



AnglicanLife eMagazine - Faith and Faithfulness

From Bishop Peter Carrell

There is a fascinating theological debate which has rumbled along for several decades now, straddling the turn of the 20th century into the 21st.

At risk of over-simplification, it is a debate about whether a Greek phrase in some of Paul's letters means "faith in Jesus Christ" or "faithfulness of Jesus Christ".

The former meaning has been hugely emphasised in the writings of the great Reformers, in the preaching of great evangelists: what God looks for by way of response to the announcement of the Good News is our faith and not our works. Will you or I put our faith in Jesus – entrust our lives to him – as a response to the inherent invitation of the Good News to believe in Jesus?

The latter meaning has been spurred by the possibility that we might think of our faith as something we contribute to our salvation. Without a personal faith in Jesus, we won't be saved. That can sound like "my faith in Jesus" is my contribution to being saved, thus diminishing the conviction that when Jesus died on the cross for me, he did everything needed to save me. From such an angle, looking at Jesus dying on the cross, we can see sense in thinking that it is "the faithfulness of Jesus Christ" which is critical to our salvation: by being faithful to God's will, obeying God every step of the way, even to the point of experiencing death rather than avoiding it, Jesus exhibits the ultimate faithfulness to God's plan for saving humanity. Through his faithfulness, Jesus Christ accomplishes through his death on the cross everything needed that we might be right with God.

Of course, to benefit from this amazing gracious gift of salvation brought about through Jesus' faithfulness, we ourselves need to respond to God, to say "Yes" to God saving us – and the act of saying this "Yes" is an act of faith – we trust that God has done for us in Christ what we could not do for ourselves. Our faith is in God. And even that faith is God's gift to us (Ephesians 2:8). Somewhere in this theological debate is the possibility of affirming the faithfulness of Jesus and the importance of our personal faith in Christ.

This Easter, let's rejoice in God's faithfulness, expressed through his Incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, who obediently went to the cross that we might live (Philippians 2:5-12; Hebrews 12:1-3). Let's be a people of faith in God, eager and keen to entrust our lives to the One who Loved us so much that in Christ he died and rose again for our sakes.



AnglicanLife eMagazine (Faith and Faithfulness) issue 83

'Faith is not merely "feeling good about God"...'

In this Easter magazine issue, we talk about Faith and Faithfulness—our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and God's faithfulness.

The topic of faith often baffles, and to many a rather difficult terrain to maneuver one's footing on. You will find articles written for this magazine, a concerted effort at describing what faith and faithfulness means to others.

These articles point to what the Bible also describes our faith in Jesus Christ as, "*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*" (Hebrews 11:1, NRSV), that faith and works/action are inseparable (see James 2), and that God is faithful.

When you've read all 21 articles including a recipe, it is our prayer that you will be encouraged in your faith journey during this Lenten season through to Easter that the Lord our Redeemer is faithful and most worthy of our worship.

'Faith has to be exercised in the midst of ordinary, down-to-earth living.'

- Elisabeth Elliot

As we pray for the regeneration of our Diocese each week, may we pause and notice how the Lord works in our lives, our parish, our community and our world.

As the kōtuku gently rests upon the tree,

Come and rest upon us, Holy Spirit as

we pray for the regeneration of our Diocese.

Everliving God,

through Your Spirit You constantly renew the whole creation;

bring regeneration to your Diocese of Christchurch,

grant us courage to grow disciples of Jesus,

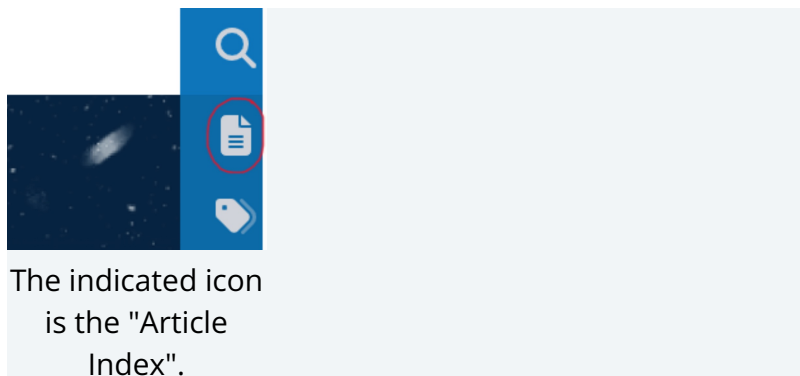
give us vision to reach young people and their families,

and strengthen us to create vibrant communities of faith.

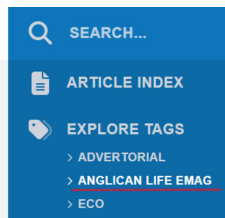
All this we ask in Jesus' name,

Amen.

To read all of the articles in this issue, go to the top right and hover over the second icon called "Article Index" (see circled below):



Next, select "Anglican Life eMag" (see underlined below):



Select 'Anglican Life eMag' to read all articles in this issue.

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Faith and Faithfulness

Words: Rev'd Dr Andrew Butcher

In the late 1930s, Frank and Marjorie, two young New Zealanders, trained for the perilous task of missionary work in China. But as war broke out in 1939, their mission hit a major obstacle. All passports were suddenly denied, and New

Zealand men and women of military age were forbidden to leave the country. Their dreams of heading to China were dashed, and they resigned themselves to waiting out the war. But God had other plans. Amidst the dark clouds of war, a

royal intervention arrived: King George VI himself personally urged the dominions to allow trained missionaries to proceed with their work. Frank and Marjorie were granted their passports, and their journey to China resumed, though it would be anything but smooth.

Marjorie was the first to set sail in July 1940, taking the ship *Mariposa* to China. The voyage was relatively uneventful; Japan had yet to enter the war, and the seas were calm. But Frank's journey, which began a month later, would test his very survival. He sailed aboard the *SS Tanda*, a ship filled with tension and fear. The ship, normally holding sixty passengers, was overcrowded with nearly 300 people. A group of pro-German Frenchmen on board led to the ship sailing under blackout conditions, with frequent emergency drills to prepare for any attack. The tension was palpable, as their journey took them into perilous waters, travelling in close proximity to enemy territories.

Upon reaching Shanghai, Frank's work took a shocking turn. He was assigned to teach English to a group of German Jewish refugees, survivors of Hitler's brutal regime, now stranded in Shanghai. These refugees had fled across Siberia to China, living in squalor as they awaited the possibility of being granted asylum in the United States. But this was no safe haven. Shanghai was under Japanese control, and getting to the refugee camp was a dangerous mission. Frank found himself crossing through hostile Japanese territories, where life was fragile, and danger lurked at every turn.

The situation worsened as the Japanese tightened their grip on China, and missionaries like the Duncans were forced to flee. In a thrilling escape, Frank and Marjorie were sent to the Free Chinese territories, travelling through Japanese-controlled areas under extreme conditions. They journeyed on overcrowded ships, forced to sleep in filthy holds alongside other "non-friendly" foreigners. The hardships only escalated as they crossed guerrilla-controlled territories and faced extortion. The journey was gruelling, and when they reached flooded areas, they had to live on tiny junks—four people crammed into a space no bigger than six square feet. The cold was unbearable, with ice forming on the water each morning. After nearly a month of harrowing travel, they reached their destination in a remote part of China.



Frank and Marjorie Duncan with their first born, Shona in Henan Province, central China (1943). —
Image by: Supplied

Yet, the real nightmare had only just begun. By 1944, intelligence reports confirmed that the Japanese were advancing toward the railway lines connecting

Beijing to Canton (Guangdong Province). This prompted an urgent evacuation. Frank and Marjorie's escape took them on a perilous journey, with Frank escorting Marjorie and their young daughter to a nearby town. He saw them off on a charcoal-powered truck, and the two were separated for six long weeks. Frank, meanwhile, had to abandon most of their belongings as the Japanese forces advanced. The tension reached its peak when the Duncans finally reunited in Xi'an, but this was only a brief moment of relief. The Japanese were closing in, and the Duncans' evacuation continued. Eventually, the Duncans were airlifted to safety, flying in military planes from Chengdu to Calcutta, and finally, to Sydney.

Their escape was nothing short of miraculous. The Duncans arrived in New Zealand in late 1945, but their hearts never left China. Though they longed to return to the mission field, health issues kept them grounded. After a few years of rest, in 1948, they received a new call to return to China. This time, they were not alone. With three children in tow, they set sail for China once more, but the landscape had changed. The Nationalist government was losing its grip, and Communist forces were on the rise.

The Duncans arrived in Ichun, in Jiangxi Province, where they quickly realised the threat of the advancing Red Army. The Communists signalled their arrival by blowing up bridges and other infrastructure. It was only a matter of time before the soldiers reached them. On 29 May 1949, the soldiers arrived, and the Duncans' compound was taken over. The soldiers, though initially stern, soon warmed to the Duncans' children, even singing Communist songs with them.

The atmosphere grew tense as Nationalist forces began bombing the area in an attempt to halt the Communist advance. The Duncans, once again, had to find shelter as bombs rained down. Their situation grew more desperate, and with their children's health deteriorating, they applied for permission to leave. In 1950, they were granted an evacuation, saying their tearful goodbyes to their Chinese friends, who sang "God be with you till we met again" as they saw them off at the railway station.



Frank and Marjorie with Shona, Douglas, and Gordon in New Zealand (circa 1951 in Hong Kong).
— Image by: Supplied

The Duncans returned to New Zealand, settling in Queenstown and later Gore, Nelson and ultimately Tawa, Wellington. Their years in China—marked by constant danger, war, and survival—came to an end. But even in their final years, the Duncans' faith and perseverance remained unwavering. Frank's favorite Bible

verse, Psalm 16:6, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage", reflected their gratitude for the journey they had endured and God's faithfulness in it. Frank passed away in 1991, and Marjorie in 2004.



L-R top row: Gordon, Douglas, Helen (Butcher), Shona and Bruce Murray; bottom row: Alex Duncan, Frank and Marjorie Duncan (circa 1964 in Tawa, Wellington). — Image by: Supplied

Their story is one of unimaginable hardship and miraculous survival, echoing the faith and strength that carried them through the darkest times. It's a story, among other things, of the faithfulness of God. But this is not just any story. Frank and Marjorie Duncan are my grandparents, and their goodly heritage, through their experiences in China and much else besides, is my heritage. Their story is my story too.



Burglary at St Augustine's Cashmere

Words: Jo Ashton-Martyn and Rev'd Kofe Havea

The vestry meeting adjourned at 9.45pm on Tuesday, 11 February 2025. We closed with the Grace, checked the Fire Doors and left.

Reverend Kofe Havea arrived at St Augustine's Church in Cashmere at 9am the next day and was startled to find that the Vestry door at the back of the church had been kicked in and the cupboards were open.

On further inspection, she found that the lower window in her office door was shattered, and the bolts had been forced. Kristine McKey, a Vestry member, arrived early for the Morning service. She and Rev'd Kofe ascertained that four silver chalices were missing along with the missal and two solid brass candlesticks.



The eagle (Ernie) at St Augustine's Church, Cashmere. — Image by: St Augustine's Church, Cashmere

In the church itself the large carved Eagle Lectern was gone. Taking this item was to be the downfall of the burglar.

Rev'd Kofe called the police and I, the Vicar's Warden, called the diocese and Gallagher's Insurance company. Our People's Warden, Annie Ogilvie Gungors, called on our church neighbours who found useful images on their security cameras.

Members of the Cashmere Neighbourhood on Facebook also provided us with helpful information as did the [local news reporter, Chris Lynch](#). The burglar was twice spotted with our Lectern Eagle strapped to his car bonnet by a Cashmere Neighbourhood Facebook member and a member of the public, who rang and reported him. The burglar was arrested on Friday and he was charged with the burglary of three churches, one church twice.

The police have recovered many of our precious items, including our precious eagle. It was damaged, but is undergoing repairs by a valuable parish contact. We rejoiced and praised God that we could celebrate the Eucharist with our parish chalices.



The recovered yet damaged missal and candlesticks at St Augustine's Church, Cashmere. — Image by: St Augustine's Church, Cashmere

Checking the church terrier, we began work on the insurance claim form. Our terrier listed our special items but it was not supported with photos or engravings. We recommend that other churches remedy this as we plan to do.

The parish members were disheartened by this experience but, and I can only speak for my impression, they were not shaken in their faith in God. The members of our parish were sad at the damage and the loss, but this incident has pulled us all together.

Annie has since created a comprehensive document recording the terrier items in detail. She has managed to borrow a missal and a wine carafe from the generous St Mark's Parish until we replace our own.

Rev'd Kofe reminded us, through prayer, that we should remember the miscreant was our fellow human who suffered from instability beyond his control. As we enter our Lent season, our task is to hold him close in the barrenness of the wilderness we journey through. She told us that his mother had rang her twice. In shame and sorrow, she apologised to Rev'd Kofe and to the church. This struck a chord with us as parishioners. The unfortunate man has mental health issues, and we will continue to pray for him.

The parish will work on improving our security – a challenge in itself as the administration offices under the church are not visible from the road.

And on a happier note, the police named him (the Eagle) Ernie.



The Shield of Faith

Words: The Venerable Mark Barlow

In the parish of Lincoln, our Bible Study group is currently working its way through the Letter to the Ephesians.

This epistle contains so much of what is required for effective Christian living. It summarises God's deep desire for relationship with us and the great cost to make this possible. It describes a new humanity without divisions and best understood as a 'body' – The Body of Christ. It goes on to unveil the characteristics of this body and how

best to function as part of it.

Towards the end comes the warning that this Body is not universally loved; indeed, there are principalities and powers dedicated to its downfall. Thankfully the body has been equipped with resources that enable us to 'resist and stand firm!' (6:10-18).

Given that this challenge is a battle, it makes sense that these resources are described using the metaphor of battle armour. Indeed, taken as a whole, they are almost a complete picture of the accoutrements of a first century Roman soldier.

I have read opinion pieces on the *Armour of God* which suggest that every part is defensive save for the sword. Thus truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, salvation and faith are either things that we hide behind or are items that protect us, in and of themselves, without effort on our own part. I don't like either option.

Take for example the shield of faith. The description in Ephesians 6 is a reference to a *Scutum*. This was the large, curved, laminated shield, used by Romans since the 4th Century BC. It is designed to deflect or absorb the blows of enemy swords and spears but also, through its cunning design, to snare enemy arrows, even extinguishing those on fire. So, a brilliant defensive asset indeed. But the *scutum* was also an offensive weapon. It was heavy enough and large enough to be employed as a one-person battering ram. With it a legionary could charge into an enemy, knocking them off their feet.

I find this to be an appealing image of faith. It isn't something that we cower behind, while holding out. It is an offensive tool which we use to throw back our spiritual adversaries, knocking them off their feet!

In addition, when a disciplined detachment of soldiers worked together, interlocking their shields in pre-practiced formations, they could throw back and overrun whole armies. Again, an appealing metaphor for what we can achieve in the spiritual realm when we work together, rely on each other and follow the instruction of our Captain.

We are now in the season of Lent, which is a wonderful opportunity for us to take time to check over our spiritual armour to see if any repairs are necessary.

Maybe our shield of faith has taken a battering, or it has become scorched and pitted by absorbing those fiery darts. My prayer for us all is that, in this season, we will work together, and alone with God to effect the necessary renewals and refurbishments through prayer, reflection, repentance, Bible study, fellowship and regular praise and worship, in order that our shield of faith will remain an effective offensive weapon against the spiritual powers of darkness.



Lent Studies

During Lent many Christians enjoy gathering with fellow followers of Christ to study and discuss the Bible. Besides being good fellowship this is part of the spiritual disciplines.

A popular resource are the studies produced each year by Theology House. These are mostly authored by writers from our diocese, sometimes with collaboration with authors and artists from around New Zealand.

[In the Spirit of Lent](#) is the latest in the series, based around Gospel readings from the Lectionary for Year C. It can be purchased from Theology House here:

Previous Bible book based Lent studies are also available:

[Stewardship: Through Lent with Mark](#)

[The Praying Life: Through Lent with Luke](#)

[Gratitude and Grace: Through Lent with John](#)

[Risk: Through Lent with Acts](#)

[Hope: Through Lent with Romans](#)

[Holy Spirit: Through Lent with 1 Corinthians](#)

For more information on these resources, visit [Theology House](#).



Image by: Theology House

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Clergy Retreats 2025

Words + Photos: Antje Duda, Director, Sister Eveleen Retreat House

Clergy Retreat Days 2025: A Time to Pause, Reflect and Recharge for Ministry

"And He said, 'Come away to a quiet place and rest for a while'." – Mark 6:31

In 2025, clergy across the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch are warmly invited to Sister Eveleen Retreat House for one of four dedicated Clergy Retreat Days. These retreats provide precious time away from the demands of ministry—a space for clergy to renew their spirits through prayer, quiet reflection, and restorative rest.

As Jesus urged His followers to step away from their work, these days are set aside for you to do just that, embracing the gift of uninterrupted time with our loving God.

Each retreat offers a self-directed experience, allowing clergy to shape their own days of prayer, contemplation, and personal renewal. Without a set programme or leader, participants can tailor their time to meet their unique spiritual needs.

Whether through quiet walks, moments of stillness, or prayers, each retreat invites clergy to step back from their daily routines and immerse themselves in the presence of God.

The retreat schedule is designed with flexibility, ensuring space for reflection and fellowship as desired.

On Sunday evenings, retreatants can gather to discuss the flow of the days, including options for communal silence, shared mealtimes, or evening conversations.

There is also an opportunity to join the house's regular midday prayer service, and, if desired, clergy may arrange to celebrate the Eucharist together. This combination of structure and autonomy supports a meaningful retreat experience tailored to each guest and the group.

Retreat Dates:

1. Clergy Retreat Days I, Sunday, 25-Wednesday, 28 May 2025. [Follow this link.](#)
2. Clergy Retreat Days II, Sunday, 15-Wednesday, 18 June 2025. [Follow this link.](#)
3. Clergy Retreat Days III, Sunday, 20-Wednesday, 23 July 2025. [Follow this link.](#)
4. Clergy Retreat Days IV, Sunday, 12-Wednesday, 15 October 2025. [Follow this link.](#)

Location and Accommodation

Sister Eveleen Retreat House offers a peaceful retreat environment in Scarborough, Sumner. The retreat days are fully catered. Each retreatant will have their own room, either in the Main House or the Annex.

For those seeking additional time for rest or self-guided reflection, there is an option to arrive earlier or stay longer on a self-catered basis. Spiritual Direction can also be arranged during those days.

Cost and Registration

Each four-day, three-night retreat is available at a cost of NZ\$450, covering all meals and accommodation.

Attendance is limited to seven participants per retreat to maintain a personal and focused environment.

We invite you to pause and reconnect with the heart of your vocation. Whether you come to pray, walk, or simply rest in God's presence, this retreat is a dedicated space for you.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.



Growing in Faith

Words: Azaria Brooker

One of my greatest passions in life is to see children encounter the love of God, this is often the catalyst for child's journey of faith, as they explore who God is and how their faith impacts

their life.

Rachel Turner, the founder of Parenting for Faith, writes this in her book, *Babies and Toddlers: Nurturing your child's spiritual life*,

"God genuinely wants to communicate with your children, no matter their age and in whatever way works for them. He doesn't need babies to have words in order for him to know what they are feeling and thinking. God understands your toddler's garbled words, even without your interpretation, because God understands baby and toddler language, and he can speak it too. We can raise our children to communicate with God, sometimes known as 'praying', because the God who knows them and understands them loves to communicate back and forth with them."

You see our tamariki can and often do experience the presence of God and God's love, they do have a profound faith and expression of faithfulness - it is just often in ways we least expect. I encourage you to ask your children and youth if they have ever experienced the aroha of God.

Here are some examples of questions that might help prompt an ongoing discussion. (Remember to be curious, it is more about hearing what is being said rather than if it is right, some children might prefer to draw):

Where do you find a special place to be with God?

Where do you talk to God?

When do you talk to God?

What sort of things do you talk to God about?

How do you listen to God?

Have you ever heard God say something to you?

Did you hear a voice?

Have you ever felt God close to you?

Can you tell me about that?

When was that?

How do you feel when you are with God?

(A list of questions from *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey* by Catherine Stonehouse & Scottie May)



Image by: pixabay.com

As children grow and mature in their spiritual journey, they often find it is easier to articulate what their faith means. I always find it inspiring to hear from children and youth what their relationship with God means.

"Faith, for me, is to feel and be embraced by the presence of God in any circumstances. He is in all things, and all things are in him. Having faith in him is to look for him in everything. He is not just found during the singing of a hymn, during a reading from the Gospel of John, or in the monstrance. He can also be found in a conversation with friends, a walk in the forest, or when serving in a volunteer service. He is in all that is seen, all that is heard, and all that is sensed. Indeed, knowing and believing that God is there in all things is faith. To seek his presence and to build a connection with him is faithfulness." - Luke Che, age 18.

"Faithfulness to me looks like sticking with something or someone that is good for you even when things are difficult. For example, this could mean staying committed to something beneficial like learning a language or a healthy diet but maybe not things that will tear you down or affect your wellbeing. In my life, I have found my biggest show of faithfulness to be to God as He has continually shown me faithfulness in times of doubt and insecurity. Unfortunately, instant reassurance and the presence of God can feel very far away at times. These periods of spiritual 'dryness' are a shared experience for Christians, and I have found that reading a daily devotional or committing to some other practice (e.g. worshipping, reading the Bible, or prayer) is a great way to maintain spiritual health during these trying times. Today I want to encourage you to start something new that gives God a means to connect with you and you an opportunity to regularly renew your faithfulness and obedience to Him."
- Cohen, age 16.

It is inspiring to hear these stories and learn from them too!

This leads me to ponder: how can we create spaces and environment where children and youth are safe and have the freedom to let their faith flourish?



Sparring Santa Affirms the Faith

Words: Rev'd Bosco Peters

Yes, Santa Claus is an actual person! And he's not just important at Christmas time. The name "Santa Claus" is a variation of Saint Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the Middle East from the second quarter of the third century into the first half of the fourth century.

Occasionally, Saint Nicholas comes up in the news – for example, when Israel officially announced last year the building of a new illegal settlement in the West Bank town of Beit Jala, near Bethlehem. We heard that Nicholas is Beit Jala's patron saint. Tradition has it that Nicholas lived and prayed there, from 312-315 AD, in a cave beneath what is nowadays the church of St. Nicholas.

Tradition has it that Nicholas was one of the bishops present at the Council of Nicaea. This year, Christians celebrate 1,700 years since that first "ecumenical council". The Roman emperor Constantine (c. 272– 337, emperor from AD 306) was frustrated by the divisions between Christians, which threatened the stability of the empire. Christianity was growing in importance and influence during Constantine's reign; he decriminalised Christian practice and stopped the persecutions.

So Constantine called a council of the world's bishops to settle disputes about such things as when to celebrate Easter, and also the heated debate about the nature of Jesus.

Many people can give the impression that the Bible is straightforward about beliefs: quote a Bible verse or two, and your case is settled. But, you only have to be honest about the plethora of disagreeing Christian groups to see that we all bring particular lenses to our reading of the scriptures.

Let me illustrate.

A couple of Jehovah Witnesses came to my door, an older man and a less experienced younger woman. Jehovah Witnesses believe that Jesus is not God. The man opened his floppy black Bible at John's Gospel and pointed to the right-hand page where it calls Jesus not God but "the Son of God" (1:34). In response, I pointed to the left-hand page of his open Bible where "the Word was God" (1:1) and "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (1:14). "Sure," said the man, "but we interpret this left-hand page in the light of the right-hand page". "And I interpret the right-hand page," I responded, pointing, "in the light of this left-hand page." As the conversation continued, the older gentleman hurried the woman away – she was becoming far too interested in my perspective.

This was the sort of debate happening in the early church. Was Jesus fully God? Was Jesus fully human? Was Jesus some sort of "in-between" being?

Arius (c. AD 256–336) was a priest who taught that the Word was not co-eternal with the Father, but was instead created by God. The term regularly used by his followers was ὁμοιούσιος ("homoiousios" - from ὅμοιος "similar" οὐσία "essence, being") – the Word was of a *similar* substance to God the Father. The opposing position was arguing that Jesus was ὁμοούσιος (homoousios) – of the *same* substance. The dispute was about an iota ("ι"), the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet. To this day we still talk about "an iota of difference"!

There is a famous anecdote (it may not be historical, but don't let the facts spoil a good story!) of St. Nicholas losing his patience and slapping Arius at the Council of Nicaea out of frustration with his teachings.



"Another image of St Nicholas confronting Arius" — Image by: Public Domain

The Council of Nicaea condemned the teaching of Arius and produced what we now call the Nicene Creed ("We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, ...) They stopped at "We believe in the Holy Spirit". The rest was added at the Second Ecumenical Council which met in Constantinople in 381, with a further later addition (only accepted in the Western half of Christianity) that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father "and the Son" (the Latin addition being *Filioque*). But the *Filioque* addition is another story.

The main focus of the Nicene Council was that "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father", and that Jesus Christ was "fully human".

This is an important lens through which Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and all "mainline" Christian denominations read the scriptures. Jesus is fully God – if you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. Jesus is fully human – he was not just *pretending* to be human. He didn't secretly keep Einstein's Theory of Relativity from us, or pretend to learn to speak. Jesus truly learned, felt hungry, got tired, felt emotions, and really suffered just like you and I do.

This is good news. Great news. The early church regularly repeated that "God became what we are so that we might become what God is". Jesus is that joining of humanity with divinity. We are immersed in that reality. The good news includes accepting and loving our humanity and through that (not by rejecting our humanity) we can grow into the divinity that God offers us in Jesus. The Nicene Creed regularly reminds us of our marvellous purpose.

For further reading: [The Creed in Slow Motion](#).

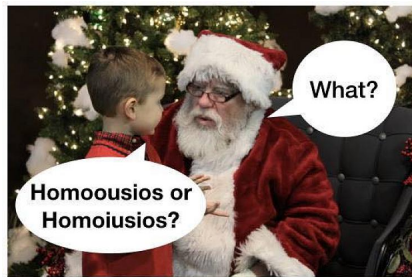


Image by: Supplied



When I was hungry, you fed me.

Words: Amy Clark, Rev'd Sammy Mould, and Rev'd Steven Dunne + Photos: E Creative Photography

If you drive past St Barnabas Woodend-Pegasus any time from 3.30pm on a Friday, the car park will be heaving.

Familiar and new faces gather and wait for a blessing before receiving their coloured peg (our 'high-tech' ordering system) and filing in to collect great food that would otherwise go to waste. Over two years of faithful service, this ministry now has its own culture embodying diversity and acceptance of all, and it is truly beautiful. A

number of people have experienced the practical love of Jesus at a Friday 'service' and come back on Sunday to find out more.



Rev'd Steven Dunne praying a blessing over all who came on a Friday afternoon to Woodend-Pegasus Parish. — Image by: E Creative Photography

People give and receive prayer for needs, and we were greatly encouraged by Jesus visibly healing someone's back a few weeks ago. Any given Friday you will find a great base of volunteers; some who originally came for a bit of help to make ends meet many Fridays ago.



Rev'd Sammy Mould and a volunteer. — Image by: E Creative Photography

"I attended the community pantry on a Friday and was greeted by a bunch of lovely people. I am not a church member myself but I really admire the work that the church is doing for the community. I will absolutely be back and couldn't recommend them enough!" - Bella, 2024

"The reason we love to attend free food Friday at 4pm is because having the food to see us through to our next pay day. Having little mouths to feed is our main concern and the church really helps provide. 🙏

I can say for many families that attend on a Friday are truly grateful for the food you can provide to feed us.

We thank you and the whole team and really hope we can try and source more food. As a lot of us really count on a Friday. :) " -Megan

Satisfy Food Rescue (a service who receive food from local grocery stores that is no longer sellable) has been our main source of supply - and we continue to be grateful for all they give. However, there have been a few weeks where we can't offer free food due to lack of supply.

We are asking for you to keep your ear out for any small (or large) food businesses you know that have stock to spare. This could be damaged packaging, passed best before date, or ugly produce. If you know of any such businesses or are such a business, we would love to partner with you in serving our community together. Please contact Rev'd Steven, [027 230 0146](tel:0272300146).



Donated produce for Satisfy Food Rescue at Woodend-Pegasus Parish.

— Image by: E Creative Photography

"I came just over a year ago when I was out of a job and facing the loss of my home, and found more than just a food bank. I am now both a recipient of the service and a volunteer doing teas and coffees and the witnessing the life changing conversations is truly beautiful." - Ella



A Faith Conversation with Rachelle Mathews

Words + Photo: Rachelle Mathews, Diocesan Manager

Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko wai tēnei i mua i a koutou?

*Ko Saddle Hill te maunga, Ko Outram Glen te awa
Ko Otako te rohe, Ko Aotearoa te whenua
Ko Rachelle Mathews ahau.*

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā totou katoa.

Greetings to you all

Who is this before you?

The mountain I acknowledge is Saddle Hill, the river I recall is Outram Glen.

The district that I connect with is Otago, I hail from New Zealand.

I am Rachelle Mathews.

I greet you all, I salute you all, I acknowledge us all.

I feel incredibly privileged to have grown up in a faith-filled environment with strong spiritual role models on both sides of my family, many of whom have given their life in service to God. Reflecting on the church families I've been part of feels like a natural continuation of my pepeha. I think back to Sunday School teachers I loved, youth group leaders who made my teenage years full of adventure and spiritual growth, and fellow believers who have walked alongside me in adulthood.

Two people who modelled God's faithfulness to me are Don and (the late) Elane McKenzie, whom I was fortunate to travel with through Bangladesh to visit missionaries just before I started two years of theological training. They are a couple whose conversations over dinner always turned to God's faithfulness in recent situations. One day, while I was hanging curtains at their new house, Elane listened to my chatter and offered a wise prayer that spoke directly to the heart of a situation I was facing. The result of me repeating that prayer was an encounter with God in a new and real way. I am deeply grateful to the McKenzies and many others who have shaped and enriched my journey with God.

One verse that has always stayed with me is from Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." A plaque featuring this verse hung in the hallway outside my bedroom as a child. Life brings its challenges. During a time of emotional pain, when one night I was literally curled up in a tight ball because the emotional pain was causing physical pain, I thought to myself "how could someone go through this without God in their life?". God had never been closer to me than He was that night. God is faithful. During another challenging time in my life, there were many people praying for me. I felt as though I was walking through those days in another dimension. It was profoundly spiritual. What a friend we have in Jesus.

Outside of work, with three beautiful teenagers, a 'work-in-progress' garden and governance positions in commercial and not-for-profit organisations, my spare time is filled with a mix of peaceful gardening and inspiring people.



Faith is Taking Action

Words + Photos: Ewan Sargent (Christchurch City Mission)

Radical, counter-cultural, status-challenging – can you really describe the Christchurch City Mission, a highly respected 95-year-old social welfare

institution, this way?

New fundraising and communications manager Dave Marsh thinks so.

He joined the City Mission late last year and leads a small team that raises money to keep the Mission's work going.

Dave explains why he calls the Mission radical.

"Reading the Bible, I always come back to how radical Jesus was in the context of the times. His inner circle, who were to carry his message into the world, were outcasts or uneducated men. He actively incorporated women into his circle, he challenged church hypocrisy on how sinners were viewed, he challenged the Roman Empire. It was radical stuff."

He sees a similar outsider role in the Mission and its supporters.

"Our modern western society is individualistic and materialistic. Nowadays, the drive is for a bigger house, more wealth, and the approach to others is often 'what's in it for me?', or 'what are you doing for me?'

"But at the City Mission, we aren't here for ourselves. We exist for other people. In fact, we are trying to do ourselves out of a job. Us helping people who society has forgotten about, or who fall through the cracks, I see as counter cultural."

Dave says the Mission goes even further than that. It asks supporters to give from what they have to help someone they don't know and will probably never meet.

That's radical. And it takes a lot of faith...

Dave is the son of an Anglican vicar and grew up in Southland. He has worked for several Christian welfare charities and discovered fundraising work at the end of an interesting journey to find himself.

After university (degree in marketing and music) he gave it his best shot at being a professional musician in a hard rock band and spent several years working odd jobs while drumming on original Dream Farm songs.



Image by:
Supplied

When the band project eventually petered out, Dave was left with the "what now" feeling, but the answer came from God, who Dave felt was telling him to go home.

He did and found himself back at his mum's place in Invercargill in his mid-20s without a job and looking for a purpose.

"It was a soul-searching time. Sometimes I'd be on the beach and I'd think, 'You [God] told me to go home and there's nothing here for me, or I can't see it'. And sometimes faith is like that. You can't see the destination, but you have that faith that you just keep on going and have confidence in what God might be doing in your life."

Dave joined a local church and undertook an internship with them. It was a big year which included distance study with Laidlaw College, working in youth ministry and music, and meeting his wife, Helen, who was also at the church. They married and travelled north.

His first fundraising role was with Scripture Union and others followed including with Presbyterian Support Otago, the Christchurch Methodist Mission, and World Vision.

The Bible tells us faith needs an action. Just believing is not enough and it is probably why the Mission's work with the hungry, homeless and desperate resonates so well with practising Anglicans.

"How many love actions would the Mission do every day, whether it be a food parcel, or a social work support session, or a night in a bed? That is love in action even if some people might think it's just because the need is there," Dave says.

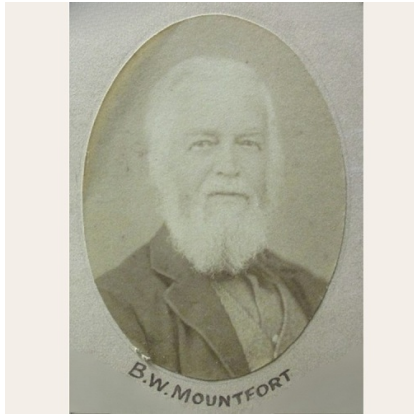
He believes faith is central to the help given by the City Mission, whether it comes from a Christian viewpoint or just a belief in helping others.

For Dave, it all flows from God, who created us to be in relationship and to care for other people. Whether you have faith or not, you are practically applying that through helping others at the mission. "I see God inspiring people, whether you believe in him or not."

Faith is also part of the process of helping when the cause sometimes seems lost. "Imagine working with a client long-term who needs to make changes. You can't force them to make changes. You are investing your time in faith that the person might change. When there is little sign change is happening, you might wonder what's the point? But just by helping, by being there for that person, that's faith."

He also sees God-inspired faith at work when donors give to the City Mission.

"If you are donating to us, you're donating in faith," he says. "You are trusting that your gift is going somewhere to do something. It's an action. It's a counter-cultural action. Instead of chucking this in Bitcoin, or shares, or whatever, you are going to invest in helping other people and in doing so you are living out your faith or your values... or both."



Benjamin Woolfield Mounfort (1825-1898)

Words: Jane Teal

13 March this year will mark 200 years since the birth of Benjamin Woolfield Mounfort, so it seems appropriate to re-introduce him to some and introduce him to others.

Members of Church Property Trustees are familiar with the words "it's a Mounfort" when referring to the wooden buildings that are part of the ecclesiastical landscape that they care for.

Yet Mounfort had a somewhat inauspicious beginning as a Canterbury architect. Quite simply the congregation in Lyttelton "assembled in terror" in the first Church of the Most Holy Trinity when there was a nor'wester. Why? Because Mounfort was not familiar with the shrinkage that occurred in New Zealand woods (having been used to working with oak) and when the brick nogging[i] rattled it was decided that the congregation would return to the room they had previously inhabited in the Immigration Barracks. The building was ultimately pulled down, but not until 1857.[ii]

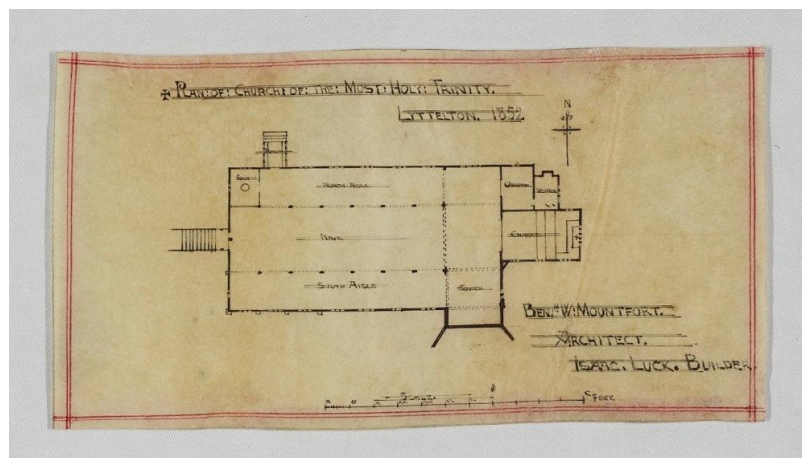


Figure 2 This plan was found in the bottle laid in the foundation stone, which was located when repairs were undertaken on the church. PAR039-LYHT-P3 — Image by: Christchurch Anglican Diocesan Archives

Even while the parishioners of Lyttelton were trying to decide the fate of their building, Mounfort was at work at Kaiapoi, designing St. Batholomew. But work as an architect was not proving to be particularly lucrative so he set himself up as a Bookseller and Stationer in Cashel Street and later in Colombo Street. It was in this latter building that he advertised in April 1857 as being able to take portraits by the "new Collodion process".[iii][iv]

But all was not lost. In the same year Architects Mounfort and Luck[v] were

advertising for tenders for a Goalers House and Police Barracks in Lyttelton and for carpenters for the Bank Buildings in the same location. [vi] This was also the year in which Bishopscourt was completed.

On 14 November 1857, the *Lyttelton Times* announced that the firm had obtained the tender to build a church to be called St. Peter in Ferry Road. Although the church in Ferry Road was actually the original St. Mary in Heathcote and nothing like the cob building that tenders were called for, it was from this date that Mountfort and Luck, and then Mountfort on his own, obtained ecclesiastical work.

Based on various lists, there are 28 church buildings that he was involved in, and all or part of them are still extant. The involvement could be as small as the additions to the nave and a vestry at St. Mary the Virgin in Addington, or the whole building at Tinwald and St. Mary, Otaio. All Saints Prebbleton was destroyed by fire in 1906 and later rebuilt to the same plans whereas St. Philip and St. James Waterton can now be found at the Plains Museum. Further research of the original signed plans has shown that St. Saviour West Lyttelton (that wandered off to Cathedral Grammar and came back again to the Holy Trinity site) is not a Benjamin Mountfort, but the work of his son Cyril Mountfort.[vii]

The Diocesan Archives have digitised the Mountfort plans in its possession. Below are two examples.

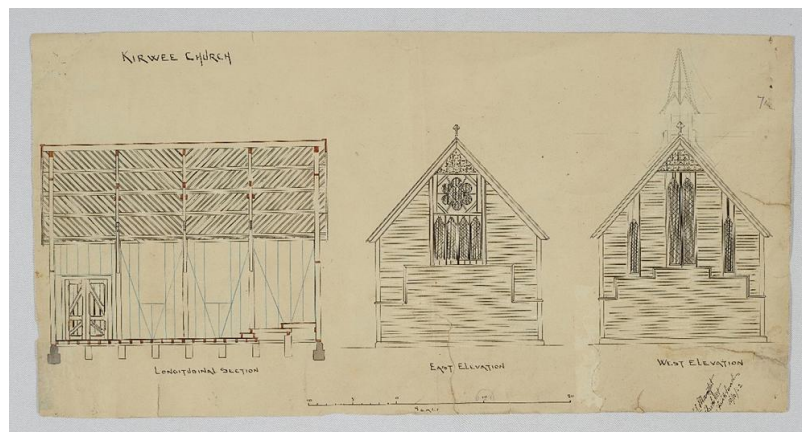


Figure 3 St. George Kirwee PAR040-KWSG-P3 — Image by: Christchurch Anglican Diocesan Archives

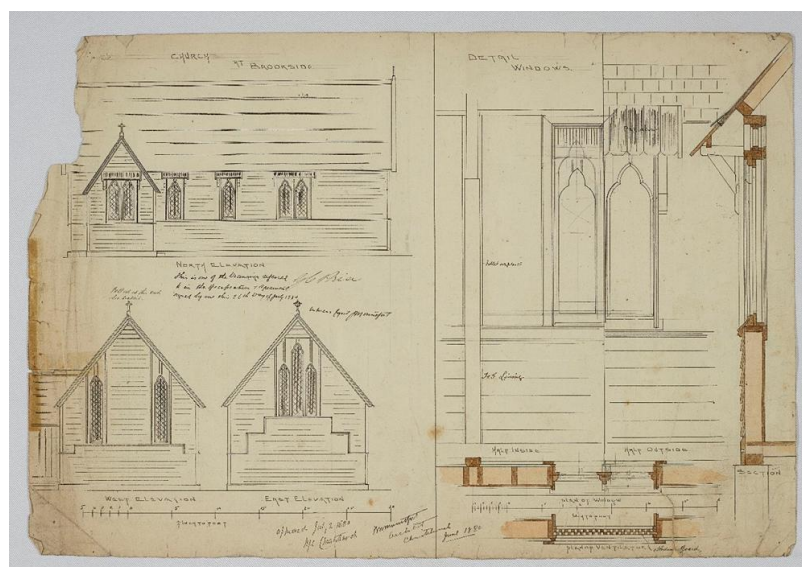


Figure 4 St. Luke, Brookside PAR022-BKSL-P3 — Image by: Christchurch Anglican Diocesan Archives

[i] Brick nogging is where bricks are laid between the beams and framing of a building to create insulation. Surprisingly when repairs were undertaken on the Lyttelton Vicarage in the 1980s it was discovered that at least the west wall was brick nogged.

[ii] *Lyttelton Times* 11 March 1857. BW Mountfort provided the specifications for pulling the building down. FA Weld's painting of the building [can be found here](#).

[iii]. The wet collodion process used a prepared piece of glass which, in the darkroom, would be coated with collodion and then made light-sensitive with further chemicals. Before the plate could dry, it would be placed in the camera and exposed. These are now in many collections as glass plate negatives.

There is a possibility that Alfred Charles Barker, whose photographs of early Christchurch are so well-known, was taught by BWM.

[iv] *Lyttelton Times* 8 March 1856 and 18 October 1856.

[v] Isaac Luck Married BWM's sister Susannah in Lyttelton in 1853.

[vi] *Lyttelton Times* 17 June 1857.

[vii] See Teal, FJ 2013 [Here, There and Back again](#). Anglican Historical Society.

Further Reading

Lochhead, Ian 1999 *A Dream of Spires*. Canterbury University Press.

Mountfort, Ian J 1990 *Mountfort*, Benjamin Woolfield.

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1m57/mountfort-benjamin-woolfield>



Decult

Words + Photo: Alice Bates

"A cult is a group or a relationship that stifles individuality and critical thinking, requires intense commitment and obedience to a person/or an ideology, and restricts or eliminates personal autonomy in favour of the cult's worldview and the leader's wants and needs."

(Dr Janja Lalich – Keynote speaker at Decult 2024)

Cults seem to have hit the limelight in recent years, with documentaries, books and podcasts tapping into a seemingly insatiable desire to gape into stories from the comfort of the couch – the stranger, the better.

But behind this populist phenomenon, we are talking about people's lives. People are suffering at the hands of unhealthy groups and controlling leaders. Many join such groups with the intention of seeking a life that offers something beyond the temporal concerns of modern society and that is in service of others. People do not only join cults that are founded in religious ideology, but also in political, business, wellness, personal development, and esoteric ideas.

The term 'cult' is sometimes contested. It is a word that gets thrown around to describe any group, religious or otherwise, that someone doesn't like for one reason or another. A useful reference point to determine whether a group is showing signs of cultism, is to look to Dr Janja Lalich, a leading authority in cultic studies. She describes **four criteria** that determine whether a group is a cult:

1. There is a charismatic and authoritarian leader;
2. There is a transcendent belief system, where there is consistent adherence to an ultimate meaning or sense of purpose (and where any questioning of this belief system is discouraged);
3. There are systems of control that exist ostensibly to create unity, but which ultimately restrict members' freedoms, and;
4. There are systems of influence, where the behaviour of group members is enforced by the twin pillars of duty and guilt.

Decult 2024 was the first conference in Australasia held to bring awareness of the dangers that cult-like groups pose, to give a voice to those who have experienced life inside a cult, and to provide a space for helping professionals to upskill in supporting ex-cult members. For the Anglican community, the conference offered much insight into learning what constitutes a cult and how we might support those who are moving out of high-control religious groups. Conference speakers also stressed that anyone is at risk of joining a cult, perhaps even more so if we have a faithful longing for the world to be put to rights. So, it pays for us all to think about how our communities can safeguard against cult-like leaders and activities.

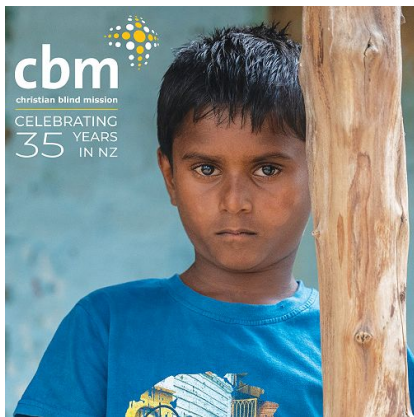
A key point of discussion for churches to be aware of is that there are cult-like groups who are active in New Zealand and who seek out new recruits from existing Christian congregations and university campuses. One Decult presenter was recruited into the Shincheonji cult from within a Wellington church at a time when she was struggling with the disconnect she saw between Christian life in the Bible and the modern Church. Other high-control groups with Christian-linked ideology active in New Zealand today include: The Two by Twos (sometimes called The Local Church); Shincheonji and the Zion Christian Mission Centre; The World Mission Society Church of God; The International Church of God; and The Church of Almighty God.

It is important that we are aware that there is likely to be people in our congregations who have been impacted by involvement with high-control religious groups. And, ex-cult members also sometimes look to healthier church spaces where they can pursue the Christian faith without the curtailing of fundamental freedoms. The Anglican Church may be especially well-placed to offer a space where it is okay to ask questions, where it is okay not to know the answers, and where it is okay to sit and be held by others in corporate prayer. A theology that

prioritises humility, love and dignity may act as a powerful counter to the dogmatic, authoritarian belief systems that are typical of cultic groups. Our churches may offer the kinds of spaces that attract people to be drawn into a cult in the first place: a place to belong in community with a group of people who indeed believe there is 'something more' and who wish to live out a life of hope and justice within the world.

There is growing awareness of the damage that cults cause in our communities. The Anglican Church can support the work of cult awareness and safeguard our own congregations with a focus on education, advocacy and proactive commitment to building healthy communities. Ultimately, we have the opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ through our commitment to hope, peace, joy, and love where all people are accorded dignity, choice, and respect in our churches.

Alice is an Ōtautahi-based Anglican, with a theology degree from the University of Otago, and is currently practising as a social worker.



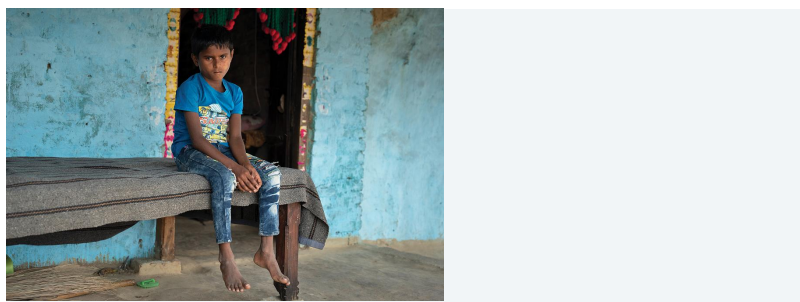
The Gift of Sight: A Miracle for Children Like Aanand

Words: Murray Sheard + Photos: cbm New Zealand

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.

**But the greatest of these is love." – 1
Corinthians 13:13**

He only wanted to play marbles with the other children.



But 7-year-old Aanand from rural Nepal, couldn't see well enough to play, so the other children mocked him and sent him away.

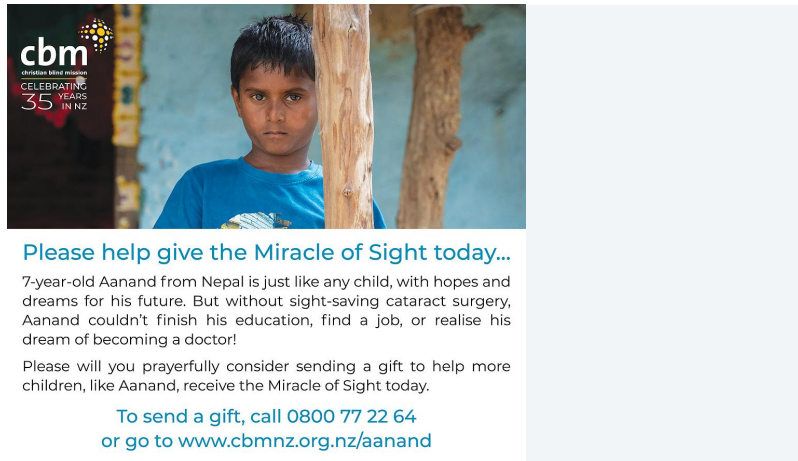
Children like Aanand, with treatable conditions such as cataracts, have done nothing to deserve the hardship and unkindness they often have to endure. Instead, they have to carry on – missing out on so much of the fun and joy of childhood that they long for.

As we enter this Easter season of prayer, reflection and of gift giving, it's a wonderful time to share our blessings with children and adults in need – passing on the true meaning of giving to our loved ones at the same time. It's a way of saying "thank you" for the many blessings we receive.

Your generous gift today can give a child, like Aanand, the precious gift of sight—a gift that transforms lives forever. You can be part of the miracle they hope for.

For the child with cataracts who is at risk of a life without sight... for the mother who can no longer see to earn a living and faces appalling hardship... for adults and children who are needlessly blind, and so many more people with conditions that could be easily treated or prevented, your compassion and generosity can help save sight and transform lives.

Will you please prayerfully consider sending a gift of \$35, or an amount of your choosing, to help answer prayers and make dreams come true?



cbm
CHRISTIAN BROTHERS MISSIONS
CELEBRATING
35
YEARS
IN NZ

Please help give the Miracle of Sight today...

7-year-old Aanand from Nepal is just like any child, with hopes and dreams for his future. But without sight-saving cataract surgery, Aanand couldn't finish his education, find a job, or realise his dream of becoming a doctor!

Please will you prayerfully consider sending a gift to help more children, like Aanand, receive the Miracle of Sight today.

To send a gift, call 0800 77 22 64
or go to www.cbmnz.org.nz/aanand

Aanand is such a bright boy – he loves learning – and his parents have the highest hopes for him.

So you can imagine their worry and concern when Aanand started falling behind at school. He wasn't keeping up in class and even handed in his assignments late. That had never happened before.

Then Aanand was diagnosed with cataracts in both eyes. Suddenly all that promise, and those wonderful dreams, started to fade.

Because, living in one of the world's poorest places, there is simply no way Aanand's parents could afford the urgent cataract surgery he needed. They knew that, without treatment, Aanand was at risk of permanent blindness. His mother, Bhulli, told us,

"It really hurts me as a mother to see my son suffering."

Their hearts were breaking, but living in poverty, there is nothing they could do – the cost of surgery was beyond their means.

With your kind gift, you can transform a life like Aanand's.

Where families are living without hope of support or treatment, your generosity can provide surgery to restore a child's sight – and provide them with greater opportunities to access education, and lead a full and happy life.

Worldwide, 45% of people with a vision impairment are living with conditions that could have been treated or prevented, meaning they are needlessly blind.[1]

Their hearts are breaking, but there is nothing they can do – the cost of surgery is beyond their means.

In the world's poorest communities, millions of people are blind simply because they cannot access or afford sight-saving treatment.

Aanand has high hopes for his own future. He told us,

"After studying, I want to become a doctor. I want to fix the eyes of other children who are suffering."

The hopes and dreams of so many children, like Aanand, can be given life and potential through straightforward surgery to save their sight.

I know that, when kind people like you decide to act, extraordinary things happen. Your gift will mean more than just better eyesight; it will bring dignity, opportunity, and hope.

Every gift you give is so valuable. It opens up a world of hope and possibilities to children and adults who have been left behind and otherwise forgotten.

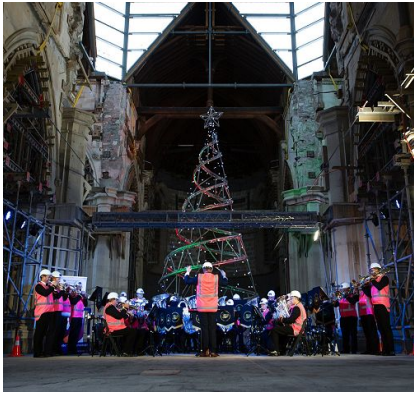
To help transform the lives of more children like Aanand, please prayerfully consider sending a gift today by phoning 0800 77 22 64 or on **cbm** New Zealand's (Christian Blind Mission) website www.cbmnz.org.nz. Your generosity will bring the miracle of sight-saving cataract surgery to adults and children living in poverty. Thank you for your kind and caring heart.



Murray Sheard, CEO cbm New Zealand

Murray has worked in international development for over 15 years, and lectured philosophy and ethics at the University of Auckland. He was born in Wellington and worked across the world, including a year within the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Murray and his wife Joy have two young sons, Finn and Jamie. Friends with disabilities taught him a lot about the reality of their lives, and the difficulties they face.

[1] World Health Organization, 2019. [World report on vision](#).



Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Project Update

Words + Photo: CCRL

Despite a difficult year, we ended 2024 positively. The introduction of the City Mission Christmas Tree inside the Cathedral (adding a Woolston Brass and then a Piper finale) led to significant national media coverage and exposure for the

project.

The 10-metre, 13-tonne tree heralded a welcome to hundreds of visitors who came to view it inside, over the last few weeks before Christmas. We brought a cherished tradition back to life and reminded everyone of the important part we have in our city's traditions. In doing so, we raised thousands of dollars to support the City Mission's work for the people of our city.

The tree was erected at no cost. This was thanks to the support of local businesses. You can [enjoy the occasion again here](#).

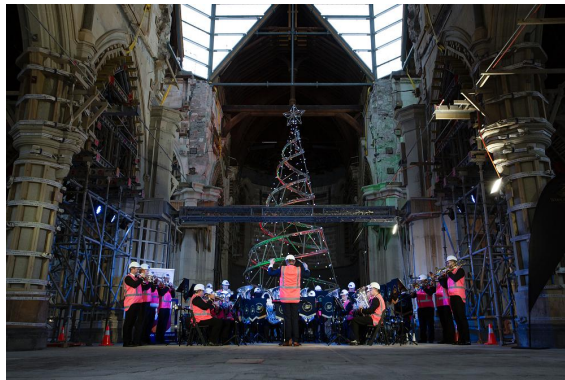


Image by: CCRL

All this set the scene for the new year which has started well.

With the Church's ongoing commitment to Cathedral Square affirmed, CCRL continues to work to reinstatement principles reflecting those of the Church. These include a commitment to heritage and civic pride. The team is now relocated to the site office on-site at Cathedral Square, which means there is a physical presence at the Cathedral each day.

Setting an activity plan to bring people behind the fences and inside the Cathedral has been made possible by securing a 12-month CPU (Certificate of Public Use). Under the CPU we clarify that we intend to continue holding short-duration visits under a Health and Safety Management Plan, as we did in 2024. Access is restricted, a maximum number of fifty in the group wearing PPE.

There have been several enjoyable visits already this year. These include welcoming our local Christchurch Tram drivers and an Ashing Service on Ash Wednesday - a wonderful way for us to begin Lent.

At the end of March, we will bring artwork inside the Cathedral. This is in the form of an art exhibition preview that will then move to the Arts Centre, where it will be shown for six weeks.

Christ Church Cathedral will provide a unique and breathtaking setting to experience the exhibition, *Ghosts on Every Corner*. Mike Beer, a local artist who goes by the name of *Ghostcat*, will display his intricate scratch-built miniature models of pre-quake Christchurch buildings, inside the Cathedral.

The recreations bring together iconic lost buildings of Ōtautahi Christchurch's recent past. Featured are diverse places, from Smiths bookstore, Echo Records, and Wizards Arcade to Java Café, the Cathedral Square police kiosk and the Deans Ave saleyards building.

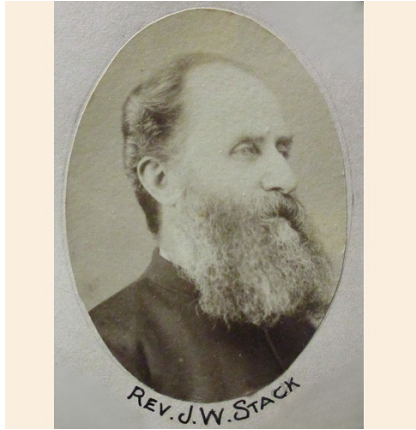
The Cathedral provides a link between so many of the sites featured in the exhibition (and book). Our current state of ongoing repair serves as a reminder of the precarious nature of many of our most cherished places.

In April, we plan to light the exterior of the Cathedral red for ANZAC Day. We intend to honour our soldiers and, at the same time, provide a beautiful backdrop to the commemorative Dawn Service in Cathedral Square.

All this allows us to continue to share the Cathedral as much as possible and show the incredible work that has already taken place. We are showing that we have one-third finished the project. Our activity demonstrates that we are paused, not mothballed. Also, that we are firmly committed to finding a way forward. Alongside this, we continue to keep funding conversations alive with Government, Council and donors.

Finally, we give thanks for everyone's faithful support, patience and prayers as we

work to restore the literal and figurative heart of the city. Together, we protect our city's heritage, our taonga. As well as a spiritual place, our Cathedral is a symbol of human and social accomplishment. A thread that connects faithful generations past and present. That is what motivates our endeavour.



Canon James West Stack (1835-1919)

Words: Frieda Looser + Photo: Christchurch Anglican Diocese Archives

What motivates a person to action, especially in a public or community role?

For many Christians it is their faith in God's purpose for their life. It is a deep-seated belief that talents or skills are gifts to be used for the

good of the community in which one lives or where one chooses to go – and this often involves a reliance and trust in the faithfulness of God. This is a bedrock for the soul, a quiet assurance that does not need to be trumpeted, but is visible in action.

Canterbury has a rich and colourful history that is woven from Māori and Pākehā cultural heritage. This fabric is significant because not only is it stronger for its diversity, but also more artistic and vibrant.

Within local history, there are many 19th-century characters, Polynesian and European, who deserve to have their stories recounted and remembered. Taking an interest in their lives does not assume agreement with all their thoughts and actions, but often greater knowledge leads to deeper understanding and acknowledgement of their outstanding achievements within the context of their time.

The Reverend James West Stack was such an individual; born into a North Island missionary family near Thames in 1835, his early childhood was spent with his parents and younger siblings at remote Church Missionary Society stations, including three years among Ngāti Porou near Ruatōria in East Cape, where he learned to move between two cultural worlds. However, there were many challenges, hardships and health issues faced by the family, and by May 1848 they had returned to England.

Our pathways in life are sometimes guided by chance meetings with significant individuals. As a teenager in London, encounters with two such men changed the course of the life of James West Stack: a reunion with CMS missionary Rev'd William Williams; and time spent renewing his te reo with Tamihana Te Rauparaha.

Stack was too young to be a missionary but trained for a year as a teacher, and returned to New Zealand in 1852 in the company of Tamihana Te Rauparaha. Faith and bicultural friendship provided important motivation for the rest of Stack's life.

James West Stack gave a lifetime of service in various communities including among Māori of the Banks Peninsula and Tuahiwi, and 10 years as Vicar of the parish of Fendalton in Christchurch in the 1890s.

Rev'd Stack also made a valuable contribution by increasing European knowledge of Māori through his research, publications and public lectures.

Stack wrote an autobiography, and his memoirs were later published as three books, titled: *Early Maoriland Adventures*, *More Maoriland Adventures*, and *Further Maoriland Adventures*. These books are eminently readable, full of personal insights and reflection, but also amusing snippets of cultural interaction during pastoral visits such as at Wairewa (Little River) and Rāpaki. Fluent in te reo, and with a deep and abiding appreciation of Māori aroha and hospitality, he also confesses his struggle with a supper of muttonbird. The beauty of the Banks Peninsula, the bush-covered hills and birdsong are captured in his memoirs of journeys on horseback or, indeed, alone in the encroaching darkness, leading his horse along the stony shore of Wairewa (Lake Forsyth).

Faith and a sense of God's faithfulness may be a birthright of Christians raised in Christian family, providing a sense of God's purpose for their life. For others, there is a Road to Damascus revelation as experienced by St. Paul.

Each person is a product of their generation and culture, and James West Stack was an educated European of the 19th century. His unique gifts included his birth in Aotearoa prior to colonisation and his knowledge of Māori language and culture. He made the choice to use his talents in New Zealand as a teacher and clergyman in the Māori Mission. He was a practical man but undoubtedly aided by the support of his wife Eliza.

Stack had a vision of a Māori tikanga within the Anglican church in New Zealand. James and Eliza Stack's significant contribution included the construction of Te Whare Tipene St. Stephen's Church at Tuahiwi in 1867. They faced many challenges in the 1870s, but today, Tuahiwi is the prominent marae of Ngāi Tahu and local iwi Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

James West Stack was also able to use his bilingual skills as an interpreter, and later inspector of Native Schools. His final years of service as an Anglican clergyman were as Vicar of Fendalton from 1888-1898. His vision, faith and contribution to the community in Fendalton and the Christchurch Diocese will be included in the 150th anniversary celebrations of the parish in 2026.

Recommended reading and websites

Looser, F. M. *Fendall's Legacy: a history of Fendalton and north-west Christchurch*. Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2002

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<https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1s21/stack-james-west>

<https://www.canterburymuseum.com/explore/our-stories/the-stack-family-153-years-of-museum-donations>

[The Blain Biographical Directory of Anglican Clergy in the Pacific](#)



Faith

Words: Dr Richard Neville (Laidlaw College)

"Faith" is a small word that is big on meaning. In what follows we will look at a few features of faith from the life of Abraham.

Genesis 15 opens with the Lord speaking to Abraham, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward" (15:1).

These words assure Abraham that the Lord will protect him ("your shield") and provide him with great material wealth ("your very great reward"). Abraham responds rather boldly by pointing out that God's generosity wouldn't mean much as long as Abraham remained childless, and everything he owned would be inherited by a servant in his household. What Abraham needed was an heir.

The Lord had no trouble with Abraham's boldness and responded with an even more spectacular promise than Abraham was looking for. The Lord took Abraham outside and said, "'Look up at the sky and count the stars – if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be'" (15:5). The imagery here is remarkable and speaks to the immensity of what God was promising to Abraham. He wouldn't just father an heir, he would be ancestor to a population beyond counting.

Despite the immensity of the Lord's promise, we are told, "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (15:6). There are a couple of things worth noting about Abraham's faith.

First, Abraham was responding to something God had *said*; in this case something he had promised. This suggests that faith has cognitive content – it is believing that something is true. God promised he would produce a multitude of descendants and Abraham believed what God said.

We find faith has content in the New Testament as well. Paul recalls how he received and passed on to the Corinthians, "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Paul writes, "By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have *believed* in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:2).

For faith to mean anything it must adhere to certain content. Otherwise, faith is in vain. Faith that is misinformed doesn't achieve anything. Faith that the Easter Bunny will bring peace to the world is silly and pointless. But faith in God and the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ brings eternal life.

Second, faith is trust in God. In this sense faith considers the Lord utterly trustworthy and dependable. When God says he will give Abraham descendants like the stars in the sky, Abraham trusts God completely. He knows the Lord is faithful and will deliver on his promises. In this sense faith is not so much about believing something as it is trusting in someone.

I can make all kinds of promises to my wife, but if I have a track record of letting her down and being unfaithful, she isn't going to trust what I say. Trust is only as good as its object. And when the object of our trust is the Lord, we can be confident his faithfulness will see us through. We find this kind of faith in the New Testament as well. When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we know he is willing and able to bring us to our eternal home, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood (vivid imagery depicting faith in Jesus) has eternal life, and *I will raise them up at the last day*" (John 6:54). We can be absolutely certain that when we trust Jesus he will deliver on his promise.

The other thing to note about faith is that it changes the way we live. This is nicely illustrated in Genesis 13 when Abraham and Lot part company because there isn't enough space for their animals to graze together. Previously, in chapter 12 the Lord had appeared to Abraham and promised to give the land of Canaan to his descendants, "To your offspring I will give this land" (12:7).

When Abraham and Lot part company in chapter 13, we are told Lot "*saw* the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord" and so "Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan" (13:10-11). Lot's choice was *based on sight* and as a result Lot left the land of promise. That is what the text means when it says, "Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain" (13:12). Lot was drawn away from the land of promise when he saw the attractive well-watered plains, while Abraham chose by faith to remain in the land God had promised him.

The contrast is one of faith versus sight. The only piece of land Abraham owned

before he died was the field he purchased to bury his wife Sarah (Genesis 23). Nevertheless, by faith he chose to wait on the Lord to make good on his promise of a land for his descendants. 400 years later the Lord did just that and brought Israel into the land. The story is a simple one, but it makes an important point. We can choose to live by faith, making choices based on what God has revealed about his great purposes for us and his creation, or we can simply live our lives like Lot (and so many others) based on what appears attractive and what will give us immediate gratification.



Diaspora Opportunities: Love and faith in action

Words + Photos: Rev'd Victoria Sibley-Bentley (Anglican Movement) and Terry McGrath (ISMNZ: International Student Ministries of New Zealand)

At the centre of the Bible is relationship: relationship between God and people; between people and God; and amongst people.

When Jesus was asked the question, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:34-40). This command to 'love your neighbour as yourself' flows out from, and is energised by, how we love God. From earliest times, the concept of showing loving, kind treatment of foreigners has been inherent in what God expects of us, and Leviticus 19:34 is a great example of this.

A more recent and local example, is Palmerston North Central Baptist Church's welcoming of foreigners, which started with international students. A group of members offered friendship to international students, welcomed them into their homes and provided hospitality. Some joined the church. Subsequently, the congregation became aware of migrants who were being drawn to the environment at Central Baptist. Some migrants began asking about Christianity and joined a Bible discovery group. Today, the church has a significant Chinese congregation with a Chinese pastor, and many other migrants have also found a place to belong there. Critically, the church leadership has endorsed and supported migrant ministry, and this is now part of the church's DNA.

The latest New Zealand Census indicated that 30%^[1] of our population were born overseas. Looking outwardly on our local mission field, we discover the world coming to us via migrants, international students, refugees, temporary labourers, and tourists. The flow of people into and through our community creates wonderful opportunities for the gospel from, to and through this diaspora. History shows us that the gospel moves wherever and whenever people move, and we in Aotearoa New Zealand have experienced people movement that has had implications for the gospel. Temporary workers, students, and trade training, over

many years, has had an impact for the gospel amongst those coming to New Zealand but subsequently returning to their home countries.[2] The church here has also experienced levels of renewal through arriving migrants of faith.



Image by: Supplied

Some specialist ministries have arisen in response to these opportunities. International Student Ministries of New Zealand,[3] which is now a nationwide ministry dedicated to building missional capacity amongst international students and migrants, is one example. Those responding to the gospel are equipped to act as Christ's ambassadors into their differing work and life contexts in their home countries or within the New Zealand community.

As the church wrestles with migration missional opportunity, a Diaspora Missiologist,[4] Dr Terry Casino[5] has posed some questions to help us think through evaluating mission amongst diaspora:

- *Do we have a solid biblical theology of missions among the diasporas?*
- *Do we have strong support from leadership to do diaspora mission?*
- *Do we have intentional evangelism and discipleship efforts among diaspora groups?*
- *Are we equipped and empowered to deal with ethno-linguistic and cultural issues?*
- *Do we have qualified personnel, adequate resources, and relevant experience for diaspora mission?*

Ministry amongst our local community diaspora is not complex but needs to be thought about sensibly and prayerfully, with a focus on:[6]

1. Knowing our community profile.[7]
2. Being able to identify points of entry amongst our diaspora.
3. Developing a strategy for ministry within the diaspora e.g. 4 steps to a multicultural ministry:
 - i) Identify and use welcomers

- ii) Develop a team for ministry and prayer
- iii) Make international (diaspora) ministry a feature of your church or group
- iv) Develop partnership with mission groups and ministries that can assist with resources, training and links for returnees.

In our earlier example of Central Baptist Church, we see a growing cultivation of cross-cultural competencies and people naturally interacting across cultures, with a genuine, loving approach to sharing the gospel. This is vital if we are to uphold the value and dignity, the 'mana', of each and every person we come into contact with, and for enabling life-long discipleship.

The Lord has allowed many of the nations to come to us here, and has uniquely given us the privilege of walking alongside them for the gospel's sake and to build up His church. The invitation to us is to have "ears to hear and eyes to see", so that we might be involved in ministry amongst the diasporas and migrants of our communities; in the workplace, the marketplace, places of sport and recreation, hospitality, entertainment and education – journeying alongside and for the sake of the gospel.

About the Authors

Reverend Victoria Sibley-Bentley

Victoria is an ordained Anglican Priest serving as part of the team at All Saints Church in Palmerston North. She has been part of the Massey University Chaplaincy team on the Manawatu campus since 2008, ministering amongst students and staff.

Terry McGrath

Terry is a past National Director of [ISMNZ](https://www.ismnz.org.nz/), which was developed to facilitate Christian Ministry and pastoral care amongst international students. He has contributed to developing resources, training research and writing in cross cultural, migrant and international student support and settlement in New Zealand, and beyond through involvement in [The Lausanne Movement's](#) Worldwide Student Ministries executive. Currently Terry focuses in assisting ISMNZ mainly through mentoring and advising in Wellington and Palmerston North.

[1] New Zealand 2023 Census on birth origins.

[2] Luke 8:39 "Return home and tell how much the Lord God has done for you".

[3] <https://www.ismnz.org.nz/>

[4] Definition of Diaspora Missiology: A "missiological framework for understanding and participating in God's redemptive mission among people living outside their place of origin." *Seoul Declaration on Diaspora Missiology*, November 2009.

[5] <https://gardner-webb.edu/people/terry-casino/>

[6] Another excellent approach is offered by Elias Madeiros in “Local Churches in Missional Diasporas”, pp190-193 in *Scattered and Gathered – A Global Compendium of Diaspora Missiology*, Edited by Sadiri Joy Tira and Tetsunao Yamamori, 2016.

[7] Local councils very often have good information on the diversity within their communities, as well as entry points.



Recipe: Vegetable Kuruma

Words: Aifa's Kitchen + Photos: Archdeacon Katrina Hill



Image by: Katrina Hill

Prepare vegetables

Chop the following:

- 2 medium onions (1 cup finely chopped)
- 1 medium carrot ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup, half-inch pieces)
- 1 medium potato (1 cup, half-inch pieces)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup green peas (fresh or frozen)
- 7 to 8 green beans ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup, half-inch pieces, French beans)
- 1 small sized green chilli
- curry leaves

Ingredients to add to the pan

- 3 Tablespoons of cooking oil
- About 1 teaspoon of fennel seeds (to taste)
- 1 teaspoon of garlic paste (to taste)

- 1 teaspoon of ginger paste (to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon of turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon of coriander powder
- ½ teaspoon of garam masala
- 1 cup of boiled water
- Chopped coriander leaves
- ¼ teaspoon of black pepper powder

Ingredients for making the white paste

- 6 Whole cashew nuts
- 5 Tablespoons freshly grated coconut
- ¼ teaspoon of salt

Preparation

1. Heat a non-stick or stainless-steel frying pan on a cooking top.
2. Pour 3 tablespoons of cooking oil. When heated, add about 1 teaspoon of fennel seeds to taste.
3. Turn the temperature to low and add 1 teaspoon of garlic paste and 1 teaspoon of ginger paste. Fry for 1 minute.
4. Then add the chopped onion and fry for 2 minutes. Now add all the cut vegetables into the pan and fry for 2-3 minutes. Add salt to taste.
5. Add ¼ teaspoon of turmeric powder, 1 teaspoon of coriander powder and ½ teaspoon of garam masala and mix with the vegetables and fry for 2 minutes.
6. Turn the temperature to medium and pour 1 cup of boiled water. Close the pan with a lid and let it cook for 7-8minutes.
7. In the meantime, grind the white paste ingredients in a grinder or small food processor until the paste is smooth.
8. When the vegetables are cooked well, pour the white paste to the frying pan and mix well. Let it boil for 2 minutes, then add some chopped coriander leaves and add ¼ teaspoon of black pepper powder. Let it cook for 2 minutes and turn off the cooking.
9. Now a delicious and healthy Vegetable Kuruma is ready to be served.



175th Milestone for Christ's College

Words: Claire Bennett + Photos: Christ's College

Christ's College, New Zealand's only independent school for boys from Years 9–13, this year celebrates its 175th anniversary.

The Christchurch school, one of the oldest in the country, has marked the milestone with a gala weekend of festivities which drew hundreds of Old Boys from throughout New Zealand and overseas – including 103-year-old John Rutherford.

Established in 1850 at the Lyttelton Immigration Barracks, Christ's College was modelled on the English public schools, with an emphasis on a classical education, including Greek and Latin, as well as Modern Languages, Mathematics, English, History and Geography. Boys were also expected to be able to conduct scientific experiments, draw and sing.

When Christ's College moved to its present site on Rolleston Avenue in 1857, there were 30 or so pupils, and three staff. Today, it has more than 700 students.

By 1863, the first of the stone buildings, Big School, was built on the west side of the Quadrangle, followed in 1867 by the Chapel. Today, Big School houses College's library.



Christ's College Quad (1869) — Image by:
Supplied

The school suffered "minor to moderate" damage to its heritage buildings during the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. A substantial strengthening and restoration of its Historic Place Category 1 buildings followed, including Harper and Julius Houses, the Hare Memorial Library, and the Kitchen Tower.

Board Chair Jeremy Johnson, an Old Boy, described Christ's College as an educational leader in New Zealand, committed to being a leading boys' school.

"That is done through academic excellence, encouraging the development of sporting and cultural talents and an emphasis on wellbeing. The College motto, 'bene tradita bene servanda' – translated as "good traditions well maintained" – is as relevant as ever.

"Named, as we are, for the Servant King, the concept of Christian service is absolutely central to the identity of the College. Through our chapel and service programme we encourage our boys to consider the obligations they owe to others and to do so through an Anglican framework.

"In many ways, the College was modelled on the monastic tradition (as the English public schools were through the Oxford and Cambridge models) and a rhythm of life that encourage study, exercise, service and worship remains how we operate. Critical to that is worship and giving our boys the chance to consider religion and spirituality through an Anglican lens.

"We strive to maintain our best traditions – our Anglican nature, academic rigour and the pursuit of excellence - while always looking outward to see how we can evolve to help each boy be at his best in the world of today," Johnson said.



Christ's College Board Chair,
Jeremy Johnson.

An Auckland-based barrister, Johnson recently received a King's Service Medal for services to the Anglican Church and the LGBTQI+ community. In 2017, he established the Tuis, the official Christ's College Alumni group for LGBTQIA+ Old Boys.

The 175th aptly marks the opening of the new Christ's College Museum, housing many of the school's treasures. On display are sports gear from yesteryear, drama costumes and uniforms through the ages, photo archives, important historical documents and significant artefacts.

For more information:

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Well Done, Vasco.

Words: Russell Gifford

This armchair historian finds it a bit difficult to get into Vasco de Gama's head.

A man of courage and determination, he completed two voyages from Portugal to India at a time when such adventurers were amongst the first to venture beyond the near horizon. And he left evidence of his Christian faith as he went. I think he concluded that he could combine two missions. One to spread the good news of the Gospel and as well, set alight the prosperity which would arise from the spice trade. Regardless, he left lasting evidence of his inner convictions. As he gazed upon the land at the southern tip of

Africa, he named it Natal noting it was Christmas, the season of the Nativity.

At Malindi, in Kenya, he set up a stone column topped with a cross. This was not well received by the local Islamic leadership.

The story moves on from 1500 to the arrival of the first missionary from Europe some 350 years later. In 1843 Ludwig Krapf was surprised to find that the people of the Kenya coast were familiar with the Cross as a symbol and knew something of the person of Jesus. Yet another remarkable example of the durability of the Good News.

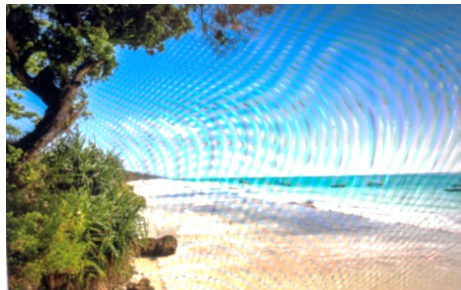


Image by: Russell Gifford

It seems to me that those few fragments of the Good News story, surviving for 350 years along the sandy shores of the East African Coast is nothing if not remarkable. It opens a window on the teaching that Jesus gave in the parable of the Sower. There will be seed that is good that will multiply many times over.

So we are dealing with the beginnings of the Church in East Africa. In 1972 we sat in a class listening to a talk by Archbishop Leonard Beecher (Rtd).

He became the Bishop of Mombasa.

During those years a young Obadiah Kariuku "caught" the message of the Gospel and committed his life to one of service to the Anglican Church in Kenya.

In the meantime, the beginnings of significant change to the statehood of Kenya were beginning to emerge.

The expatriate population of Kenya grew over the years and with growing numbers a wide variety of social pursuits. Some of the socialising earned a reputation for behaviours that were beyond what was considered right and proper!

There is the oft told story of Lord Delamere riding his horse into the dining room of the Norfolk Hotel and bidding it to jump the tables.

This somewhat lawless situation lasted for four or five decades but there was a parallel discontent building.

There was a gradual and inevitable dawning of understanding amongst the indigenous people of Kenya that this was their country and that they should own their plots of land and decide the future directions the nation should take.

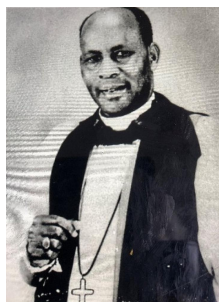
Britain, sadly, was reluctant to move from a colonial mentality. Harold McMillian's comments about "the winds of change" would gain traction in the 60's but in the years preceding, the response would be armed intervention and violence. The RAF contributed Lincoln Bombers to support a large number of foot soldiers.

Frustration at what appeared to be lack of progress began to anger Kenyans and a number began to develop extreme attitudes which developed into a determination to act violently. There were sad instances of Kenyan pitted against Kenyan. The Martyrs Church in Muranga testifies to the courage of Christians as they refused to deny their Christian convictions and refused to comply with tribal violence.

Some Kenyans willing to embrace terrorism developed a practice of Oath Taking. To substantiate this conviction Kikuyu tribesmen would swear an oath. This could mean a willingness to spill blood.

Robert Ruark's novel "Uhuru" tells with horrific detail of atrocities committed by Kenyans. Sadly too, some sections of the British Army were out of their depth and were responsible for regrettable actions.

Obadiah Kariuki was Bishop in Kenya during the agonising period of the Mau Mau uprising. The transition in Kenya from Colony to Statehood was protracted, difficult and destructive.



Bishop Kariuki
— Image by:
Supplied

During all this Bishop Kariuki continued his work of leading and nurturing the church. There must have been many a moment of personal anguish as he sought to promote a message of peace amongst a climate of conflict.

The conflict was lengthy and deadly. Thousands of Kenyans lost their lives. The military action was largely over by 1956 but distressingly, a level of commitment to the oath remained.

Bishop Kariuku recognised that the Nation was at a pivotal moment, so he confronted President Kenyatta and stated that the oath must stop. And the President agreed and complied.

And so we have an example of clear-sighted and forceful Christian leadership significantly affecting the future direction of a nation.

Kenyatta was a man of stature and wisdom. There would be no revenge to settle past wrongs. "We will forgive but we will not forget" was his frequent comment.

The church in Kenya in recent years has grown like a mushroom. The small towns we knew in the 1970's have expanded massively and have gladly accepted the challenge of each building a Cathedral.

So new Dioceses have grown and developed across the nation. There is no talk of declining church attendance in Kenya.

Praise God, and thank you, Vasco.



In Brief

This year's annual Anglican-Catholic Ecumenical Ash Wednesday service was held at the Transitional Cathedral with Bishop Michael Gielen preaching.

People joined in from the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch and the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch for the imposition of ashes.

A summary of Bishop Michael's homily on Ash Wednesday at the Transitional Cathedral:

We are challenged to be one as Scripture has called us to be. 25 years ago when I was parish priest in Gisborne I recall celebrating the imposition of ashes with the local Anglican Parish. In this Jubilee year, Pope Francis calls us to be *pilgrims of hope*. Lent is a season of hope, and the Jubilee year is a time of forgiveness and renewal for each of us. Hope in our world is in short supply, but as Christians, it is a supernatural gift and a theological virtue. Lent is a time to examine our hearts. **God remains faithful:** we see the gift of the Alpha course in New Zealand for the last 25+ years. The Alpha course is a gift to Bishop Michael's priesthood, and there is joy in seeing the hope that Jesus brings in the lives of others. This lent let's reclaim the hope that Jesus brings to us all.

(Notes and photo gallery below by Mike Stopforth, Director of the Catholic Bishop's Pastoral Office.)
