

Ministry Educator for the Diocese 2022 (for Synod 2023)

The diocese receives significant funds from St John's College Trust which pays for the Diocesan Ministry Team members, the Diocesan Director for Ordination (Rev'd Jenny Wilkens), the Diocesan Rural Ministry Facilitator (previously the Rev'd Susan Baldwin), Deacon's Formation Fund (administered by Rev'd Nicky Lee—Archdeacon for deacons), Lay Training Fund, Clergy Professional Development Fund, a portion of the costs of Director of Theology House (Gareth Bezett), the library, librarian (Sarah Dunning), and administrator, and also contributes generously to the educational aspects of the bishop's role.

My role as Ministry Educator is funded through the St John's College Trust. A wide range of educational projects and responsibilities are within the Ministry Educator's domain, both locally and nationally.

Nationally, I have been a member of the Anglican Ministry Educators Network, AMEN. In 2022, representatives from each diocese met in Wellington and via zoom to process the experiences associated with lockdowns and Covid across the motu. Later in the year we gathered in Auckland to work on improving the processes for those candidating for ordination and studying at St Johns College.

Members of AMEN are also members of the larger TPMC group – Tikanga Pakeha Ministry Council. In 2022 TPMC exec organised two events. The first was a one day zoom meeting to explore the modes of training being offered in the different regions. This has since led to some fruitful collaborations around Boundaries training, post-ordination training tools, and different approaches to vocational discernment. The second was a special residential education event held in New Plymouth. This site was chosen because of the significant work that has been done in the diocese of Taranaki-Waikato to engage with the consequences of colonisation and land confiscation. It is noteworthy that Parihaka is in this territory. The three-day event involved reflection on racism in the Anglican context, redress, and the challenges involved in navigating bicultural relationships. It was heartening to hear stories from those involved in educating as well as hearing history from the lips of locals. The Waikato-Taranaki diocese has been pro-active in seeking to heal and helping pakeha better understand the level of harm that has been perpetuated through generations, though predictably this has not been without resistance and criticism. Dean Jay Ruka and Archbishop Philip Richardson were our hosts. Each diocese was encouraged to include representatives who would be able to carry the message forward. Rev'd Chris Orczy and Jo Bean (who is responsible for media engagement and communications for the diocese) joined me as the Christchurch representatives.

Throughout 2022 over 20 individuals in this diocese received St Johns Scholarships to study at tertiary providers across New Zealand and

internationally. Each of these students is now required to provide some account of their study goals and achievement. The number of applications to the scholarship fund has increased significantly in recent years, and the St John's College Trust Board are continuing to develop a process by which allocation of scholarships might provide the most benefit to the future Church. The Ministry Educator is required to assist those who apply to the St Johns College Trust to fund to develop a study plan and to identify potential benefits they will bring to the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Grants from the Lay Training and Clergy Professional Development fund are overseen by the Ministry Educator. In 2022 these funds were overspent. These funds were available to lay and ordained people who attended the conferences facilitated by Mark Chamberlain in his role as Archdeacon for Regeneration and Mission.

The Ministry Educator is convenor of the Study Leave Committee. This is reported separately but it is noteworthy that nine clergy went on study leave in 2022 and two others have had their plans approved for study leave in 2023.

Throughout the year I facilitated or presented a number of seminars and retreats. For ease in reporting, I will list them.

- At Clergy conference I arranged for two legal staff from Parry-Field to share information on 'The Significance of Privacy Legislation in the Church Context.' The memorable slogan shared by Aislinn Molloy was "Don't be creepy!"
- At the same conference the working group responding to the Royal Commission of Enquiry into Historic Abuse in Care provided a video report to clergy that included plans to develop a Lenten Series of studies over two years (in collaboration with Theology House) to foster understanding of healthy ways of relating and dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Also planned is a liturgical service of lament for the harm caused to vulnerable persons in this diocese and the church's failure to respond in appropriate or timely ways, although it is hoped that all who have suffered harm, no matter the context, will find this a helpful experience.
- In collaboration with Rev'd Susan Baldwin, Rev'd Susan Gill and Rev'd Jenni Carter we held a workshop for clergy nearing retirement. The focus was on spiritual growth in retirement, navigating changes in relationships, reflecting on identity, temptations, and the art of aging well.
- In collaboration with Rev'd Susan Gill and Barbara McMillan we held two days of creative devotions. This was a delightful group and we used art, music, poetry, embodied awareness, collage, and physical exercise in a range of devotional practices.

- In collaboration with Rev'd Nicky Lee and Jo Cotton we created and facilitated a Pastoral Care Training Course. We piloted the course with a group of capable and compassionate pastoral carers from several parishes over six weeks. The outcome was very positive, and the training model had very good effect, it also led to the development of a useful and well-crafted pastoral care policy by one of the parish teams.
- There were two retreats for clergy women this year. The first, in August, was at Kowhai Lodge and drew on Joyce Rupp's "Cup of Our Life." The second, in October, was a silent retreat at Te Waiora, facilitated by Anne Shave. These retreats have been precious times providing a haven for rest and replenishment to those in demanding ministry roles.

Book groups can be a great way to engage with new ideas and to be challenged and extended. This year I started two book groups for church leaders interested in reading a range of books centred on theology and ministry practice. One thrived. We met monthly and had some profound discussions. It was a pleasure to meet regularly with people who believe very differently, but who were able to engage in respectful and passionate discourse.

This year saw the development of a Boundaries Refresher Course for those who had already completed the Healthy Boundaries training day. Two refresher courses were held in addition to the six Introduction to Boundaries training days. (Those with a bishop's license must complete this training at least once every three years.) In addition, I was asked by two secular organisations to run Boundaries Training for them, which I was delighted to do.

The Diocesan Working group established to respond to the Royal Commission of Enquiry into Historic Abuse continued its work throughout 2022. This group has now been disbanded. +Peter has decided to focus on specific aspects of the work with individual specialists.

In 2022 there were two discernment weekends for BACO members (Bishop's Advisory Committee for Ordination) and those candidating for ordination. This has resulted in three new students studying at St John's in Auckland. Ciru Muriuki, Lukas Thielman, and Matthew Maslin, as well as several people who will remain based in Christchurch on the discernment pathway, or who will be ordained in the near future. Christchurch diocese has three students currently studying at St Johns in Auckland as part of the pathway towards ordination. Eddie and Ripeka Bijl and Cassie Lee. It particularly wonderful to be able to celebrate the accomplishments of Ripeka Bijl who was awarded two significant prizes in 2022.

One delightful group of people has been the Post-Ordination Training group, who met monthly at a gathering now known as Professional

Development Fridays (PDF). Together Gareth Bezett and I co-ordinated the monthly studies. We alternated between meetings in the parishes of participants and at the Anglican Centre. Group members led discussion on a book called "*Canoeing the Mountains*," by Tod Bolsinger, which explores Christian leadership in uncharted territory.

I continued to offer professional supervision to several clergy and one lay leader throughout the year.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) continued to meet monthly to share news and views from across the diocese.

My work for the diocese concludes in February. I would like to express my gratitude to those who have shared different aspects of this phase of my life—the colleagues who have shared their hearts, the churches who received me warmly, the many people who have inspired me and reminded me what matters most in life. May you be blessed. May you be safe. May you be content. May you be strong. May you live with ease. Arohanui.

Stephanie Robson—January 2023