an opportunity to gather for refreshment and renewal as part of the new-look Assembly Week.

Moderator Designate, the Rev Andrew Norton, invited the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership to lead a training day specifically for ministers because it provides space for them to gather, reconnect and share stories.

"There are very few occasions when we get a chance to get ministers all together. So I wanted to build something for this into Assembly Week which this year has a big focus on resourcing and equipping people in their ministry.

"The day provides the opportunity for ministers to take time out to be inspired and work through issues in a collegial atmosphere."

Andrew believes this is the first time there has been an opportunity for ministers across the country to gather together in one place for professional and personal development. He is hopeful that many ministers will take up the opportunity to join the training day and be equipped and refreshed in their ministry.

The programme has been designed with everyone in mind regardless of what stage of ministry they're at explains the Very Rev Dr Graham Redding who is co-ordinating the programme.

The training day will focus on two areas – resilience in ministry and transformational

leadership – which he says are issues that are of wide and enduring relevance.

"From our discussions with people these are two things that keep coming up.

"Even if we think we have a handle on them, resilience and transformational leadership are things we need to engage with time and time again.

"At times ministry can be isolating. Ministers often feel institutional pressures and are trying to be missional in a rapidly changing society. Questions like 'How do I go the long haul?', 'How do I remain fresh in my motivations, my ministry?' are things we hear regularly at retreats and workshops we lead."

Held on Friday, 3 October - the day before General Assembly business sessions start - the ministers' day runs from 9am-4:30pm with a focus on resilience in ministry in the morning and transformational leadership in the afternoon.

Keynote speakers the Rev Dr Lynne Baab and the Rev Dr Kevin Ward will offer a brief reflection on their respective themes - Lynne on resilience in ministry and Kevin on transformational leadership. The sessions will then move into the practical with inspirational stories from hands-on ministry leaders about how things are working in their patch.

Jill Kayser, national Kids Friendly coach, the Rev Dr Geoff New, and the Revs Karima Fai'ai and Hamish Galloway

How do I remain fresh in my motivations, my ministry?' are things we hear regularly at retreats and workshops we lead."

are among the ministry leaders offering reflections on their experience.

To help ministers tease these subjects out out there is also time for dialogue. Attendees will spend an hour in small discussion groups where they will have the opportunity to examine the issues in more detail.

Plenary sessions led by the Rev Mark Johnston are scheduled at the end of both the morning and afternoon dialogues and will endeavour to articulate common strands of thought from the discussion groups and give participants key points to take away with them.

Graham is hopeful ministers will leave the day encouraged, feeling stronger and more confident in working through any questions or problems.

"It would be great if they leave with a sense of solidarity, feeling they are not isolated, and perhaps have a few extra tools to help them engage with these relevant issues."

Registrations for the ministers' day are essential. All ministers are welcome regardless of whether they are attending General Assembly. There is a cost of \$75 to attend which includes lunch and dinner. Learn more about the speakers, and register online at the Assembly Week website www.pcanzassembly.org.nz

Jose Reader [Spanz](#)



New one to come

Presbyterian Savings and Development Society of New Zealand (inc)

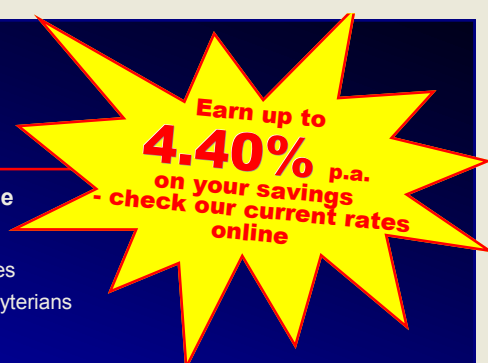
Earn a very competitive interest rate, while helping the Presbyterian Church nationwide.

- all loans secured by first mortgage over Church properties
- all investments managed by prudent, professional Presbyterians
- all profits returned to the Church via grants to parishes

Go to www.psds.co.nz for information, current interest rates and an Application form, or e-mail us on enquiry@psds.co.nz or telephone us toll free on **0800-00-22-74**.

Our Investment Notice is available on the website www.psds.co.nz Rates are quoted on the website and are subject to change without notice.

PSDS is a registered Charity (CC20941) and registered Financial Service Provider (FSP17741)





Mission meeting highlights issue of migrant worker exploitation

In January this year the Rev Paul Prestidge represented the Presbyterian Church at a meeting it co-hosted for the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) in Auckland.

Paul says that around 30 representatives from CCA member churches in Korea, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, USA and Australia met for five days of discussion, theologising and practical strategising about “people on the

move in Asia, particularly to Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand”.

One issue raised that Paul feels strongly about is the exploitation of migrant workers in New Zealand.

“Denis Maga, who organises UNEMIG, a network of migrant workers within FIRST Union, gave a presentation on exploitative work practices affecting migrant workers - workers who are most often Asian. Denis, who is a Filipino Kiwi, has been at the forefront of exposing these practises,” Paul says.

The challenges faced by migrant workers in New Zealand are something that Paul has experience with. “It’s an issue in my congregation. I am trying to work out how to help a parishioner, a Burmese refugee who is struggling with a new job where his boss has not given him an employment contract and pays him irregularly. The parishioner doesn’t want to rock the boat and put in jeopardy his employment status before his three-month trial period is up.

He also doesn’t want to put the jobs of his fellow work mates, many of whom are also refugees, in jeopardy through a Labour Department investigation. In this case it’s as Denis Maga described at the meeting, that many of the bosses treating refugees and migrant workers badly are migrants to NZ themselves, they’ve simply been here a bit longer.”

Paul says that the issue of exploitation of migrant workers presents the Church with a kingdom opportunity. “There’s the opportunity to bring justice to a vulnerable group of people in New Zealand, and to insist upon fair and legal work practices when people set up in Aotearoa from countries where paying taxes and legal wages is not yet the norm.

“As the world increasingly comes to Aotearoa, churches here need to seize the opportunity to show off our Triune God to our nation through the rich diversity and deep unity of our congregations.”

Angela Singer Spanz

The Tindall Foundation Funding Applications

Presbyterian Support New Zealand is The Tindall Foundation Faith Funding Manager for Presbyterian organisations and parishes. We are pleased to invite applications for the 2014 funding round.

The Foundation allocates funds to PSNZ for distribution to projects undertaken by Presbyterian Support regional organisations and Presbyterian and Union parishes under the Supporting Families and Communities criteria.

Donations of up to \$15,000 (typically between \$10,000 and \$15,000) per project can be made. Applications for projects meeting the criteria are now open.

The closing date is Friday, 27 June.

For funding criteria and application forms please visit our website: ps.org.nz



Presbyterian Support



Developing an understanding of mission

Stephanie Lamborn was not quite sure what to expect when she embarked on the Rice Bowl Mission to Myanmar. But one thing she had not counted on was spending so much time dressed as Snow White.

The 22-year-old Victoria University student explains that at the Tahan Theological College (TTC) Fun Fete, an event similar to a school gala with food stalls, games, face painting and photo booths, she found herself adopting the Disney character.

“Westerners are a bit of a novelty in Myanmar and the opportunity to have a photo with them is very special. So over two nights I smiled my way through hundreds of photos with locals,” says Stephanie who is completing a Masters in Development Studies.

“The little girls especially liked Snow White and I learned the importance of a smile, and how people can appreciate something as simple as that.”

After coming across the 12-day mission to Myanmar on the Presbyterian Church website Stephanie, who is a member of St Aidan’s on the Hill in Lower Hutt, was initially sceptical about its aims. She contacted Global Mission coordinator the Rev Phil King to find out more.

“I remember his response being open-ended enough to pique my interest in exploring what mission meant for the Presbyterian Church and the Rice Bowl Mission in Myanmar.”

Meetings in Wellington followed where the visit’s purpose became clearer to Stephanie who had done assignments on Myanmar at university and harboured an interest in travelling there.

“I liked that it was to let us get a taster of what mission was like and how it was more focused on friendship.”

Phil, who has travelled to Myanmar five times, says the mission to the South East



Talking with Buddhist monks was one of the highlights for (left to right) Grace Boston, Gwyneth Key, Shwedagon Monk, Stephanie Lamborn and Jessie Boston. Photo Gina Williamson.

Asian country came about when the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, which had been isolated for about 50 years, reached out and requested overseas help.

“It’s about being a partner alongside and supporting churches in their mission. It’s their country, it’s their context. They speak the language, they understand the culture. So what we can offer is friendship, encouragement and occasionally resources and a lot of the time those resources are financial,” says Phil.

The Christian community in Myanmar comes primarily from the Chin ethnic group who are found in the west of the country and across the border in India and Bangladesh.

The Chin converted from traditional beliefs to Christianity during the colonial era and after earlier being oppressed for being non-Buddhist, they then found themselves out of favour for adopting a Western religion.

“So they are very welcoming to Christian groups coming from overseas basically saying you are not alone, sharing the gospel with them and sharing a connection to the wider Christian community,” explains Phil.

He says the Rice Bowl Mission encourages young adults to take part in a visit to a partner church and not to do anything but learn about the culture and get a broader worldview.

“The faith aspect is critical to it. But it’s more about being alongside and learning from one another and also having our own faith challenged when we see the lives of our fellow Christians in other parts of the world.”

Phil says the highlight of the trip for him was seeing how the nine-strong group interacted with the students at TTC and the community they stayed in.

Since returning from Myanmar Stephanie has taken a year off university to take up a Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) opportunity in Bougainville and is hoping her experiences will provide inspiration for her thesis.

Phil says Stephanie is an example of a young adult who is really concerned about equality and is exploring the way her faith could have some input into and be a foundation for expressing those values.

“She has obviously set her course early in life and she was looking for more confirmation of the decision she has made to add value to the developing world.”

For her part Stephanie has kept in contact with friends made at TTC via Facebook and was reminded of the fun she had in Myanmar when discussing what they were doing to celebrate the New Year.

“It turns out they were playing Duck Duck Goose. On our final night at TTC we taught the students how to play it.”

Robin Martin [Spanz](#)

Help is Coming

Early in the morning 13 year old Junior Abana picks up small fish that have fallen on the ground as workers unload their latest catch. He will take them home for his mother to cook for his family who live in Estancia, in the Iloilo province of the Philippines. Once a busy coastal seaport, residents are still picking up the pieces after last November's super typhoon.

They are not the only ones. Further around the coast in the Aklan province, the residents are also striving industriously towards recovery. They are rebuilding homes and fishing boats. With 94-98 per cent of homes badly damaged or demolished and most boats destroyed, the need is great. The numbers are shocking: more than 1.1 million homes lost and more than 4.5 million people affected. The next rainy season is due in June and half of these people are living in improvised shelter or tents.

Christian World Service is grateful for the generosity of supporters and churches, including the Presbyterian Church, who provided vital backing for an application to the New Zealand government for matching funding. Knowing that the next steps of recovery are critical, CWS wants to raise still more to help our neighbours.

CWS responds to emergencies like Typhoon Haiyan and April's flash floods in the Solomon Islands as part of the church's commitment to diakonia, the work of loving service. CWS knows that local people help first, but they need support to keep going, especially when the adrenalin runs out and trauma takes over. Through strong local partners and the ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together – part of the United Nations cluster system), CWS has the networks that put the people in need at the centre of their own response.

After Haiyan, International Programmes Coordinator Trish Murray contacted Developers, a small non-governmental organisation working in Aklan Province and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP). It was a fortnight before Tet Naraval of Developers could report the extent of the destruction – between 94 and 98 per cent of the houses in coastal villages badly damaged or destroyed.

The NCCP made plans before the typhoon hit and was ready to respond. Disaster preparedness is now an important part of good community development. Their local church contacts and other ACT members provided a ready network of help and gave them the base from which to coordinate a multimillion dollar response.

Knowing it is the poorest people who are often the most vulnerable to disaster, ACT Alliance members worked to send relief to isolated communities across the Visayas region. Relief aid is not always distributed evenly – some communities have received more than others. ACT Alliance members are already helping locals regain livelihoods lost in the storm.

Once UN food handouts stopped in May, recovery became more urgent. The UN estimates 5.9 million people lost their livelihoods in the typhoon and that 2.94 million are at risk of "undernutrition". Coconut farmers will need to wait seven years before trees mature. Fishing folk need boats and equipment to replace what was lost. Many farmers no longer have land to work.

The government's "No Dwelling" zone, which prevents people from building within 40 metres of the coast, is also contentious. In more sparsely populated areas like coastal Aklan this won't be a problem. But in highly congested Tacloban people have nowhere to go and are worried about their future.



Junior Abana picks up small fish that have fallen on the ground

CWS has sent funds to the NCCP and Developers. Tet Naraval of Developers reports villagers are sharing boats and building bamboo rafts so they can get the food they need.

"But the pain and difficulty, like here in the communities, are eased somehow with blessings and prayers from kind and helpful people like you. For these, we can't thank you enough," she says.

"When I spoke to Tet, I told her that we had launched an appeal and help is coming," said Trish Murray.

CWS is appealing for more support for the Philippines Typhoon Appeal. Money raised will buy corrugated iron for roofing and help families re-establish livelihoods.

Donations can be made on line at www.cws.org.nz or posted to Philippines Typhoon Appeal, PO Box 22652, Christchurch 8140.

SOLOMON ISLAND FLOOD APPEAL



PLEASE DONATE NOW

Can you help Solomon Islanders recover from Flash Floods? They need food, clothing, shelter and help to start new food gardens. Help local church groups respond.

SOLOMON ISLAND APPEAL
CREDIT CARD • Phone 0800 74 73 72
or online www.cws.org.nz/donate

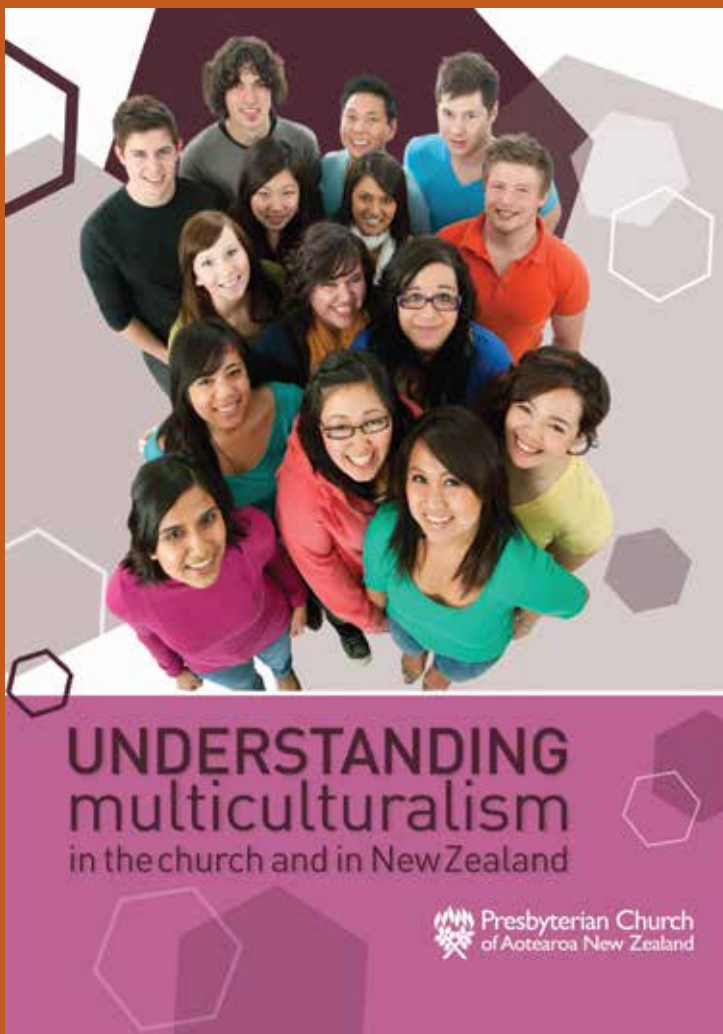
DIRECT DEPOSIT
Name of Account: Christian World Service
Account number:
ANZ 06 0817 031 8646 00
Reference: SolomonFlood
Email postal details to cws@cws.org.nz
if you would like a tax receipt.

POST • Christian World Service
PO Box 22652 Christchurch 8140.



Understanding multiculturalism is free

The latest Church social issues study guide, *Understanding multiculturalism in the church and in New Zealand* is now available free to parishes.



Understanding multiculturalism in the church and in New Zealand was recently sent to all parishes. The study guide explores the biblical mandate for multiculturalism, the changing face of New Zealand, some of the barriers to becoming multicultural and examines what all of this means for our communities and churches.

Understanding multiculturalism in the church and in New Zealand is the latest of 11 studies produced by the Presbyterian Church for use in group or Bible study groups to help with prayerful reflection on some of the key issues facing us and our communities.

To order free printed copies of this booklet, of any of our other study guides, email office@presbyterian.org.nz or phone 04 801 6000. You can also download all of our study guides from the Church website <http://www.presbyterian.org.nz/speaking-out/resources-for-speaking-out>



THE NEXT GENERATION IS HERE & WE ARE READY

**Presbyterian Support Family Works - building
strong families throughout New Zealand**

www.ps.org.nz

Presbyterian Support



making a difference together