

# Diocesan Synod Report 2023 – Christ's College.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Greetings to you all the family of Christ.

Reflecting on 2022, one likes to think despite the change of chaplain to this community, God remains as ever steadfast and faithful. There is a sense of continuity with Chapel as central to so much of what makes Christ's the College it is. Arguably our boys gathering, learning/worshipping, and being sent from Chapel puts not only Christ in the frame but gives the very idea of a *college* (people selected to work together) breath.

Regeneration and continuity seem at odds – but as any educationalist will tell you, students' need to have a sense of security, and a comfort zone from which to push at the edges of new learning and experience. Radical flux by and large does not suit the adolescent brain.

At the conclusion of the 2022 Academic Year a new Year 9-11 Religious Education Programme was worked through, where each year will build on the previous in alignment with the aspirations of the College Diploma. Three Key Strands emerged as our focus: Belonging, Unity & Diversity, and Meaning and Purpose, with each having a different context across the three year groups. As an example a Year 9 student would examine how in their first year they have come from different places to something new, and explore how in Christ the name we bare we are constantly being renewed—His work is what unites us; in Year 10 how various world religions seek to express their truth, and how although diverse there can be unity; at Year 11 how the Anglican Church—both under the Elizabethan settlement and in more recent times in our immediate context under Te Pouhere, has sought and seeks Unity amidst the diversity.

As demand for places at Christ's College has grown and thus our roll (705 students this year), the capacity to accommodate all boys in Chapel has been compromised. We have now moved to a 9/10<sup>ths</sup> model, where one in every ten services one House (approximately 70 boys) is able to spend time in mentoring with House Staff. I am grateful for the support of staff who were convinced our boys in chapel twice a week, with that 1 in 10 service exception, was better than half the school once a week.

With a change in personnel for oversight of Community Service, the chaplain is now part of a group who steer this largely student driven component of college life. The vision is to be incarnational, and Chapel prefects, Christian students and the chaplain will support and be present where the good work of the Kingdom is already underway. We need not wave a flag or claim ownership.

The Christ's College Chapel Choir has 104 voices this year. It is remarkable, a sign of regeneration, to have 15% of our students commit

to a voluntary, non-secular choir. The students practice twice per week and lead services 4 Sundays per term. This together with their leadership in school singing at regular weekday services is an encouraging mark of the Spirit's work within our community. Regular singing of sacred music, bathed in the Scriptures being a legitimate a place to encounter God, and the truth of the Gospel.

In 2023 through change and in continuity as our College Hymn references:

Praise God that we inherit.

Strength from our College Spirit

Living "Bene tradita,

Bene servanda":

By ancient wisdom guided.

With future hope provided,

Singing Kororia ki te Atua (*Glory to God*)

I do extend a warm invitation to any members of Synod and the wider Diocese to attend any of our Sunday Services during Term time. We would love you to join us and see what God in Christ is doing in our school. Details can be found on the Calendar of events online or drop me an email.

The Reverend Cameron Pickering

Chaplain

Christ's College Canterbury