Anglican Life

He Oranga Mihinare

INVITING FORMING SENDING SERVING

JESUS CHRIST: OUR RECONCILIATION TO GOD

ANGLICANLIFE.ORG.NZ | DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH | ISSUE 79 | 2024

MEET OUR DIOCESAN UNDER 40'S TEAM

EMPOWERING FAMILIES

EASTER IS UNEXPECTED

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

Anglican Diocese of Christchurch
He Oranga Mihinare

Anglican*Life*
He Oranga Mihinare
INVITING FORMING SENDING SERVING

01. *BISHOP'S MESSAGE: Jesus Christ: Our Reconciliation to God*
02. *THE BRIEF*
03. *CITY MISSION: City Mission Role Broadens*
04. *FEATURE: Empowering Families*
06. *OUR STORY: Deeper Camp Highlights*
09. *OUR PEOPLE: Meet Our Diocesan Under 40's Team*
10. *OUR STORY: Elder Care*
12 *OUR PEOPLE: Introducing Steven & Emma*
14. *THEOLOGY: Who Do You Say that I am?*
16. *WORKPLACE: Take a Pew…*
18. *CULTURE: Book Reviews*
20. *DIALOGUE: A Conversation with Bishop Peter*
22. *CPT: An Introduction to Church Property Trustees*
24. *OUR STORY: St Paul's Window Restoration*
26 *SPIRITUALITY / THEOLOGY: Easter is Unexpected*
28. *CCRL: Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Project Update*
30. *CCRL: The Anglican Campaign is Underway*
32. *CULTURE: Easy Meal Recipes*
34. *GLOBAL DISPATCH: To Serve on the Global Mercy Ship*
35. *ADVERTORIAL Clubfoot*
36. *ARTICLE: Giving Thanks in All Circumstances*
38. *2023 May to December Highlights*
40. *ECO CHURCH: Spreading Easter Joy*
42. *LyCiG: What LyCiG has Done for Our Diocese 16 Months on*
44. *PERSPECTIVE: Love so Amazing, so Divine*

Front Cover: Pisit Heng. Anglican*Life* is now published yearly by the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch. Editor / Yvette Koo Butcher, Assistant Editor / Veronica Cross, Contributing Writers / Ewan Sargent, Rev'd Bosco Peters, Ven. Mark Chamberlain, Ven. Indrea Alexander, Contributors / +Peter Carrell, Rev'd Dr Pauline Stewart, Emma Tovey, Rev'd Steven Dunne, Rev'd Karen Kemp, CPT, Rev'd Dr Tim Frank, John Stringer, CCRL, Jo Seagar, Eva Gregory-Hunt, Philip Baldwin, James Beck, Advertising Enquiries / Yvette Koo Butcher – editor@anglicanlife.org.nz, Design / Leisa Jamieson jamiesonmessage@icloud.com, Printed by / Blueprint Media, Sustainability / AnglicanLife is printed on recycled paper using vegetable-based inks. Sign up for the Anglican*Life* electronic Magazine (June, September, December 2024 issues) with your name to: media@anglicanlife.org.nz and visit www.anglicanlife.org.nz for past Anglican*Life* issues.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER at The Transitional Cathedral *Latimer Square*

SUNDAY 24 MARCH
PALM SUNDAY
8:00am Holy Eucharist
10:00am Choral Eucharist including the procession of palms and reading of the passion
5:00pm Service of Passiontide Music & Readings

TUESDAY 26 MARCH
11:00am Diocesan Chrism Service
(held at St Christopher's Church)
12:05pm Holy Eucharist
1:10pm Holy Week Organ Recital

WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH
7.30am Holy Eucharist
12:05pm Holy Eucharist

MAUNDY THURSDAY 28 MARCH
12:05pm Holy Eucharist
7:00pm Celebration of the Last Supper, including foot washing and the stripping of the altar

GOOD FRIDAY 29 MARCH
10:00am Children's Service
12:00noon Celebration of the Lord's Passion with singing of St John's Passion by The Cathedral Choir

HOLY SATURDAY 30 MARCH
12:noon: Midday Prayer
Music by The Cathedral Choir
9:00pm The Great Vigil with the First Eucharist of Easter
Music by The Cathedral Choir

SUNDAY 31 MARCH ~ EASTER
8:00am Holy Eucharist
10:00am Festival Eucharist
Music by The Cathedral Choir
5:00pm Festal Evensong
Music by The Cathedral Choir

CHRIST CHURCH TRANSITIONAL CATHEDRAL NEW ZEALAND

www.christchurchcathedral.co.nz | admin@christchurchcathedral.co.nz | (03) 3660046

See our website for full details of these and our other regular weekly services

JESUS CHRIST: OUR RECONCILIATION TO GOD

Words: Bishop Peter Carrell

I love Easter – the long weekend, the often but not always balmy late summer/early autumn weather, hot cross buns, Easter eggs. So far, a love shared by most of us Kiwis. I also love Easter, experienced through the lens of Scripture and liturgy. Not so many Kiwis these days have that love for Easter.

The journey to the Cross, moving through the season of Lent, conscious of Jesus' embrace of suffering for the sake of you and me leads to the entry to Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday, the definitive moment in Jesus' life because there is no turning back to Galilee. Holy Week is an invitation to walk with Jesus through the ratchetting tension of the final days of his life. Maundy Thursday is the poignant last meal of Jesus' life before his execution the next day – and is also the beginning of the eucharistic life of the church. The remaining hours of that night and the next day, Good Friday, have more stories told about Jesus in Scripture than any other night and day of Jesus' life. What we read in the gospels is both a human drama and a divine drama.

Humanly speaking, Jesus experiences the destructive effects of conspiracy, betrayal, trumped up charges, prejudiced trials, callous authority, military abuse and one of the most painful forms of execution. This drama is a tragedy. On any reckoning Jesus is an innocent pawn in a power-crazed game of deadly chess.

The divine drama involves Jesus pursuing God's will so that in his person God suffers and dies for the sake of the world God loves. Only an innocent – righteous – Jesus can take on himself the sins of the world and become the atoning sacrifice for us, the God-ordained means for our reconciliation with God (see, for example, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 1 John 2:1-2). The injustice Jesus experiences as a human being crushed by oppressive enemies becomes justice for us – the justifying of us in God's sight as righteous people (Romans 5:6-11).

This divine drama is no tragedy. When Jesus is raised from the dead – celebrated by us on Easter Day – sorrow becomes joy. The Cross looks like a massive defeat for God on Good Friday – all hopes for the kingdom of God buried with Jesus in his tomb. On Easter morning, the Cross is seen as a massive victory for God – evil conquered, the power of death over humanity de-powered (Hebrews 2:14-18).

There is a lot to love about Easter. This Easter may we all renew our understanding of the great love God has for us – a love demonstrated through Jesus dying on the cross and rising again that we might live joyfully and hopefully in God's presence for ever. Our turbulent world in 2024 needs the news of the love of God more than ever.

+Peter

RIGHT REVEREND RICHARD RANGI WALLACE, QSM (1945-2024)

Words + Photo: Veronica Cross

Bishop Richard Wallace was born in Little River in 1945 and was of Ngāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe and Waitaha descent. He grew up in a Rātana and Anglican home.

He completed high school in Motueka, before joining the Royal New Zealand Air Force, serving as an aircraft technical engineer for 11 years, reaching the rank of sergeant. He was ordained deacon then priest in 1987 and his first role was as an assistant minister in Christchurch. In 1989, he was installed as the first Māori Missioner for Nelson and over 12 years in Nelson he progressed through the ranks of Canon and Archdeacon, before relocating to Hokitika to become the Archdeacon of Te Tai Poutini.

+Richard then served as the second Pīhopa o Te Waipounamu (Bishop of Te Waipounamu) from January 2017. He was the first of Ngāi Tahu descent and was ordained Bishop at Ōnuku marae.

He also worked for the Ministry of Māori Affairs, with a particular emphasis on social services. Wallace was awarded a Queen's Services Medal for services to Māori in 2009. Those skills were also recognised by the Royal New Zealand Air Force in 2019, who made +Richard and wife Mere official kaumātua, providing cultural advice and support.

Bishop Richard died in Wairoa on Saturday, 6 January 2024, having travelled from the South Island to officiate at the funeral of Norm Dewes, a prominent leader for urban Māori in Christchurch. +Richard's body was returned to Christchurch by Air Force Hercules, before his tangihanga.

Kua haere ia ki tōna moenga roa. Kia okioki i runga i te Rangimarie.

He has gone to his final rest. May he rest in peace.

YOUNGEST DEAN FOR ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH

Photo: Mandy Caldwell

Congratulations to our new Dean of Christchurch, The Very Rev'd Ben Truman, his wife, Dr Johannah, and their boys Edward, Toby and Thomas.

Dean Ben is our youngest-ever dean at 38 years old. After studying for a double degree at Otago (including a theology degree), Ben taught at Burnside High School for three years. Post further study and ministry training at St John's College, he was ordained priest in November 2015 and served as curate in the Parish of Lincoln.

Since October 2017, Ben has been Vicar of Opawa-St Martins. He is very familiar with the mission and ministry of our Cathedral having served on Chapter (the governing body of the Cathedral) since July 2016. Dean Ben began his role on 1 December 2023.

Christchurch City Mission
Te Whare Mīhana Ki Ōtautahi

CITY MISSION ROLE BROADENS

Words + Photo: Ewan Sargent

The Christchurch City Mission is now leading the social services work of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch after recent structural changes.

Formerly, the City Mission, Community Development, Anglican Living, South Canterbury, Mid Canterbury, Elder Care, the finance team, and Advocacy came under Anglican Care and were managed through a series of reporting divisional/advisory committees.

But Anglican Living no longer operates, Advocacy comes directly under the Diocese, and the remaining activities have been absorbed into the Christchurch City Mission, which now reports directly to the Anglican Care Trust Board.

Christchurch City Missioner Corinne Haines said the City Mission is now the operational social service agency in Anglican Care and it leads and manages the community outreach work of the Diocese. She said the restructuring should improve efficiencies and would bring a strong focus on maximising good outcomes from the resources available. This would enable all activities to complement each other and work together in a collaborative environment.

Our social workers had 5,000 approaches for help in 2023. We look after anyone and everyone with love and compassion and willingly take on the city's hardest cases on behalf of our community. We rely heavily on donations of money and time to carry out our mission. See www.citymission.org.nz

The Christchurch City Mission was launched in 1929 by the Anglican Church and 95 years later we are a vital charity that supports tens of thousands of struggling people every year through a wide range of services. That includes:

- delivering 760,000 meals through a foodbank
- hosting 1,100 men and women in day programmes
- providing beds for 430 homeless men and women, and
- offering expert counselling and support to 2,500 people battling with addiction.

Corinne Haines.

EMPOWERING FAMILIES

—THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF FAMILY DRUG SUPPORT AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Words + Photo: Rev'd Dr Pauline Stewart

"FDS aligns well with the recently released findings..."

Family Drug Support Aotearoa New Zealand (FDS) is a nationwide not-for-profit organisation established in Christchurch. Since 2018, FDS has assisted hundreds of families/whānau and friends dealing with the complexities of alcohol and other drug use, in a way that strengthens relationships, while achieving positive outcomes.

Founder and Executive Officer, Rev'd Dr Pauline Stewart established FDS as a Charitable Trust with a strong Governance Board. A recipient of the 2023 Kiwibank Local Hero Award, Pauline remembered overcoming the initial required tasks in the early years (which seemed daunting at times) to set up FDS as an organisation. She also went on to train and develop a substantial team of skilled Accredited Practitioners (mostly volunteers) she calls "the dream staff team".

Pauline is ordained as an Anglican priest, is a Registered Psychologist with Counselling and Educational Scopes of Practice, and a Registered Counsellor. Pauline is also a member of the New Zealand Psychological Society (MNZPsS) and a member of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC). With a background in psychology and education, Pauline worked as a psychologist Service Leader / Psychologist in the Ministry of Education in Southland for 16 years supporting children and their families, who have high and complex needs. Pauline's work has included working in the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) field for over 20 years, and in her private practice as a psychologist.

The aim of FDS is to provide support based on science, compassion, and human rights. The organisation strongly supports a harm reduction model. FDS aligns well with the recently released findings from the enquiry into mental health and addiction in New Zealand which stresses the importance of including families/whānau in solutions.

FDS offers individual and couple counselling support, with over 95% of the psycho-educational counselling support delivered via Telehealth (Zoom) into the home of the Impacted Family Member, no matter where they live in New Zealand. Accredited Practitioners are located all over New Zealand and often work

outside regular office hours to accommodate the needs of those seeking help. Self-referrals can be made at FDS website: www.fds.org.nz

In June 2023, Pauline attended and delivered three papers at the 4th Annual Addiction and the Family International Network (AFINet) conference in Rotterdam. A total of 95 conferees from 21 countries were present and at networking occasions, it was clear that problems with alcohol and other drug use are universal around the world. The chronic sorrow experienced by those impacted by someone's alcohol and other drug use is also widespread and seldom acknowledged.

Research in the universities of New Zealand indicates that around 40% of university students are impacted by the alcohol or other drug use of family/whānau or close friends. These substantial numbers are repeated in research over the whole of the New Zealand population, showing that many people are impacted by a loved one's alcohol or other drug use.

Therefore in 2023, FDS developed a new additional psycho-educational counselling programme for young people between 16 to 24 years old. Free of charge at this stage, application from young people can be made by self-referral on the FDS website: www.fds.org.nz

Family Drug Support Aotearoa New Zealand has been developed to tautoko/support whānau/families with as much understanding as humanly possible, making available the website, the on-call volunteers, resources, stories, courses, and many other educational tools to equip whānau/families to develop coping and resilience on their journey.

FDS is built on the Te Whare Tapa Wha model (four cornerstones of health) which was developed by leading Māori health advocate and researcher Professor Sir Mason Durie in 1984. The whare, or house model, has four walls with each wall – physical health, mental & emotional health, family & social health, and spiritual health, representing a different dimension of overall health. All four walls are needed and must be in balance for the house (or our health), to be strong.

Funded originally by grants and donations which are always very appreciated, FDS recently gained financial support from Te Whatu Ora (Ministry of Health), operationalising the research that advocates the inclusion of family/whānau to support families as well as supporting the recovery of the focal person. Family/whānau can be a catalyst for positive change, and those in FDS: staff; Board members; and volunteers are driven by the same passion that led to the establishment of the organisation, and the underlying considerations of support, hope, empowerment, and progress.

From an idea in the mind of one person in 2018, to a nationwide organisation assisting hundreds of family/whānau impacted by someone's alcohol or other drug use, has been an interesting journey for FDS Founder, Pauline.

FAMILY DRUG SUPPORT AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND OFFERS ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES/WHĀNAU AND FRIENDS IMPACTED BY ALCOHOL AND OR DRUG USE.
HELPLINE: 0800 337 877 OR 03 281 8740. REQUEST A CALL BACK BY VISITING: *WWW.FDS.ORG.NZ/SUPPORT-LINE*

DEEPER CAMP 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Words: Emma Tovey + Photo: by Amy Clark

Deeper 2023 was fantastic. The weekend started off on Friday night with the intermediates and their leaders. We had dinner together, a talk and some music with Deeper band. Later we played spotlight in the drizzle. Over the weekend we had two amazing speakers: Azaria Peach and Cole Yeoman who spoke on our identity in Jesus. On the Saturday, we had quite a number of families join us for the day participating in the rock climbing, Aero-Jump, archery, Zipline and waterslide. It means a lot to me to see families enjoying their time together, as well as having a chance to worship and learn together as well.

Working as the Christchurch Children's Ministries Developer for the last few years has been a huge privilege. I have really enjoyed getting to know the amazing children's workers and volunteers in our churches as well as so many of our Vicars.

I've really enjoyed the opportunity to develop a resource that can be used by our churches and have learned a lot about our diverse churches. Children's ministry is a huge challenge at the moment, and I don't think there is

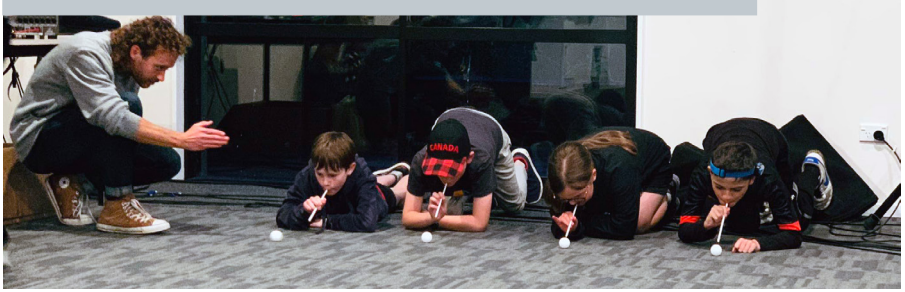
necessarily a one size fits all answer to our churches. But, whatever style or system you choose please continue to prioritise families and their needs. Continue to welcome them actively and enthusiastically when they show up and keep teaching our tamariki (children) about Jesus.

In 2024, I will be studying theology full time through the University of Otago. I am really looking forward to a change of focus. I'm also really looking forward to finally getting a good theological foundation for my future ministry.

"IT WAS REALLY WELL LAID-OUT, WE COULD SEE THE TAMARIKI (CHILDREN) FROM WHEREVER WE WERE OUTSIDE."
FLATT WHĀNAU

“PLAYING MINI GOLF WAS FUN.”
KORA (AGE 5)

MACKENZIE:
“I ENJOYED MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND DOING ALL THE ACTIVITIES.”



“I REALLY ENJOYED BEING ABLE TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND PLAY GAMES WITH THEM.”
SOPHIA

(L-R front row: Rev'd Sammy Mould, Azaria Peach, and Emma Tovey
second row: Paul Hegglun, and Nathan Muirhead)

MEET OUR DIOCESAN UNDER 40'S TEAM

UNDER 40'S MINISTRY TEAM LEADER:

The Rev'd Sammy Mould
(35 hours/week)
email: youth@anglicanlife.org.nz
phone:
022 021 5401
Your first point of call for anything regarding children, families, youth, and young adults. Sammy is happy to talk with any parishes about anything for under 40's ministry.

UNDER 40'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPER:

Paul Hegglun
(20 hours/week)
email:
youngleaderdev@anglicanlife.org.nz
phone: 021 615 933
Paul's speciality is leadership development, especially in the areas of worship music, discipling, and growing young leaders.

UNDER 40'S SAFEGUARDING EDUCATOR:

Nathan Muirhead
(10 hours/week)
email: safe.edu@anglicanlife.org.nz
phone:
027 274 2226
Nathan has a wealth of knowledge about policies and procedures. He will be helping the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer to make sure our diocese and parishes are striving to be safe places for our children and young people.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY EDUCATOR:

Azaria Peach
(8 hours/week)
email: cmd@anglicanlife.org.nz
phone:
020 4026 1160
Azaria's skills and knowledge in children's ministry will be vital for continuing to help grow vision and practicalities for building children's and families' work across the diocese.

UNDER 40'S RESOURCE CREATOR:

Emma Tovey
(5 hours/week)
email: vipmag@anglicanlife.org.nz
phone:
027 780 6629
Emma will create the fantastic VIP Magazines and work on the 2025 Family Faith Journal.
To order the 2024 Family Faith Journal, visit www.theologyhouse.ac.nz under Resources.

ELDERCARE

Words: Ewan Sargent

"Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
do not forsake me when my youth is spent." *(Psalm 71:9)*

Anne Russell-Brighty is the manager and founder of the Anglican Elder Care service in Christchurch.

Anglican Elder Care is now running 10 groups to support isolated elderly people.

Guests at the Opawa Elder Care group enjoy the exercises at the start of the morning's activities.

Arms swing into the air as the video facing the chairs moves to a new exercise in the meeting room at St Mark's Church in Opawa. Some arms stay down, some go up just a little, and you only do what you can comfortably do.

It's Monday and once again a group of elderly people have gathered for the morning to exercise together, do quizzes, talk about events, have morning tea, and enjoy companionship with each other. With them are attentive volunteer helpers and the coordinator Donna.

The Anglican Elder Care Opawa group has met here weekly for 10 years and while the occasion seems simple enough on the surface, something much deeper and impactful is happening.

Just think about this - annual surveys across all the Elder Care groups reveal the sad truth that for up to a third of all the elderly guests this will be their only human connection that week.

And that is exactly why the Elder Care groups are needed for people in the communities around parishes - it's a community outreach project, mainly for non-parishioners because, of course, it's assumed the parishes are already looking after their own elderly.

Anglican Elder Care (which now comes under the Christchurch City Mission) started these groups 10 years ago with groups at Opawa and Burwood. The tenth group at Woodend opened this year as the steady growth continues.

Anne Russell-Brighty, who is the Anglican Elder Care manager, launched the groups here after the quakes to help the elderly who were suffering social isolation. It's based on the work of the Selwyn Foundation's Selwyn Centres in Auckland, and the foundation has heavily supported the work here.

Groups are started when parishes see a gap in support for socially isolated elderly people in their communities. They approach Anglican Elder Care, which will do its research, and if all goes well a group will appear with admin costs and the coordinator paid for by Anglican Elder Care. The parish provides a suitable room, volunteers, and prayer support.

Anne says this type of support is needed more and more as more elderly stay at home because they can't afford to move into retirement villages.

"We need to work harder helping them to still have quality of life. All the research tells us that people who are socially isolated become physically unwell and mentally unwell," she says.

They need this contact even if they sometimes don't recognise it themselves and say they are only coming for the exercises. She says many elderly people can be seen in places like supermarket cafes and malls, sitting quietly alone on the side, but coming because they need to be close to other people even if they say nothing.

Isolated elderly people can lose the skills to talk, forgetting even how to have a conversation and connect with others. The groups with their gentle exercises (recommended by the Arthritis Society), quizzes, talking topics and socialising help them regain a sense of belonging and being someone who matters.

When a member dies the group holds a short memorial service, birthdays are honoured and celebrated and if someone misses a group they are rung to check everything is okay. For some elderly people, the groups become the families they may not have for many reasons.

Anne is proud of her team of staff and with the work that is being achieved. While the groups are not religion-focused, she says they are "God's work" in action.

INTRODUCING STEVEN & EMMA

Words + Photos: Rev'd Steven Dunne

Being ordained a Deacon and then a Priest in the space of one year was not as quick as McDonald's drive through but it did seem fast. My entry into the Anglican Church began over 50 years ago but has sped up in the past two years. It was at McDonald's where my wife, Emma and I had our first fortuitous face-to-face meeting with Bishop Peter and Teresa.

Our meeting to discuss our future relationship with the Anglican Church in New Zealand was tastier and much more nutritious than the fast food. The fast food did not require much preparation; this meeting was decades in the making.

Growing up in England is a funny thing, you sort of become an Anglican by osmosis. Both Emma and I were christened as babies in the Church of England. This is hilarious if you think about it because my mother is an atheist, while my father is a Catholic and comes from a famous drug cartel family recently featured in the 2023 documentary called Dublin Narcos on Netflix. Nonetheless, God Almighty honoured the baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and saved Emma and me from a ruined lifestyle of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll in 1990.

I always thought I would be a Vicar,

but it just seemed so far-fetched. We came from a "grungy" life and were drawn back into that "grungy" life to help. I took the route of street preaching and missional work. Emma and I have worked with orphans and the lowest dregs of society in several nations.

God called us to New Zealand 20 years ago. We left Mums and Dads, Aunties and Uncles, Brothers, Sisters, and Cousins. We sold the family business, our house and packed up a growing family. We arrived with 10 suitcases on the doorstep of Auckland city in 2004. Our first four years were spent in Taumarunui. We had legal guardianship of our first Māori child to add to our growing brood. We cared for about 29 foster children, developed 24/7 prayer rooms, taught at a ministry school and worked alongside gang leaders, worked in rehab programs, developed friends in the all-Māori speaking unit at Rangipo prison, and learned to see a side to New Zealand we had only ever read about. At the time a well-meaning friend from Auckland said we should watch "Once Were Warriors", I watched for 30 minutes and turned it off as it was too similar to our daily ministry at the time.

Emma always knew she would end up in the South Pacific. As a child, she would sit in her boring bedroom in foggy England crying as she looked at Frangipane postage stamps from the Pacific islands thinking she had been born into the wrong family. As we traversed the joys of Bible school in the USA, we would read the heroic stories of the South Sea Martyrs and be inspired to give our lives to Jesus for the great commission.

I think God has an incredible sense of humour when he looks at Emma and me. In 1988, as a lead singer in a Punk band I staggered drunk into a midnight mass service at Saint Andrews Church, Summertown, Oxford. We were not in our right minds but were drawn into the back pew of a glorious church service.

During the service we were encouraged to greet one another and

"pass the peace." I personally experienced the power of the Holy Spirit for the first time. Two very "Christian" looking Anglican girls turned around and said "peace be with you". I felt a power touch me and literally throw me back onto the pew. I was pinned on that particular pew for most of the remainder of the service. I can still remember what the preacher preached that night. Think about that for a second, I still remember what the preacher preached. Most vicars' sermons today get talked about as much as an All Blacks loss on the rugby field – awkward silence! The Vicar at St Andrew's encouraged the congregation to make sure you have got your bus ticket to get on the bus when you are waiting at the bus stop. Everyone needs a ticket, and the ticket was an invitation to know God more!

Over the years, I have taken this ticket of invitation to know God more quite seriously. This invitation has taken me to 20 nations to preach and teach. I have had to hold onto this ticket of invitation through some of life's colourful carnivals and heart-breaking storms. Through facing incredible hardship with a life-threatening sickness of our first child, and now with a genetic illness, affecting my wife and two of my children, a ticket of invitation to experience the depths of Jesus is ever real and ever-present.

I am excited about the future of the Church in New Zealand. Charles Dickens said his days were "the best of times and the worst of times". With high levels of anxiety and mental health issues in our society we embody and carry the gospel cure. I am thrilled at the openness to the gospel of Jesus I experience daily with people from all stratospheres of society. I am honoured to have lived through historic revivals, and to have seen with my own eyes, the power of the Spirit, touching human hearts en masse resulting in lasting Church growth.

Both Emma and I are trusting Jesus for a profound breakthrough and kingdom of God advance into the Harvest fields of New Zealand. Like never before, clergy and laypeople alike, need to be radically rooted in the love of Jesus, and resilient to cope with the profound changes happening daily in our society.

I don't know about you, but even in all my weakness, insecurity, and frazzled feelings, I sense I was born for such a time as this.

Let us not think of our aging church movement as dying but look at the Anglican Church in a natural cycle of aging and regeneration, or winter followed by spring. New life, new vision, and new people approaching the ancient throne of God and asking for their invitation to Life.

How about we take that ticket of invitation from Jesus ourselves and get on the bus of regeneration for our generation. I am onboard, how about you?

Rev'd Steve is Priest in Charge at St Barnabas Church, Woodend/Pegasus. Pictured: Rev'd Steve, Emma and their 8 children (with spouses).

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

Words: Rev'd Dr Karen Kemp

Eastern Orthodox Icon: The Saviour. Crete circa 1600. Auckland Art Gallery: Heavenly Beings Exhibition, 2022. Photo: K. Kemp.

Nigerian storyteller, Ben Okri, once said –

"We live by stories. We also live in them. One way or another, we are living the stories planted in us early or along the way, or we are also living the stories we planted — knowingly or unknowingly — in ourselves. We live stories that either give our lives meaning or negate it with meaninglessness. If we change the stories we live by, quite possibly, we change our lives."[1]

In the heat of growing criticism and controversy, of the stories spun and twisted that would ultimately lead to his crucifixion, Jesus asks his disciples, 'But who do you say that I am?' 'What is the story you tell yourself and others about who I am?'[2] There's something poignantly human in the vulnerability of Jesus' question. Jesus is addressing his friends, the disciples closest to him – in the midst of opposition, will they recognize him for who he truly is?

Simon Peter's heartfelt reply, 'You are the Messiah – the Christ – the Son of the living God.'[3] must have been encouraging, despite his later denial. But Jesus' question is also a challenge – a wero thrown down at the disciples' feet to test their steadfastness – will they stand in, on and by the truth of who they know Jesus to be – even in the face of growing opposition? Jesus' question reaches forward to a time when the disciples' response would cost them everything.

The holy season of Lent and Easter is a time for self-examination and special devotion. A time to reflect afresh on who Jesus is, and who we are in relation to him. A time to reflect on the story we are living in and by. We're surrounded by competing narratives about who we can or should be. We're encouraged to choose, to curate, and narrate our own stories – about ourselves, about others, and about God. But the good news of Jesus' life, death and resurrection is that it's The Story that changes all others. The Story that rearranges a broken universe and restores us to the truth of who we are as God's beloved image-bearers. Beloved to the point that Jesus the Christ willingly absorbed our own stories of brokenness and shame, so that we could enter into Life in all its fullness. An expansive and grace-filled re-storying where, in the words of Welsh poet R. S Thomas,

"…the poor man
Is king and the consumptive is
Healed; mirrors in
which the blind look
At themselves and love looks at them
Back; and industry is for mending
The bent bones and
the minds fractured
By life…"[4]

So, this Easter season, who do you say Jesus is? The story we tell in response has the power to change not only our lives, but the lives of our whānau/family, our communities, and our world. And here's the thing – according to the 2023 Wilberforce Foundation Faith and Belief Survey[5] of everyday Kiwis, a third of those who locate themselves as not Christian, say they are very open to hearing stories of faith. Not from celebrities, books, or preachers, but from their Christian friends, family, and neighbours.

Reflect with me this Easter:

WHAT STORY AM I TELLING ABOUT WHO JESUS IS?
WHAT STORY AM I LIVING IN AND BY?
WHAT STORY AM I PLANTING IN THOSE I PARENT, WORK OR PLAY WITH, CARE FOR, LEAD, OR TEACH?

Rev'd Dr Karen Kemp is an Anglican priest who joined the Laidlaw Centre for Church Leadership (CfCL) as a Senior Coach/Lecturer in 2022. She trains coaches, supervises and resources leaders, develops resources and workshops, and teaches into both undergrad and postgrad Practical Theology programmes. She lives in Cust Village with her husband, Hugh and their Labrador, Bonnie. Karen and Hugh have three adult daughters.

[1] *www.azquotes.com/quote/649656*
[2] *Matt. 16:15*
[3] *Matt. 16:16*
[4] *R.S Thomas. Kingdom*
[5] *www.faithandbeliefstudynz.org/*

TAKE A PEW… SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL IS HAPPENING ON TUESDAY MORNINGS AT THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY MISSION

Words + Photo: Evan Sargent, Communications Advisor, Christchurch City Mission

"Last Tuesday in the chapel there was a Muslim guy, a guy whose faith it would be very hard to describe, and a very full-on Christian woman, and we were all praying together…" Reverend Chris Orczy never quite knows what will happen when he opens the Christchurch City Mission's Chapel on Tuesday mornings.

When he arrives, he settles on his favourite seat just inside the door and waits to see who will turn up to talk and pray.

There's a little strategy going on with Tuesdays because the City Mission's men's day programme puts on a lunch that day and numbers swell, but every time it is different. He does know that it will be real, grounded and often very profound.

Chris is the St Luke's Inner-City Chaplain and while his parish is the streets, the chapel is a place to linger and connect. It's 136 years old and has a special charm and in some way quite powerful in the way it opens people up and peels back layers.

And that includes himself. Chris says his regular visits from August 2022 have challenged him deeply, and in a good way.

City Mission clients include people who have had some of the most traumatic lives it is possible to have. The City Mission cares for the hardest-hit people and it shows among those who walk through the gate, go up the stairs and into the chapel on Tuesday mornings.

"Some of the insights that have been shared with me through the clients have been incredible, they have made me look at the sayings of Jesus in a different way," Chris says.

He tries to explain, "You can read a passage in a standard Anglican church, and it might be saying 'we have to look after those unfortunate people'. But if the people you're reading it to are 'those unfortunate people', it doesn't work. It changes the whole angle. I just have to trust the Holy Spirit to give me the right words at the time."

He feels there is a closeness of the Spirit in many of the conversations he has and many challenge him – "they challenge all of us in our comfort".

"It's not quite as dramatic as rediscovering Jesus again, but I feel closer."

"And so much of it comes down to just listening, not talking. Listening, and letting that person's experience with Christ be spoken. I've learned so much. It's been really good for my faith and it's changed the way I think about ministering."

On the weekend before Christmas 2023, the City Mission Chapel was used as a toy grotto where children from needy families came to collected presents donated by City Mission supporters. Chris was there too and several times was overcome by emotion at what he was seeing.

"I was crying," he admits. "And it's the mothers looking so happy for their children that was getting to me."

"But a dad turned up and I saw him sitting in the car. He sat there for a bit and there was a big bunch of pride that had to be swallowed for him to come in, and to witness that and then see him go out with the toys was incredible. He thanked us all, but I said to him 'You're a really brave man. You are a man of great strength'."

Easter messages abound in the work he sees at the Mission.

"That sense of resurrection and new life. That's really what a lot of these people are going through, society has given up on them and they might as well be dead according to society. But if they can come to the Mission and be told they're actually in some way valuable and they don't have to live this life of addiction or violence or whatever - they can come here, then a new life is possible."

He says the chapel is a place where they will always be accepted.

But there are other Easter messages too. "Holy Week has got its element of doubt in it. It has got elements of service. Christ goes to the garden and says, 'Father can you take this away from me?' Who hasn't been in that situation? These guys have been through that and said, 'I can't cope with this anymore'."

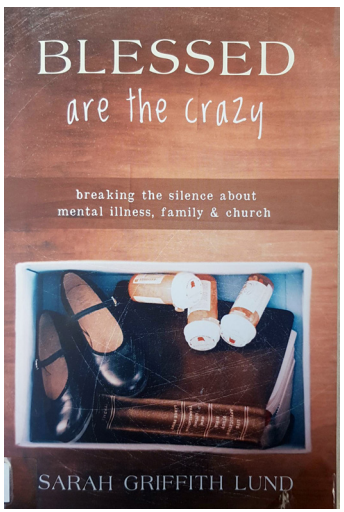
"Even if they are just getting glimmers of God's love for them, just once in a while, that's the beginnings of new life. That's what I hope the chapel does."

Rev'd Chris Orczy is based at the Transitional Cathedral, but his ministry takes him throughout our CBD. The focus of the ministry is to businesses within the inner city, engaging with the poor, and exploring contemplative ways of knowing God.

You can connect with this ministry: www.facebook.com/icchaplainchch

BLESSED ARE THE CRAZY BY SARAH GRIFFITH LUND

Words: Veronica Cross



Sarah Griffith's book is a testimony of her life both walking alongside family members who live with mental illness, and her Christian journey as a member of clergy. As her story begins to unfold, she encourages others to begin to tell their own stories.

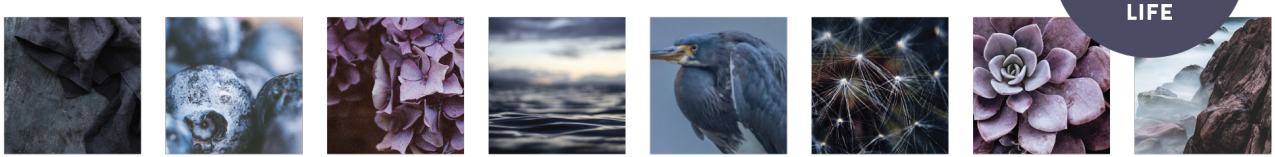
Sarah's story, and that of her family, is told with a touching openness as she shares some very hard times and asks, "Where is God in the midst of suffering?" – then goes on to talk about God's love catching her by surprise.

Sarah reminds us that many faith communities still believe and preach that mental illness is strictly a spiritual disease caused by personal sin and not related to biochemistry. This way of thinking adds to the stigma and shame of those suffering mental illness by the very communities in which sufferers seek compassion, acceptance, healing, and love.

A practical addition in the form of an appendix, is "Ten steps for developing a Mental Health Ministry in your Congregation" which people may find to be a useful takeaway. Available from Theology House Library.

BLUEPRINT
more than ink on paper.

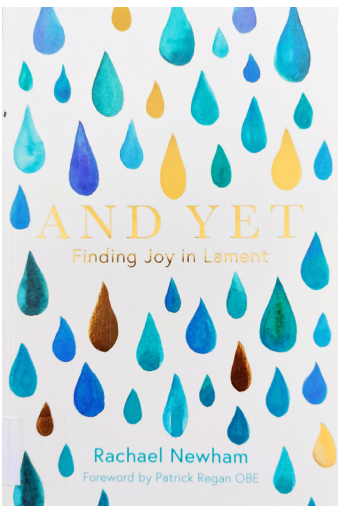
PROUD TO PRINT FOR ANGLICAN LIFE



19/21 Gasson Street, Christchurch | 03 348 0538 | julie@blueprintmedia.co.nz | **blueprintmedia.co.nz**

AND YET: FINDING JOY IN LAMENT BY RACHAEL NEWHAM

Words: Yvette Koo Butcher



This 127-page book surprised me with its contrasting depths of grief and hope; lament and joy. The author, Rachael Newham is no stranger to struggles with depression as a Christian teenager and invites us to embark on this journey through the seasons in the Church of England liturgical calendar year while discussing about waiting, celebrating, grieving, lamenting, hoping, and rejoicing.

This book acts like a journal and each chapter ends with questions to reflect on (for churches, Rachael also wrote 'And Yet' as a Big Church Read). Rachael is unafraid to explore the paradox of light and darkness, light and shadow, joy and pain – I like the helpful quotes she includes from the Bible and other well-known authors.

One of the golden nuggets I found in this book is by Walter Brueggemann: '… the laments are refusals to settle for the way things are. They are acts of relentless hope that believes no situation falls outside Yahweh's capacity for transformation. No situation falls outside of Yahweh's responsibility.'

This book was written during the worldwide Covid-19 lockdown and offers a biblical perspective on personal grief and hope in the God who we can invite into our pain. Available from Theology House Library.

Theology House

Come and visit Theology House Library!

A comprehensive theological library with resources for study, ministry and life in general. Free to join; we have something for everyone!

The Anglican Centre | Level 1/95 Tuam Street | Christchurch Central City | Monday to Friday 9:30am — 4pm
Telephone 03 341 3399 | library@theologyhouse.ac.nz

A CONVERSATION

The Right Reverend Dr Peter Carrell chats to Yvette Koo Butcher about his mission as the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch.

"I believe that God continues God's work in our churches, in the communities of our Diocese and in the different nations of the world."

Bishop Peter, congratulations for reaching the five-year mark as the Bishop of Christchurch in 2023. Thank you.

Q. **What is the most memorable experience for you?**

A. I do not think of one memorable experience standing out. There have been wonderful ordination services. It was a privilege to meet the (then) Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall when they visited the Cathedral in 2019. Participating in the Lambeth Conference (for Anglican bishops from around the world) in 2022 was amazing. Another highlight was visiting the Diocese of Western Tanganyika, Tanzania in 2023.

Q. **Can you share about a joyful experience since becoming a bishop?**

A. There have been many joyful services – all services are joyful, perhaps I should say, "many especially joyful services"! I think the most joyful services have been services where people present have a special joy because of the occasion – a confirmation, or ordination or anniversary. Looking back to the beginning, a very special joyful experience was the ordination service on 9 February 2019.

Q. **In the midst of joy and or sorrow, how do you see the loving hand of God in all this?**

A. There have been some significant sorrows since I became Bishop of Christchurch. Five weeks after I began the Mosque Massacres took place. During the past five years I have become aware of significant sorrows in the lives of many of our clergy. I believe that God continues God's work in our churches, in the communities of our Diocese and in the different nations of the world. I do not have any special insight to share on the loving hand of God when suffering occurs. We live by faith as Christians that God's will is being worked out in our world and that one day all tears will be wiped away.

Q. **Bishop Peter, why do you always wear purple and how many purple shirts do you own?**

A. Most working days I wear a purple clergy shirt. I am not sure how many I own - perhaps eight currently - but they wear out so I keep throwing faded, jaded shirts out and replacing them! I am happy to wear bishop-colour shirts because on any given day, through individual appointments and group meetings, I am likely to be engaging with people who expect to meet 'the Bishop' and think that I should at least look like a bishop.

Q. **The Diocese of Christchurch serves the central portion of the South Island including the Canterbury and Westland regions along with the Chatham Islands. What is on your heart for the people and parishes in our Diocese?**

A. We are an amazing Diocese – mountains, rivers, lakes, bush, forest, farming country, small, and medium sized towns and the best city in New Zealand. Across the Diocese we have wonderful, faithful, hardworking people serving the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many struggles for the people and ministry units of our Diocese. On my heart is a wish for less struggle. For instance, most ministry units would feel less stressed if there were more resources available to them – people resources as well as monetary resources.

Q. **Do you have a 'normal' week in the office?**

A. I think I have but I cannot remember when. Most weeks have something different about them from the week before and the week to come.

Q. **2024 is a year of prayer for the Diocese of Christchurch. How can we pray for you, Teresa, and whānau/family?**

A. Teresa and I are really grateful for all the prayer through the past five years. Many people tell us they pray for us everyday. Thank you. Please keep praying. At this point in time please pray for good health, for strength to tackle every task put before us, and for opportunities to witness to our Lord.

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH PROPERTY TRUSTEES

Words + Photo: CPT

Church Property Trustees [CPT] is a unique organisation within the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia, in that it is a separate legal entity created to "hold and administer" the assets of the Diocese of Christchurch – as opposed to assets being held and administered directly by the Diocese as is usual.

CREATION OF CPT

In 1854 the Provincial Council passed an Ordinance creating the Church Property Trust.

The 1854 Ordinance [and its successors] became the Church Property Trust (Canterbury) Act 1879 following the abolition of provincial councils and the establishment of the General Assembly. The latest version is the Anglican (Diocese of Christchurch) Church Property Trust Act 2003 [CPT Act].

CPT's operations must adhere to the CPT Act and provisions of the Trusts Act 2019.

FUNCTIONS

The function of CPT is to "hold and administer trust property in accordance with this Act" [s6(1)]. In the exercise of its powers, it is "subject to any authorisations that this Act requires to be given by the Synod or other body or person." [s7(2)]. This subjugation is very important for ministry units[1] to understand – the rules, particularly around property – are Synod/Standing Committee rules.

The Act's different parts cover:

- The functions, powers, and operation of CPT
- The trusts administered by CPT – Bishopric Estate, Dean and Chapter Estate and Local Endowments
- Funds administration and investment; and
- Cemeteries.

'Local endowments' refers to property held in trust [real estate and investments] for ministry units and are administered for their benefit. It is not contemplated by the Act that parishes will own their assets. The Act [and the original Ordinances] intends that CPT will hold all assets of the Diocese. This is also reflected in the Financial Regulations of the Diocese of Christchurch 2018 [Anglican Diocesan Handbook Section C] – "All church property shall be held in the name of Church Property Trustees" [s7.1]

For this reason, CPT is the legal owner of all Diocesan property. It holds the property however as a trustee. As trustee, CPT is legally obliged to administer funds and property on the same terms and objectives of any associated underlying trusts.

PROPERTY

The CPT Property Team has oversight of the real estate portfolio. At 2023, the portfolio includes:

- Approx. 125 Churches
- Approx. 100 Halls and ancillary buildings
- Approx. 61 Residential properties [mostly vicarages]

The CPT team's role includes:

- Managing insurances for the Diocese
- Sale and Purchase of properties
- Administration of leases
- Assisting parishes with major repair, maintenance, or building projects; and
- Compliance with government and Diocesan Act and regulations.

Increasingly, the CPT team is involved in compliance issues and

this aspect of their work will continue to have impacts on parishes. Major areas where compliance requirements are increasing include:

- Health and Safety as it relates to buildings and property.
- Residential Tenancies – tenancy law continues to evolve. CPT produces a Vicarage Handbook to assist parishes who rent out residential properties.
- Building compliance schedules and Building Warrants of Fitness.
- Earthquake-prone Buildings – this is a long-term project; and
- Heritage – CPT is one of the largest private owners of heritage-listed buildings in New Zealand. These impose additional requirements when undertaking maintenance, improvements, groundworks, etc.

FINANCE

The CPT Finance Team administers the financial investments of the Diocese. This includes the Estates, trusts, and ministry unit investments. The Diocesan Parish Investment Policy states that all parish funds must be deposited either with a Registered Trading Bank or with CPT. [Diocesan Handbook section I]

Investments are pooled and managed according to a Statement of Investment Policies and Objectives [SIPO] prepared jointly with CPT's external Investment Advisors. In undertaking investment activities, CPT must adhere to outside regulations including the Financial Markets Authority, Anti-money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism Act 2009, and Financial Reporting Act 2015 requirements.

CPT currently operates two investment funds and is considering establishing a third 'cash' fund:

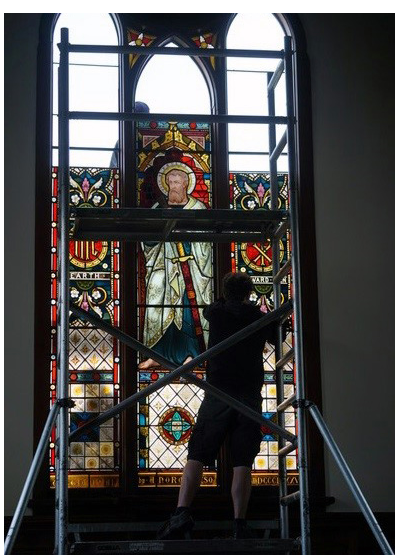
- Fixed Income Fund [FIF s32 Fund]. The FIF s32 Fund is for medium-term investments [1 – 5 years]. The fund does not require deposits to be made for a fixed term and there are no deposit or withdrawal fees; and
- Balanced Growth Fund [BGF]. This fund is for longer-term investments.

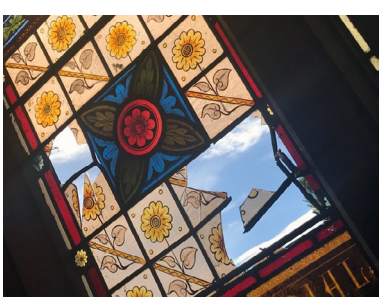
[1] *"Ministry and Mission Units" - A geographical or other group/grouping of persons sharing in the mission of this Church and Diocese (Diocesan Handbook, updated Sept 2022).*

Heritage building: St James' Church at Franz Josef.

ST PAUL'S WINDOW RESTORATION

Words + Photos: Rev'd Dr Tim Frank (Vicar) and John Stringer (People's Warden)





The St Paul's Church stained-glass windows were damaged by vandals on a destruction spree through Papanui just before Christmas 2022, leaving the church in a sorry state. While damage in other parts of the Church was quickly dealt with by a working-bee ahead of weekend services, restoration of the stained-glass window was a major undertaking. Damage to the window proved to be more extensive than initially thought.

Artisans from Stewart Stained Glass put a protective cover over the window and retrieved small parts of glass. Stewart Stained Glass is a Christchurch company that specialises in stained glass and is restoring stained glass windows throughout New Zealand. The company has been involved in many repairs after the Canterbury Earthquakes and is part of the Cathedral reinstatement project.

Once insurance agreed to the restoration of the windows, the windows were removed and taken apart. The impact of rocks, some thrown from inside the church, had left many fine cracks as well as breakage. Some squares could be glued together with conservation silicon, but new glass was also required.

Because the window is so old, matching glass is very difficult to find and colours had changed through exposure to sunlight. Matching pieces were found in storage, because Graham Stewart, the founder of the company, has been in the stained-glass business for 55 years. SSG had several scrap bins of glass available. Other squares had to be specially made. Glass painters then painted the patterns onto the small pieces of glass. The windows were then arduously put together again with new lead. One has to look very closely to see what parts are new and where the old parts have been reused.

On Tuesday 12 December and Wednesday 13 December 2023, the stained-glass window was put back in the church. Better protective sheets were installed on the outside. The growing congregation is happy to finally have the window back after the window had been covered by plastic sheets for a year. The Parish continues to fundraise to cover the repairs which cost around $80,000. While insurance covered some of the repairs and the Church has received some donations for the window, about $4,000 still needs to be raised to cover the installation and repairs.

The large window shows St Paul at the centre holding a sword and a scroll. These items refer to a verse in Paul's letter to the Ephesians in which he wrote: "Take… the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:27). The words "Peace on earth and goodwill toward men" are from the song of the angels proclaiming the birth of the Messiah to the shepherds at Christmas (Luke 2:14). The Letters 'ihc" stand for the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek. The letters "XP" stand for the first two letters of the title "Christ" in Greek. Combined they stand for "Iesous Christos" – Jesus Christ. The red and blue flower symbols are part of the medieval stained-glass repertoire, celebrating the beauty of Creation. The circular rose window at the top is decorated with symbols for the Trinity: God is one in three, and three in one – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The congregation of St Paul's is using the building in all its glory again. It wants to ensure that this heritage endures for future generations. The church is open most weekdays from 12 – 2pm allowing visitors to look at the window and the simple beauty of the Church.

On Sunday, 28 January 2024, Bishop Peter rededicated the newly restored stained-glass window to the glory of God.

EASTER IS UNEXPECTED

Words: Rev'd Bosco Peters (www.liturgy.co.nz) + Photo: Bruno van der Kraan

This year, on Sundays, we are working our way through the first of the gospels to be written, the Gospel according to Mark – so short that some Sundays we read other gospels, especially John.

We begin Easter by reading Mark 16:1-8, the earliest account we have of the empty tomb.

When the Sabbath was over, three women go to anoint the dead body of Jesus. They find the very large stone closing the tomb rolled back. A young man sitting there announces Jesus has been raised, he gives instructions to tell his disciples, and explains that Jesus is going ahead to Galilee where they will see him just as he told them. But they flee in "terror and amazement".

Different endings to this Gospel were added later (a longer ending, 16:9-20, and a short ending following 16:8, but this has no verse number). Early manuscripts, however, end shockingly with "they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid," (16:8). The end. It is even more startling in the original where the scroll of Mark peculiarly finishes with the Greek words: "they were afraid for".

Why was the stone rolled back? It was not so that Jesus could get out of the tomb. The resurrection of Jesus is not resuscitation. God is not using a divine defibrillator, "Clear!", followed by Jesus tottering zombie-like out of the tomb that's now got the entrance opened.

The stories of the risen Jesus have him appearing and disappearing, being in two places at once, entering rooms that are locked, and so on. The stone doesn't need to be rolled away so that the risen Jesus can get out.

The resurrection of Jesus is a transformation that has never occurred previously or since. That's why it's outside of science – science is about repeatable stuff.

Why was the stone rolled back? The stone is rolled back so that the women could get in! You and I need a way to get into that tomb, that empty tomb. You and I need to find a way to get into this resurrection story.

In this story, women, culturally not able to give witness, are given a message to pass on but they fail to do so, and a promise to the disciples that they will see Jesus in Galilee – but no story that this happened. While we, and Mark's original hearers and readers, and obviously even Mark himself, know that the message *was* passed on (or we wouldn't have the story today), and the risen Jesus was encountered, what are we to make of this perplexing original conclusion?

Mark's Gospel constantly demands a response. Jesus tells a paralysed man to stand up and walk (2:1-12). The point is that a paralysed man cannot stand up and walk. But he obeyed. Jesus tells a man with a withered hand to stretch out his hand (3:1-6). The point is if you have a withered hand, you cannot stretch it out. But he obeyed.

Easter is not a day. It is not a week (or an octave, eight days). It is not forty days. Those who would end the Easter Season on the 40th day take the Ascension chronology of Acts literally, ignoring that the same author, Luke, in his Gospel, places the Ascension 39 days earlier! The Council of Nicaea firmed up the way to calculate Easter Day, affirmed that it would be a Sunday, and that the season was a joyful celebration 50 days in length. Easter is 50 days.

Our culture seems to find the self-denial of the tithe of the year (Lent) easier than joyfully celebrating an unbroken seventh of the year - Easter. Easter is our Great Sunday of the year, with endless Alleluias, and the Easter/Paschal candle lit for these 50 days at every service.

Just as Jesus was fully God on earth and continues fully

human in the resurrection, so we can allow ourselves, fully human, to be drawn through baptism, faith, eucharist, prayer, and love by God's power more and more into the divine life celebrated in Christ's resurrection these 50 days of the Easter Season.

Mark's empty-tomb story demands a response. Mark describes his relatively short manuscript of 16 chapters as "The BEGINNING of the good news," (1:1). Scholars speak of Mark's three "passion predictions", but these are also resurrection predictions – "after three days he will rise again" (8:31; 9:31: 10:34). Even so, we still didn't see Christ's resurrection coming (9:10). The manuscript stops unexpectedly. It demands a response. It is the end of Mark's story because it is the start of our story.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL REINSTATEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Words + Photos: Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Project (CCRL)

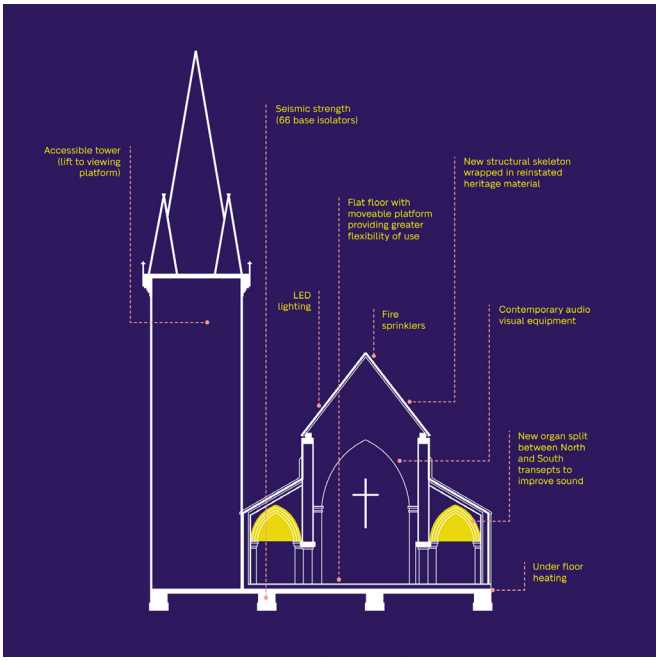
We celebrated the significant milestone in March 2023, when the Cathedral was fully stabilised and workers had unconstrained access to the building. Since then, the focus for the site team has been strengthening the Cathedral walls.

Project Director Keith Paterson explains, "We use three different ways for this work, the first involves the stonemasons deconstructing a portion of wall (if particularly damaged). The outer stones are carefully photographed, marked and catalogued with the details recorded on an especially developed app. The second way is to remove the internal ashlar tiles and dig out the internal rubble, keeping the outer wall in place. The space is then filled with steel-reinforced concrete (which will be tied to the new foundations in time). The third method is to drill holes through the wall and fill with special grout which fills in all the voids, additionally, stainless steel rods help give the wall strength". [image on this page]

"I outline this to illustrate that when completed it will be structurally strong and so there is an understanding of how complicated and detailed the work is".

Getting the final building consent for the main building and tower along with ground investigations last year, allowed the contractors to carefully plan how they will efficiently and economically do the work to support the strengthened building and put in the new foundations. This indicates that the work will take longer than originally allowed, which means increased cost. As a result, the wider project team is engaged in a full review of the programme and resulting costs. The experience gained to date and the strong relationships developed support this quest for the best outcome for the project.

In parallel the stained glass window remediation work has continued. The cinquefoils for the rose window have been remade based on the original design. Where possible, pieces of the old window that were salvaged from the debris in the interior [image] have been repaired and reused. Further from home, in the United Kingdom, early works have started on the new organ, 2,000 pipes were identified as being reusable and will be repaired and re-sounded before installation. In all, we will have 4,000 pipes split between the north and south organ lofts allowing for a much-improved sound. How wonderful it will be to hear its breathtaking music once more!


Seismic strength
(66 base isolators)
Accessible tower
(lift to viewing
platform)
New structural skeleton
wrapped in reinstated
heritage material
Flat floor with
moveable platform
providing greater
flexibility of use
LED
lighting
Fire
sprinklers
Contemporary audio
visual equipment
New organ split
between North
and South
transepts to
improve sound
Under floor
heating

ALLELUIA ALLELUIA

THE ANGLICAN CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY

Words: Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Project + Photos: Heather Joy Milne

In 2023, the stabilisation phase of Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement was completed enabling us to re-enter into its sanctuary. A simple joyful service was held in March and since then in August we held a Choral Evensong to celebrate this sacred place and the love of God at its heart. It was livestreamed to the world.

The reinstatement of the Cathedral is well underway, but we cannot complete it without more help, including from you. It's in all our hands. Reflecting on this, the new year sees a renewed focus on our fundraising efforts.

In February 2024, the Bishop of Christchurch, The Right Reverend Dr Peter Carrell, launched the Anglican Campaign to raise funds for this reinstatement of the Diocese's Cathedral. At launches, held on consecutive evenings at Choral Evensong in the Transitional Cathedral and St Mary's Timaru, the Bishop issued a call to action to the region's Anglicans to be part of it. An opportunity for the Church to show true leadership, unity, and faith, by supporting the restoration of our majestic Cathedral to stand as a symbol of Canterbury's resilience, faith, and hope.

Fundraising efforts to date have already secured $24 million from our generous lead donors and sponsors. Their support and belief in the vision, together with funds from both central and local governments (and the insurance proceeds) have propelled us to this point. There is an absolute commitment from all involved to see our glorious centre of worship reinstated. To achieve this, we now ask the Anglican community to build on this generosity and make a commitment to the project.

Recent research[1] shows public perceptions support the reinstatement of Christ Church Cathedral and campaigns directed at religious and non-religious sectors should run in unison. The Bishop has acted upon this advice recognising the restoration of our Cathedral is not only an Anglican endeavour; but a project that transcends religious boundaries. It is a reinstatement impacting the entire Canterbury region. As Bishop Peter emphasised to our Diocese, we must play our part by leading the way. The Anglican Campaign will be pivotal with the wider community watching our lead.

Bishop Peter will be strongly supported in his stewardship by the Dean, The Very Reverend Ben Truman and the Bishop's Champions: Reverend Peter Beck, Mrs Suzanne Bell, Honorary Canon Jenny May, Reverend Mark Sullivan, and Mr Steve Wakefield. All these members of the Diocese share in a sense of purpose 'to get this done' and build on the platform of $1 million already committed by our Anglican community. We are off to a good start!

We have a solid foundation. We now ask that everyone be part of our shared taonga, our treasure, a Cathedral that will stand testament to the enduring spirit of Canterbury for generations to come. If you have not received your letter from Bishop Peter inviting you to play your part, or if you would like to have more information about how you can support the Anglican Campaign, please contact Fundraising Manager, Jill Robinson jill.robinson@ccrl.org.nz Mobile +64 275 190 124

Mā ō tatou ringa, ka rewa anō te tuara o tō tatou whare karakia.

With all of our hands the roof of our Cathedral will rise again.

[1] *Research First - 2022*

EASY MEAL RECIPES

Words + Photos: Jo Seagar

Anyone can be a good cook if you have the funds to buy fabulous crayfish tails, oysters on the half shell, or eye fillet steak. But it takes a clever resourceful cook to make "something out of nothing". I love to entertain and to invite friends and visitors to break bread together with us around our family dining table. Often, budget or seasonal ingredients are the star of the show. I am happy to share just a couple of very "easy peasy" recipes from my collection of simple foodie ideas that won't break the bank and will earn you lots of culinary praise.

LEMON & PARSLEY FISH WITH BROWN RICE

This is such a quick, wholesome dinner recipe that we would eat at least a couple of times a month. I always have one of those packages of frozen fish fillets in my freezer and in the store cupboard microwave brown rice. It is very simple, better for you, and a cheaper option than take-aways. This is good for students too. This can be rolled in wraps or stuffed into a pita bread with optional extras such as tomatoes, cucumber, etc.

Difficulty: Easy
Serves 2
Prep Time 3 minutes
Cooking Time 2 minutes

Ingredients
2 fish fillets, about 15 cm long
50 g butter
1 x 250 g packet microwave brown rice
1 handful parsley, chopped
Grated rind & juice of 1 lemon
Salt & freshly ground black pepper to taste

Slice the fish fillets into thin strips about 0.5 cm wide. Heat a frying pan over medium/high heat. Add the butter and melt. When sizzling, add the fish and stir for about 1 minute. Add the microwave brown rice and stir 1 further minute. Add the lemon rind and juice and parsley and salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

JO'S SPEEDY APPLE SHORTCAKE RECIPE

One of my most useful and requested recipes. Great to quickly fling together for an office shout, afternoon tea or a quick dessert. There are loads of variations using different seasonal fruit and adjusting the sugar accordingly – peaches, pears, nectarines, gooseberries, plums, etc.

Difficulty: Easy
Makes 20 pieces

1 teaspoon mixed spice
2 cups self-raising flour
1 cup sugar
3 apples, cored & diced into pea sized pieces
125 g butter, melted
2 eggs
Icing sugar to dust

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line a 20 x 30 cm slice tin with baking paper.

In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients together.

Spread into the prepared tin. Bake for 30 – 35 minutes. Cool in the tin then dust with icing sugar. Carefully lift out of the tin using the lining paper. Cut into portions.

This is great served with softly whipped cream, yoghurt, custard, or ice-cream.

YUM!

TO SERVE ON THE GLOBAL MERCY SHIP

Words + Photo: Eva Gregory Hunt

Kia ora from the Chatham Islands.

At the end of March 2024, I'll swap island life for six months on board a ship docked in Sierra Leone, with roughly the same amount of people living onboard, as the population of the Chathams.

The 'Global Mercy' is a hospital ship which delivers specialised surgical care in countries where even basic surgery is limited. 'Mercy Ships' provides a range of Orthopaedic, Maxofacial, Ophthalmology, Reconstructive, Dental and Women's health surgeries and aftercare, free of charge.

Many people suffer for years from a variety of disfiguring conditions, with a range of causes. Some will spend a lifetime being treated as outcasts because they are believed to be cursed. Children and adults are shunned or bullied which increases their misery and suffering. The people treated by 'Mercy Ships' are some of the forgotten poor. Without treatment, they have no hope, no peace and in some cases, no one to love or even care for them.

Hospital ships are a perfect way to reach more patients and help access the care they need. 'Mercy Ships' is

an International, faith-based charity that was founded in 1978 and are well known in African countries. Patients will hear of the ship's schedule via word of mouth, churches, health clinics etc. and can apply to be registered with a Mercy Ships clinic via their Ministry of Health office but there are still many who don't know.

The organisation relies on generous sponsorship to build, equip and operate their ships. All of the onboard crew are volunteers, including the captain and everyone funds their own travel and expenses.

Locals from the host country are employed in all aspects of ship life. Some even undergo training during their employment to help them when 'Mercy Ships' leave.

Serving aboard 'Mercy Ships' has been a dream of mine for many years. Watching the TV series 'Mercy Ships' has had a huge effect on me. Following the person's journey from their assessment to their hope as they arrived at the ship and their joy and gratitude as they left was extremely powerful. The surgeries also impact their family and communities.

My role will be in reception. I won't be working with the patients directly, but I will be part of a team supporting the Global Mercy family, which will benefit the patients and the staff working within the hospital.

Not everyone is able to volunteer abroad but if you would like to support 'Mercy Ships' and the work they do, visit www.mercyships.org.nz/volunteer/eva-gregory-hunt

Thank you so much for joining me to support this incredible organisation.
I will be providing regular updates on my Facebook page www.facebook.com/wharekauriwanderer
evamarewa10@gmail.com

CLUBFOOT

Words: Dr Murray Sheard www.cbmnz.org.nz

A devastating and Isolating Health Condition

High up in the steep, perilous ravines that rise towards the highest mountains in Nepal, families live in extreme poverty. Ramsaran's tribe live on the steepest slopes with the worst land and barely enough to survive - the most challenged are people with disabilities, like Ramsaran.

Disabilities like clubfoot, where the ankles are bent and twisted, mean children are unable to attend school as they cannot walk like other children and the journey is too far. The stones hurt their knees and hands, and even when carried by their parents their attendance is irregular. They fall behind their peers and, when in class, are with much younger children. Often, their siblings are their only friends.

Over a third of the population have a physical impairment. Civil war, lack of rural medical services, and the devastating earthquake in 2015 have added to the number of children and adults with disabilities in Nepal. Many remain at home, in isolation, unable to participate in community life or achieve their full potential.

Many physical disabilities can be restored with surgery and medical intervention. To help deliver vital support for people with disabilities, cbm-funded field workers trek the mountains, identifying adults and children with physical disabilities living in remote areas, and connecting them to relevant cbm-funded services like vital life-changing corrective surgery, physiotherapy and locally made assistive devices.

Through the generosity of people like you, adults will be able to better support themselves and their families, while children will be able to run and play with their friends, go to school, and plan for a brighter future.

cbm is an international Christian development charity, whose ministry includes delivering life-changing medication, support, and surgeries to people with disabilities in poor countries. cbm aspires to follow the teachings of Jesus in Luke 10:27, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself."

Clubfoot – where every step is agony...

In the world's poorest places disabilities like clubfoot, where the ankles are bent and twisted, mean children are unable to go to school as they cannot walk like other children and the journey is too far.

Children, like 5-year-old Ramsaran, need life-changing corrective surgery, physiotherapy and locally made assistive devices. Please help them to run and play, go to school, and have a far brighter future.

To learn more, scan the QR code using your mobile phone camera or go to www.cbmnz.org.nz/ramsaran5

cbm
christian blind mission

GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Words: Philip Baldwin

If you and I were worshiping in a rural Canterbury parish this autumn, there is likely one Sunday that we would likely be marveling at a magnificent display of harvest produce. The service would focus on God's continuing blessings to us.

Many of us take those blessings for granted, as we largely take the good things about New Zealand for granted, especially in the abundance of our land's produce. The whole business of agriculture provides us with food for our tables, and a significant part of our nation's economy depends on working the land in one way or another, and benefiting from its bounty. Some of us give this precious little thought, except maybe when the price of food increases, or there are reports in the news of a threat from foreign pests, or government regulations change the way that farmers have to work.

You might shrug your shoulders and say, "These are First World issues. Lots of people in the world have much more serious concerns: war, famine, earthquakes, floods, disease".

But just in case you haven't thought lately about the advantages we enjoy as a First World nation, let me remind you of some of them. As the result of reading a piece in *Macleans* magazine, the Canadian equivalent of *North and South*, I did some research to provide a brief snapshot of our country in comparison with the rest of the world.

The most recent 2023 US News overall ranking of best countries based on global performance using a variety of metrics named NZ eighth overall, after Switzerland, Canada, Sweden, Australia, the United States, Japan, and Germany.

Forbes names NZ the tenth happiest country in the world, its highest ranked country outside Europe and Israel in 2023.

The World Bank's annual "Doing Business" rankings in 2019 (the latest year for which they provided global data) listed New Zealand the highest ranked country for ease of doing business, meaning the regulatory environment is most conducive to the starting and operation of a local business.

The Economist Intelligence Unit ranked NZ among the most democratic countries on earth in 2022, second only to Norway, and higher than Canada (12th), Australia (15th), the UK (18th), and far above the United States (30th).

With regard to press freedom Reporters Without Borders ranks NZ 13th in the 2023 World Press Freedom Index, above Canada (15th), and well above the UK, Australia, and the US.

Based on the latest United Nations Population Division data our average life expectancy is just over 83 years, 18th highest in the world, below Australia, but better than Canada, the UK, and the US.

"But who knows what will happen with the National-led coalition government in the next three years?" you may well ask. It's a good question. And, because we live in one of the healthiest democracies in the world, there will be a free and fair election in 2026 and you can toss them out so they can be replaced by some different coalition who will then provide us with an entirely different set of uncertainties for the future.

Yes, we have problems. In February this year the Ipsos New Zealand Issues Monitor listed the top five concerns of our population as:

- inflation/cost of living,
- housing/the price of housing,
- crime/law and order,
- healthcare/hospitals, and
- climate change.

Maybe your favourite gripes about what's wrong with NZ extend beyond this list, but the very fact that I can freely research the statistics above, write about them, speak openly about them, and distribute my opinions without fear of being muzzled by church or government, says that we have a lot to be thankful for that we take for granted. Living in a relatively peaceful part of the world is one of them. We are far from the war-torn Ukraine, Gaza Strip, and Islamist insurgencies that have recently rocked the countries of the Sahel.

You may have noticed how far I've strayed from the Harvest Thanksgiving theme. As Christians we recognise that the blessings we enjoy are a gift from the God of love that is revealed to us in the Bible. But thanksgiving is obviously more than a once-a-year experience. The apostle Paul encourages the Philippians "… in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philip. 4.6 NIV), and similarly to the Thessalonians: "… give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thess. 5.18 NIV). Living a life of thanks to God is an integral part of our faith and our heritage. The Eucharist is first and foremost an act of thanksgiving to God for the work and the sacrifice of Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer.

But the two verses that I've just referenced suggest that our thanksgiving, our thankfulness, also need to be exercised "in every situation", "in all circumstances". In spite of our First World advantages and blessings, it's clear that New Zealanders don't see their lives in an entirely happy light. Inflation, political differences, racial tensions, the after effects of extreme weather events, problems with our education and healthcare sectors—these are among our concerns. How do we put these issues into proper perspective with our faith, and how can we be thankful in spite of overarching systemic problems in our world?

The Bible is completely candid about the harshness of life, even for the most faithful. Seemingly ironclad promises of protection like those in Psalms 91 and 121, if taken literally, would lead us to believe that the authors were delusional, or that God cannot be trusted to watch over us and protect us. Will God really be there for you and me when the cyclone strikes, when cancer is found, when the family breaks up?

Christian theology has always interpreted these promises in the light of God's faithfulness. Psalm 121

reminds that God is our Guardian, watching over us day in and day out. And the corollary of these promises is that no illness, no destructive force, no unforeseen calamity has the power to separate us from God's presence. Eugene

Peterson says it this way in A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: "At no time is there the faintest suggestion that the life of faith

exempts us from difficulties. What [the Bible] promises is preservation from all the evil in them". This is the firm assurance that Paul gives to the church in Rome: nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8.35–39).

Here is the ground of our thanksgiving. The God who has created us in love, accomplished our salvation and redemption, and calls us to live a new, reconciled life in Christ will never leave us or forsake us. Whatever blessings we experience, whatever hardships we endure, we can always count on the Lord our Shepherd to walk with us through life. God will never weary of our wavering commitment, or ignore our desperate pleas for help, or leave us alone because some other situation is more important. Once again from Eugene Peterson: "… Psalm 121 says that the same faith that works in the big things works in the little things. The God of Genesis 1 who brought light out of darkness is also the God of this day who guards you from every evil".

So, do this. Take a break from the internet, TV, and radio. Pause for a moment to be thankful to God for everything we have: divine faithfulness, and all the other blessings that we often overlook or take for granted, too.

2023 MAY TO DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Words: e-Life Editors + Photos: Various

MAY

Thanksgiving and farewell for the Very Rev'd Lawrence Kimberley, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral and Elizabeth.

JUNE

Newly appointed Archdeacon of South Canterbury, Rev'd Ben Randall (formerly Vicar of St Mary's Timaru); Bishop Peter shared the opening and blessing of the new City Mission building (north side of Hereford St) with Mayor Phil Mauger and Reverend Puawai Wallace-Swindells (Te Waipounamu); Bishop Peter commissioned new National Lay Director for Cursillo NZ, Mary Cropp at St Paul's, Paraparaumu; and Diocesan Clergy Conference at College House, Waimairi Rd, Christchurch with Chris Clarke, Wilberforce Foundation CEO as speaker (also in 2018).

JULY

St Faith's New Brighton (Parish of East Christchurch) dedication and blessing of a new window, the Lyall Calvert window; Reverend Stephanie Mander is licensed and commissioned as Chaplain of Craighead Diocesan School; New Director of Sister Eveleen Retreat House, Antje Duda is commissioned in Sumner; and deacon ordinations of Gabriele Anderson (Lincoln), Andrew Butcher (Fendalton), Simon Green (St Michael's and All Angels) at the Transitional Cathedral.

AUGUST

Rev'd Alexa Evenden inducted as Vicar of Malvern in Darfield; priest ordination of Rev'd Steven Dunne (Woodend-Pegasus) in Amberley; and Rev'd Ben Randall formally inducted as Archdeacon of South Canterbury in Timaru; Eldercare celebrated 10 years in our Diocese, with thanks to Rev'd Anne Russell-Brighty for her leadership and to her colleagues; Appointment of Rev'd Canon Ben Truman as our new Dean.

SEPTEMBER

Clergy's first visit inside the Cathedral in the Square and the construction site; Synod at St Christopher's, Avonhead; Bishop Peter and Teresa visited the Diocese of Western Tanganyika as guests of Bishop Emmanuel Bwatta in Tanzania; Cathedral Reinstatement Project Naylor Love won a Gold Award from the Association of Consulting Engineers (NZ) for their work on the Stabilisation Phase.

OCTOBER

Leading Your Church into Growth Conference with speakers, Ven. Rhiannon King and Rev'd Harry Steele; Bishop Peter presented licenses to Jenny May (as Honorary Canon) and Lay Canon Carole Muir (to be Pastoral Visitor for the Cathedral community); Deeper Camp at Woodend organised by Emma Tovey and Under 40's team.

NOVEMBER

New facility opened at Te Pā Mihinare o Waipounamu, 290 Ferry Road, Christchurch by Archbishop Don Tamihere and Bishop Richard Wallace; Ordination to priesthood and installation of Rev'd Wendy Heath at Arowhenua Marae; deacon ordinations of Matt Maslin (Curate of Cathedral), Jo Cotton (Fendalton), and Sammy Mould (Under 40's Ministry Team Leader), and priest ordination of Rev'd Dr Andrew Butcher (Fendalton) at the Transitional Cathedral; Installation of our new Dean, the Rev'd Canon Ben Truman; and the launch of the Anglican Life electronic Magazine format.

DECEMBER

Dean Ben, Bishop Peter and Teresa cooked breakfast for the workers on the site of the Cathedral in the Square as a "thank you" for their hard work in 2023; rededication of St Paul's Church, Glenmark (Parish of Glenmark-Waikari) with Priest-in-Charge Rev'd Dr Elspeth Wingham and Archdeacon Dawn Baldwin (North Canterbury); and Rev'd Cameron Pickering installed as a new Canon of our Cathedral.

SPREADING EASTER JOY

Words + Photos: James Beck

Reflecting on the Good News Project

Just before Lent this year, hundreds of young people from youth groups across Christchurch gathered to be a part of The Good News Project.

Lent is beautiful. It helps us to prepare our hearts as we head towards Easter which is a time of renewal, hope, and celebration. But Lent is also a time when we reflect on the state of our hearts and the state of our world.

The Faith and Belief Study explores the spiritual landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. It was released towards the end of 2023 and it tells us that 37% of people who live in Aotearoa New Zealand feel hopeless about the state of the planet and the future of human life. We believe that both Easter and Lent are an opportunity to both lament and take action. We can pay attention to the ecological crises of our world, and we can join with the resurrected Jesus to work toward the renewal of God's good creation.

That is what the Good News Project is all about!

The Good News Project took place on the Saturday before Lent began. It was an incredible celebration of the Church community. Over 100 young people gathered at Te Ihutai - The Estuary in Ōtautahi Christchurch to spread hope, joy, and mulch. The Estuary connects Ōtautahi to the world, as it is a significant habitat for many migratory birds. Over the past 150 years, humans have significantly degraded the ecosystems, but the Church came together to help renew and restore the whenua - even if it was only in a small way.

People from the Christchurch City Council and other volunteer groups were amazed by the number of young people who were willing to give up their time to care for the estuary.

One young person said "It's cool to see everyone working together to care for the land. It's amazing how many young people are here and getting stuck into it - it's incredible! It's so much fun, and it doesn't feel like a bunch of different youth groups, it feels like one big youth group. It's epic!"

The event was organised by A Rocha New Zealand's Eco Church project, in partnership with Canterbury Youth Services. Every young person who volunteered at the event got a free ticket to an evening event. The event featured bands, speakers, and a bunch of fun, but the main point of The Good News Project is that young people would hear the Good News and then go and be the Good News.

But the Good News Project is more than just a one-day celebration. It's a call to action for everyone in the community to join with God to care for His creation.

As we reflect on both The Good News Project and the implications of Easter, we believe that there are several ways we can continue to outwork the Good News in our own settings.

With so many people feeling so hopeless about the state of our world, we think it is more important than ever for followers of Jesus to step into the biblical mandate to care for God's good creation.

So maybe this Easter it means letting some old practices die so that our world can thrive.

Maybe it means biking, walking, or using public transport more. Maybe you could commit to finding sustainable ways to get to and from church on Sunday.

Maybe it means thinking about how you could eat more sustainably.

Maybe it means joining a local environmental restoration project. There are projects in the Port Hills and on the banks of the Ōtakaro and Ōpāwaho. In Ōtautahi Christchurch there are hundreds of projects that need more volunteers.

There are so many things that we can do to reduce our impact on the world and to take steps to actively care for His creation.

As we look back on the Good News Project, we feel deeply encouraged by all of the young people who are taking action. And as we reflect on the meaning of Easter, maybe we could once again commit ourselves to Jesus' message of hope, renewal, and love. When we put what we believe into action in our lives by choosing to live sacrificially, we really can bring a little bit of heaven to earth.

Visit www.ecochurch.org.nz

WHAT 'LEADING YOUR CHURCH INTO GROWTH' HAS DONE FOR OUR DIOCESE 16 MONTHS ON

Words + Photo: Ven. Mark Chamberlain

I had the privilege of having coffee with my 92-year-old Dad this morning along with six of his friends. One gentleman described being part of a church that had declined to such an extent it had to be closed. The church building was then demolished – reminders of our Christian heritage are being erased as the decades go by. Another man said that he belonged to a church that was mainly elderly. Will his church go the same way in a few years?

And yet there is a thirst in the hearts of so many for meaning and hope today. The recently published Faith and Belief Study underlined this point. The very top "longing in life" expressed by Kiwis was a longing for "hope for the future" (58%). Alongside these longings were several "fears in life". The top five were "Losing a loved one, Not having enough money to live, Illness, Crime, and Loneliness." It's a paradox that Christianity meets our deepest needs and relieves our greatest fears – and yet the message isn't getting through. People are not flocking to our churches to hear the life-transforming message of Jesus!

And yet, there is hope. Last October, the 'Leading your Church into Growth' (LyCiG) conference was again held in our Diocese. The first conference in 2022 attracted 115 participants and in 2023 there were 180 in attendance including 20 online. The philosophy behind LyCiG is that our Christian faith is true, it's indescribably marvellous and there are ways our churches can so live and bear witness to the good news of Jesus, that new people will want to join, and we can grow again!

THE PRINCIPLES

So what was gained by all the money, time, and effort of LyCiG? Looking back, I can identify two main benefits. I'll call the first benefit 'The Principles.' LyCiG enabled conversations about the principles of growth and best ministry practices. Church leaders, both lay and ordained, were able to talk about church life, critically examine how things were going, and consider ways to improve.

Modern life is frenetic. We've got diaries, inboxes, meetings, and responsibilities. Churches are notoriously busy places. And yet the danger is that we just keep on doing what we've been doing and never take the time to pause, be quiet, think, pray, and ask God what should be happening.

One participant said,"The LyCiG speakers were both encouraging and challenging, providing time to reflect on the material and [enabling us to] find ways to apply it practically in our own context. They helped us to think about where we are and reflect on where we would like to be."

One of the strengths of LyCiG is that it offers a sensible, clearly laid out, seven-part process to lead our churches into growth. And it starts in the best possible place – prayer! The very first step in the LyCiG process is 'Creating a prayerful culture of growth.' In other words, the process takes Jesus seriously when he said, "… without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5b). And my perception is that the most impressive result of LyCiG is that as parishes and as a Diocese we are praying more.

Furthermore, our clergy and lay leaders are talking about the changes in parish life that are necessary for growth. We are talking about Mission Action Planning, culture change – from maintenance to mission, dealing with growth inhibitors, being intentional about making disciples, developing our digital mission, etc.

In this way, LyCiG has created key principles and created a new vocabulary for us. We talk about creating a prayerful culture of growth. We talk about making a pathway so that seekers can become disciples. And we talk about the four 'P's of outreach – Prayer, Presence, Proclamation, and Persuasion. Knowing these principles of contemporary ministry – the principles if you will – will help us to lead our churches into growth.

However just because we know these principles and have developed a new kind of vocabulary, does not automatically result in growing churches. We need the principles, but we also need the feelings, and this is the second major benefit that LyCiG offered our Diocese.

THE FEELINGS

It's true that principles alone will not change us or our churches. We also need the vision, encouragement, and inspiration to help us feel that we want to lead our churches into growth. Feelings are powerful. They give us hope, they give us energy and creativity. John Kotter and Dan Cohen in their book, *The Heart of Change* wrote,

"… the core of the matter is always about changing the behaviour of people, and behaviour change happens in highly successful situations mostly by speaking to people's feelings."

And the feelings at LyCiG were very positive indeed! Presenters, Ven. Rhiannon King and Rev'd Harry Steele were upbeat and positive. They were likable and inspirational. It felt good to be part of LyCiG. Rhiannon and Harry told stories of their own experiences of being part of growing churches. And this inspired us all. We all felt at the end of LyCiG, "We can do this. By God's grace, our churches can grow!"

One participant said, "The event recharged the enthusiasm for rebuilding the parish. Although we have such a small base, with God's help, our prayers and… [LyCiG] there is hope for the future."

Another said, "A positive and motivating conference. Injected enthusiasm for growth in a place of low energy. Good fun!"

CONCLUSION

What are the lasting benefits of LyCiG 16 months after the first conference? LyCiG put growth on the agenda and showed us a simple and proven framework to get there. And the framework was applicable to our wide range of parishes – urban and rural, big and small, resort town and city fringe. Our vision is to see the regeneration of our Diocese – LyCiG can help us get there.

But more than that LyCiG addressed our feelings. There was fellowship and camaraderie. We were all learning and being inspired together. We felt part of a team – a team that was fired up by the Spirit, a team committed to Jesus Christ, and a team willing to put in the hard work of leading our churches into growth. We felt the love of God and we felt the inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit.

LyCiG will continue to be a significant part of our Diocese. A number of parishes are using the LyCiG Local material to teach the seven steps of church growth to Vestries and leadership groups. In 2024, there will be several 'LyCiG Refresh' Zoom sessions with Harry and Rhiannon to spur us on and remind us of key LyCiG learnings.

Please reach out to me if you want to know how you and your parish/ministry unit can benefit from the LyCiG approach.

THE SEVEN STEPS OF LyCiG

1. Creating a prayerful culture of growth
2. Implementing an annual rhythm for growth (the four 'P's Prayer, Presence, Proclamation, and Persuasion
3. Practicing fruitful evangelism
4. Developing engaging worship
5. Becoming an inviting and welcoming church
6. Making a pathway for seekers to become disciples
7. Begin a planned journey for growth

LOVE SO AMAZING, SO DIVINE

Words: Ven. Indrea Alexander + Photo: Yannick Pulver

Divine love has transformed the ugly, executioner's cross into an eternal symbol of life and hope. The cross encapsulates the heart of our Christian story.

On the first Good Friday, Jesus, the beloved Son of God, laid down his life in love. He accepted unjust crucifixion on a cross, in a self-sacrificial demonstration of God's utter love for a screwed-up world.

Church services each Good Friday can fittingly include contemplation of a crucifix, a cross bearing an image of Jesus either suffering or dead - a solemn reminder of the cost of love. "See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingling down; did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?"[1] Lightweight black fabric is used to veil "empty" crosses of gold, silver and brass in the church, muting their glow and message.

Then on Easter day the radiant, unveiled, empty cross greets us – proclaiming its message of resurrection. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, Alleluia! The Easter acclamation fills our hearts, resounds in our churches and is carried into the world. God's love has broken the power of death and sin.

What does it mean for us to live as disciples of this crucified and living Lord? To "love one another as I have loved you"?

A movie that graphically depicts the cost of Christian love and discipleship is Hacksaw Ridge (2016). It tells the story of Desmond Doss (1919-2006) who served as a medic in World War II. Because of his faith, Desmond refused to bear arms, and in military training he was vilified by his peers and superiors.

Their attitude toward him changed due to his integrity and courage. He is credited with saving around 75 men from Hacksaw Ridge in the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. He single-handedly lowered injured US and Japanese personnel off the ridge by rope for medical care. His actions saw him become the only conscientious objector to receive the US Medal of Honor.

Martyred human rights activist Rev'd Dr Martin Luther King Jr described love as "the active outpouring of one's whole being into the being of another." The cross is a symbol of Christ's loved, poured out for us, and a symbol of life that is stronger than death.

Crosses align us with Christ's death and resurrection. We top our churches with them, place crosses centrally in worship, and wear them as a symbol of our faith. In response to God's unfathomable love, may we, as disciples and as Christ's church, be ready to lay down our lives and serve sacrificially, offering whatever we have in love. "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."[2]

[1,2] *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, Isaac Watts, 1674-1748.*

After 40 years at our Ferry Road premises we have moved.

We are now located at 420 St Asaph Street (near Fitzgerald Avenue).

New location, new options.

Same focus on compassionate care from Christchurch's oldest established funeral home.

Here for you, always.

www.blt.co.nz

BELL, LAMB & TROTTER

03 389 7999

Owned and operated by local families since 1872.