



THE Witness

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Te Kītenga – Te Amorangi O Whakatu



WATOTO
'life changing'

Amanda Ewan, Greymouth Parish, with Watoto children



Good surprises

It's interesting when something is not what you expected it to be.

So much of our visit to Waitangi over Waitangi weekend was exactly that.

I had expected to find rather a negative attitude to the Church and to the early missionaries – certainly some Maori papers over the past few years looking at the effect early Christian mission within Maori culture was not such a positive experience.

However I was surprised – actually, overwhelmingly surprised – at the very positive attitude amongst Nga Puhi generally to the Church and its early missional influence.

Something of our experience is described in this issue of *The Witness* – this is the bicentennial year for the Christian Gospel in New Zealand.

Elsewhere in this issue we consider the development of small groups in the life of our church.

Enjoy the reading.



How far have we come... how far have we grown?

The New Zealand Church Missionary Society Council decided to attend the Waitangi celebrations this year in recognition of the 200th anniversary of Samuel Marsden's first sermon preached in the Bay of Islands on Christmas Day 1814. This also coincided with the three-yearly congress of the New Zealand Christian Network who also decided to meet at Waitangi for the same reason. Richard and I were delighted to be part of these special four days.

Participants were invited to be part of the official group at the 5.00am service under the leadership of Bishop Kito Pikaahu, Bishop for Tai Tokerau the northern most Te Kanga Maori diocese in New Zealand. It was a moving service couched in prayer as politicians and dignitaries took the opportunity to speak.

The later mid-morning service was held in the 'whare waka' with the huge canoe being moved out to accommodate the crowds, many of whom still stood on the fringes in the rain and wind. Many denominational heads of Christian churches throughout New Zealand were present and the leader of the Baptist Union Craig Vernall preached a brilliant sermon which was very well received.



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Contact: *The Editor*
Nelson Anglican Centre
Halifax Street
Nelson 7042

Email: witness@nelsonanglican.org.nz
Phone: (03) 548 3124

Layout: *Grover Productions*
Email: grovemz@xtra.co.nz
Phone: (027) 439 0747

Printer: *Printheuse Nelson*
Phone: (03) 543 9480

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Waitangi 2014

He used images that were very helpful for his listeners, likening Waitangi to the cradle of our beginnings where Maori were one parent, the Crown the other and the Church serving as the midwife as the Treaty was being birthed by the two parents.

He continued, "Something very unique happens on Waitangi Day as we return to revisit the day of our nation's birth and the birth of that vision... it is a good time to measure how far we have come – What is good? What's not? How far have we grown? Asking ourselves how far we have to go.

"The Treaty of Waitangi is a covenant. A Biblical covenant always contains a death of some sort. Death to self or death by someone or something. The central message of the Christian covenant involves the voluntary death of Jesus for the sins of the whole world. A covenant sealed in his blood. Our Treaty covenant requires an ongoing death to self or death to any claim to cultural superiority. This we all know has been our weakness and the Crown now freely admits this history. But the Church as the midwife needs to remember its place in this story both good and bad.

"Our Treaty is a gift from God and we must continue to make covenant by laying aside our temptation for cultural superiority. We need to capture afresh the spirit of humility with which and only which we can make this journey together. May God bless us all."

The members of the New Zealand Christian Network gathered the next day with leaders from almost every Christian denomination across New Zealand. The three excellent topics for the day were:

1. Two hundred years of Christianity and the Treaty.
2. The rise of secularism in our nation.
3. Marriage and the family.

On Saturday February 8 the CMS Board went on 'tour' – arranged by Rev Margaret Williams, a descendant of Henry Williams one of the first CMS missionaries from England who helped to draw up the Treaty. Visiting Marsden's cross was a very moving experience, also hearing from one of Ruatara's descendants (the chief who first welcomed Marsden to New Zealand).

On Sunday we went to the service in the little Samuel Marsden memorial church at Matauri Bay and then on to a marae welcome and lunch. We felt very privileged to be invited and Richard responded on behalf of the CMS Board in Te Reo, although he confessed to being a bit rusty! The long drive to Cape Reinga and back was well worth the trouble, it is an awesome place. The birthplace of our nation with the influence of the first missionaries had a powerful effect upon us all.

Grateful thanks go to Bishop Kito for his generous hospitality which made us all feel so welcome.

Hilary Ellena

Watching as the waka is brought in.

Watoto

A place of smiles

On January 2 we waved off 17 folk connected in one way or other with the parish to build staff accommodation at the Watoto Village in Gulu, Northern Uganda.

This was the third team to travel to Uganda since being touched by a visit of one of the Watoto Children's Choirs in 2005 and learning of the efforts to help children orphaned by AIDS and civil war. The first team built a classroom; the second a house. The team was lead once again by Pete White and nine members of the team were under 25 years old.

The team built the staff accommodation in a record four days in 35-40 degree heat alongside local builders. The team also visited the Watoto Babies Home and Living Hope women's rehabilitation facility in Gulu and had a traditional lunch with the children and housemothers in the Watoto Village where they built.

A game of soccer with the local builders and a moving dedication service at the building site rounded out the Gulu visit.

Then it was onto a fantastic two-day safari before returning to Kampala to visit the sites where the previous teams had built. Visits were also made to the Sanyu Babies Home, the equator, and grade 5 white water rafting on the Nile.

A new element of this third trip was a visit to the Uganda School for the Deaf. Pete White's nephew, Timothy Adams (member of the Motueka parish), lives with profound hearing loss. When he decided to join this year's team, he personally raised \$2300 to donate to the school. Everyone on the team was significantly impacted by the visit and are now challenging our parish to include the school in future fund raising efforts.





Our parish generously supported three of our teenagers: Callum Jones (17), Blake White (16) and Ethan Wilson-Bruce (16) to make the trip. These young men regularly bless the 10am service with their musical talents. Here are their own words of some of the ways the trip impacted them:

Blake: This trip changed my thoughts towards Uganda. I was super surprised to see how green Uganda is. I was shocked to also see tons of people in spotless white shirts taking great pride in their appearance. Even though the people live in such poor conditions, they are always smiling. They look as if they love their life no matter how bad we think it is and that is an amazing thought.

Ethan: At one of the Watoto babies' homes there was a boy of about a year old who had lost both legs. This had a huge impact on me. A moment I will never forget

was on safari. I got to look across the lake and at the sunset and to say, "Wow, God is awesome." This trip has helped me be more confident in public speaking and playing music in front of people. It helped me with my prayers and ability to develop them.

Callum: This trip has widened my perspective of the world. To see how people live over there is so different to the way we do, but, at the same time, it seems so familiar in a way I can't describe. Since the trip some of my friends say that I talk more, that I've come out of my shell, that I seem more involved, awake. The only answer I can honestly give is that I have changed. How? I'm not really sure.

Our parish waits to see what God will call us to do next.

Marge Tefft, Vicar - Greymouth & Kumara Parish



Life in small groups

Jo Lane asks some challenging questions

Who modelled the first care cell for us? Jesus. He met regularly with his disciples, taught and encouraged them. Accepted them, warts and all, took them where they were and led them on in their faith. They obviously felt safe and valued by their leader and as a group with each other. Jesus placed importance on meeting together regularly. He recognised and celebrated their differences and loved them.

How do we rate against the model that Jesus gave us? Do we attend regularly? Do we participate? Are we encouraging and accepting of others? Are we striving to learn more and grow in our relationship with the Lord? Do we study God's word and pray together? Is our care cell a safe, loving environment? Do we support each other, especially when a member is struggling with issues?

Praying aloud ...at McDonald's

Cobden Parish – men's 4x4 cell group
Every year a team of men from Greymouth attend the Promise Keepers event in Christchurch, and every year at PK they stress the importance of men's ministry, and especially 4x4's. A 4x4 is a group of men (not necessarily always four) who make a commitment to meet each week, to pray together, discuss their lives and encourage each other in their faith.

Four years ago I got together with Tim (our vicar), Hugh and Daniel and we agreed to form our own 4x4. We decided to meet every Wednesday morning at McDonald's, for breakfast. We didn't know what we were going to do, but we took that first step of faith, and I know now that we are all glad we did.

Some groups are structured and follow a Bible reading plan, while others keep it fairly informal. We've tried it both ways and for whatever reason, our 4x4 seems to be the more informal type. There always seems enough to talk about and share with each other from the weeks' events, and with us all having family at different ages and stages, sharing of personal experiences is always an encouragement.



Whatever topic we talk about, whatever trial we share, the meeting always ends in an open time of prayer for each other, our families, and our parish. We pray together, aloud, at McDonald's! I don't know what the staff think, but we've been doing it every Wednesday for four years now, so at least they all know our breakfast orders off by heart!

Personally, there have been a few crises I've faced in my life over the last four years – not the least of which was the passing of my mother. My family have always been there for me and so have the guys in my 4x4. I know that without their wisdom and counsel to help and guide me, my own journey would have been so much tougher.

Wayne Lorimer

Nativity Youth Groups

As youth we meet up to three times a week. Wednesday night is for senior youth as a care cell. On Fridays we meet for fun and a small devotion with youth from Year 7. On Sunday mornings they head out to 'Barnies' (our Youth Centre) for Year 7 upwards, for a time together with a game and topic of study.

The Wednesday night senior meeting can have up to 24 young people coming together. We really regrouped from being an oversized care cell after 'Youth Alpha' 2012. Alpha had over 34 youth attend this series. We begin with notices, hear from each other about our 'highs' and 'lows' and play a game that may often be relevant to the study.

Last year we had some wonderful studies for the group. In Term One we enjoyed DVDs from Francis Chan's 'Fellowship' and 'Love' series. Term Two we did 'The Case for Christ' series. Term Three was more personal, from a survey we asked participants to fill in regarding what they wanted to cover at youth group. We did a series on relationships, alcohol, drugs and mental wellbeing, to name just a few. Term Four is messy with prelims and exams so we went through some short 15-minute DVDs. 'Life' encouraging youth to live life and be liberated to fly with the talents that God has given them. The pastoral care for the Wednesday night can get pretty deep, and there are lots of conversations with each other outside of youth care cell during the week. The senior youth group are a very sporty and fun-loving group who play touch together and often enjoy each other's company outside organised church activities.



The youth love praying for one another and doing a Holy Spirit 'hot seat' (asking the Holy Spirit of God to come near and speak into that person's life).

Jo Lane – Youth Co-ordinator, Nativity Parish, Blenheim

Golden Oldies know how to celebrate

Golden Oldies Group, Holy Trinity Church, Richmond. Merle Gibson started our lunchtime group in 1974, meeting at her house.

Strengths of the group are sharing, caring, laughing, crying, encouraging, welcoming, respecting and above all learning more about our faith in God. We have lively discussions about many things.

Not only do we look inwards to our group but we also look outwards to our missionaries – supporting them financially, prayerfully and encouraging them with letters. Each year we choose a different missionary to support.

During 2013 one of our members became seriously ill with terminal cancer. This was a time when we could minister to her, by taking her for treatment, praying with her, allowing her to laugh in our meetings and finally being able to share Holy Communion with her during her last days at home. We were aware of God's presence and peace for her and our whole group.

Each week we revise our prayer list to ensure that

a variety of topics and needs are discussed. We use these as a guide for our personal and corporate prayer. During this time we share our personal cares, worries and celebrations. This is so important, as most of our members live alone.

In the past we have enjoyed Bible studies using the previous week's sermon, making palm crosses (for Palm Sunday), Lenten studies, guest speakers and using DVDs. Variety and flexibility are considered important.

Celebrations are very important whether it be a 90th birthday, a QSM, each member's birthday or any other excuse that can be found. Belonging to our group is uplifting, empowering and helps deepen our faith and trust in God.

After 40 years of meeting, two members of the group are 'originals' and many people have come and gone. At present we have 12 people to care about a good biblical number.

Wendy Wilkinson

Convergence – Kaiteriteri

The Vision

There was no 'New Wine' camp in the South Island this year, so after prayer and fasting I believe the Lord gave me a vision for a diocesan camp. After a couple of phone calls with other parishes, planning for a camp was underway.

The truth is, I love church camps. Because it has been at these that I have had some of my most life-changing, faith-building experiences. Lifelong friendships have been made that have helped shape my Christian faith, as friends have encouraged and challenged me. There is something about being away with a bunch of other Christians, worshiping, learning and seeking God together, that creates conditions in which our faith takes a leap forward. I think it must have something to do with coming together and being in unity with each other. (1 Corinthians 12: 12-14)

We all have a part to play in the body of Christ and my hope for the camp was that we would all leave having met with the living God, refreshed, encouraged and strengthened to play our part in the mission of God, in our churches and communities, for his glory.

Phil Greenwood – Priest in Charge, St Barnabas, Stoke



The dream becomes a reality

One hundred and seventy kids, teens and adults converged on Bethany Park Kaiteriteri February 14 to 16 and Rev Phil Greenwood's dream became a reality. From different parishes we came together as a Christian community, to draw closer to God and also have lots of fun in the stunning beach and park surroundings. Teams of dedicated people ran a worship team, children's programmes, creche, youth activities and cooked up three main meals.

Howard Espie (below), a young Scottish minister from Edinburgh, was the key speaker on the theme



'Creative Discipleship in the Kingdom of God'. He encouraged us in his Friday night introduction, to 'rest in God's love'. Discipleship arises from resting with God and he pointed out that in the Jewish world the day began at night (not in the morning) so we begin with rest. He encouraged us to put away the 'shoulds' of this life and bask in the love of our heavenly Father.

In his two Saturday talks Howard shared with us the concept of God's Kingdom in relation to the kingdoms of this world. Kingdoms come and go but God's reign lasts forever. In the culture of our day we can often find ourselves as aliens in a foreign land, as the first Christians were, up against the might and culture of Rome. Jesus came to the 'nobodies' of society to reconcile us back to God, dying on the instrument of Roman torture, the cross, and rising again to reign in heaven.

Howard urged us to remember that we are made in God's image (Genesis 1:26) and we have a contribution to make (Ephesians 4:1-13) building his kingdom here on earth. By the power of his Spirit whom he promised would come, we are able to serve and reach out to others in his name.

All of our Christian life comes out of our relationship with our heavenly Father, having a 'childlike' dependence and trust in him. When we have a quiet

time with him we can ask 'Lord what are you saying to me? And what do you want me to do about it?'

Howard encouraged us not to be afraid to ask people if we can pray for them. God actually wants to lead us to those people. Opportunities were made for prayer and learning together about how to minister to others in Jesus name. Howard's enthusiasm and humour and ability to make amazing animal and vehicle noises for the children (adults loved it too) endeared him and his wife Charlotte to all who were there.



Bishop Richard also picked up the 'Kingdom' theme in his two morning bible studies – 'The Kingship of God' and 'The reign of God'.

The first study made strong use of Genesis 1 where our sovereign God invited us to join with him in ruling over his creation (Genesis 1: 26-28). However, there was one priority in God's proviso; that we remain in relationship with him. But in Genesis 3 we decided to do life our way - We forfeited the kingdom of God because we didn't want to accept the sovereignty of God. God didn't give up on the people he had made but continued to draw his people to himself even when they demanded a King in keeping with the other nations around them.

King David's psalm 103 puts before us the benefits of being part of God's kingdom – he forgives all our sins, he heals all our diseases, he redeems our life from the pit, he crowns us with love and compassion, he satisfies our desires with good things so that our youth

is renewed like an eagle's wings.

The second study took us into the New Testament and the good news that the kingdom of God has come near in the person of Jesus as heralded by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-2). God's kingdom breaks into our world as Jesus takes up his ministry. The Kingdom of God had come among the people in the person of the King who was to give his life for the sins of the world. This would open up the gates of heaven to re-establish the original relationship that was between God and the humanity he had created in the garden of Eden.

Sadly many failed to recognise this and accept it and nothing much has changed today. Our contemporary world view believes that, left to our own devices, humanity will soar to the heights, we are inherently good and that will shine through. Just a look at our media on a daily basis will prove that is a false premise. The biblical world-view says that left to our own devices humanity will sink to the lowest common denominator... and that we need God. The good news of God that we proclaim as Christians is that the Kingdom of God has come near in Jesus and we can have light and life in him.

Make sure that you are a part of the 'Convergence' experience next year as we build on this excellent foundation. This camp will be a major diocesan occasion each year.

Hilary Ellena

'Stand up and shout if you love my Jesus!..'





Convergence Kids

Twenty-five enthusiastic and delightful primary aged kids joined us at Bethany Park Camp Kaiteriteri. We kicked off at 9am both days with 30 minutes of 'all aged' worship including kids' songs, puppets and drama. The kids then gathered separately until 12pm.

We did crafts, songs, Bible stories, games and small group time all along the theme of 'Getting to know the King' – King Jesus! It was amazing to see the kids grow and develop in their individual relationship with Jesus. It was also lovely to gather together from across the diocese, getting to know other folk from other churches.

Looking forward to next year!

Ruth Ellena



Brad & Claudia Wood in action.

Edward's two decades recognised

Edward Andrews was acknowledged at an All Saints service in Nelson recently for 20 years of dedicated service and outstanding commitment to the city's homeless men. As the Night Shelter manager he has provided around 7,500 meals over the years along with accommodation and moral and spiritual support. The Mayor presented a certificate in appreciation on behalf of the city and Bishop Derek (on behalf of Bishop Richard) also made a presentation along with the wardens of a very proud All Saints Parish.



Hearts for Albania

Murray and Féy Cotter are missionaries from the Nelson Diocese sent by the New Zealand Church Mission Society (NZCMS), and seconded to work with European Christian Mission (ECM) in Albania. We talked with them during their recent return visit to New Zealand.

When did you first work in Albania and how is this situation different to what you experienced then?

We first went to Albania in October 1996 and we were church planting in a small city called Patos which was four or five hours drive from Tirana, the capital. We were living in a small house with a garden with our four children, who were home schooled on NZ correspondence. We were the only foreigners living in Patos then.

Now we live in a spacious two-bedroom second-floor apartment in Tirana without our children. Our work now is mostly at a leadership level; mentoring Albanians and supporting missionaries.

How has the climate for evangelism changed during those intervening years?

Young people were the main group of people responding to the gospel when we were in Albania the first time, however now more people across the generations are open to the Gospel, but only if time is taken to build deep relationships.

Murray can you give us a broad picture of your ministry?

My work is in three areas:

1. Working with the Shalom church plant. This



year I will be focusing on building relationships with, and discipling two men whose wives come to the church, as well as following up four young people from our previous church in Patos who now live in Tirana but who are no longer connected with a Christian group. My goal for this year is to build two or more new discipleship groups.

2. Mentoring Albanians who are directly involved themselves in church planting.

3. Supporting the ECM Albania/Kosovo missionary team which has

grown from five adults to 13 adults and 13 children over the past year.

Féy can you give us a broad picture of your ministry?

My ministry is 99% supporting missionaries and the work is divided into three distinct areas:

Along with Murray I support the ECM Albania Kosovo missionary team – however my focus is mainly in the area of co-ordinating the team meetings and activities.

1. Manage the Albanian Encouragement Project (AEP) office – an umbrella organisation that supports nearly 70 different mission organisations and over 330 missionaries with such things as communication, residency visa help, group discounts (ie: Vodafone), a yearly conference and promoting networking opportunities.

2. I am a member of the ECM Field Ministries Executive Team. My two specific responsibilities are first, as the link person for Albania/Kosovo, Croatia (and rest of Balkans), Austria and Romania. Second, I am the leader of the Ministry Direction Group which is a think tank that helps ECM missionaries develop robust projects and ministry plans.

How have your language studies enabled you to immerse yourselves in the local community?

The one thing we particularly notice is that Albanians are a lot more receptive to us when they realise that we have made the effort to learn Albanian. For them it shows we are committed to them as a people and nation.

How do you nurture your own faith and growth in your present situation?

This is not easy to do, but we mainly do so through reading, and when we meet with colleagues and friends. This year Féy is hoping to start up an English speaking Bible study group for this specific purpose.

Please continue to pray for Fey and Murray and if you are able to help them financially contact NZCMS (www.nzcms.org.nz)



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**Marble Arch, Hardy Street
Nelson
Phone (03) 548 0064**

Easter

Turning the darkness of death
into the dawn of new life



By Bishop Derek Eaton

There is darkness without and when I die there will be darkness within. There is no splendour, no vastness anywhere, only triviality for a moment and then nothing. These words by the famous atheist, the late Lord Bertrand Russell, sum up many people's feelings about death... or do they?

Death, of course, is the great inescapable fact of life. It is the ultimate statistic – one out of one dies. Even scripture talks about the inevitability of death: *'There is a time to be born and a time to die'* (Ecclesiastes 3:2). CS Lewis, in his book *'The Great Divorce'* assures us that *'whoever we are, we have an appointment with death, one which we did not make and which we cannot cancel'*. All of which sounds like a counsel of despair, doesn't it?

However the Christian Scriptures and especially the words of Jesus about resurrection and eternal life turn the subject of death and dying on its head. *'I am the resurrection, and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life'* (John 11:25-26).

Some words from our New Zealand Prayer Book put it beautifully. *'God of consolation, in your unending love and mercy, you turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new life'*.

Compared to 50 years ago, we hear very little today from our pulpits about death and resurrection apart from Good Friday and Easter Day. Some feel that to talk about these things is to take our eyes off the ball – ie: we become so preoccupied with thoughts of the afterlife that we neglect our responsibilities of caring for and meeting the tremendous needs so evident in our world today.

A common objection to talking about life after death, which is sometimes expressed even by professing Christians, is that it acts like an anaesthetic. We become so heavenly minded that we are of no earthly use.

Charles Kingsley, the author who wrote *Tom and the Water Babies* was the originator of the saying (usually attributed to Karl Marx) that *'religion is the opiate of the people'*. He was an Anglican minister and was deeply troubled by the social abuses of his day. He was concerned that many Christians became so absorbed with heaven and the afterlife that they displayed little

concern for the enormous and pressing needs of the people of his day.

Of course such opinions should be challenged – they do not stand up to the scrutiny of historical fact. Many who stood in the forefront of social progress, reform and of alleviating the plight of the poor and who vigorously challenged evil and injustice were committed Christians who believed intensely in the life hereafter. To name a few – Lord Shaftesbury, John Newton and in our own day, Mother Theresa.

Heaven and life after death, far from being a drug, became a stimulant to activating their social conscience and trusting them into caring for the suffering and righting social wrongs.

Life beyond death is, I believe, an integral part of the good news revealed in Jesus Christ. It is part of the Christian faith that we need to take on board, to rejoice in and to meditate on as much as any other part of Christian belief – if not more. Why? Because such belief has the power to transform our whole attitude to life and living – to say nothing about our attitude to our own death and dying.

Death, resurrection and eternity are important concepts for the Christian believer. Where do you want to spend eternity? *'God has set eternity in the human heart'* (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We cannot imagine that our lives will one day end, since we are created in the image of God there is a homing device built into each of us which connects us with the eternal. Sin disrupts that connection but Christ restores it with the gift of eternal life to all who are united in his death and resurrection by faith.

This is the great fact of Easter. Jesus said, *'Because I live you shall live also'* (John 14:19). Death is not the end... for the Christian it is a new beginning. As someone wisely said, *'God has not necessarily promised us an easy passage through this life, but he has promised us a safe landing'*. For the Christian, death and beyond holds no terror. On the contrary, we have so much to look forward to.

For a more comprehensive look at this subject Bishop Derek has written 'Life After Death – Welcome to the future'. Copies are available from the Anglican Centre or from Bishop Derek for \$18 (eaton.d.a@gmail.com).

'Not my will but Thine be done...'

"Jesus didn't complain when he had to carry the cross— what have I got to complain about?" I asked. "Mum, cancer is your cross," was the reply.

And actually Jesus did ask if it was possible 'for this cup to pass' from him. After asking this, Jesus then prayed, 'nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.'

I was sure of my healing, but I didn't know if it would be on earth or in heaven. Statistically I had a 15% chance of living on earth longer than six months (with my type and stage of cancer), so going to heaven for my healing seemed like a desirable option and a good idea to me.

On stunning autumn days I said, "If heaven is more perfect than this, I want to go there. Take me now." But I also constantly prayed, like Jesus, "Not my will, but thine."

How much did I mean that? Is it disappointment I remember feeling when, after removing the tumour, they told me, "There is no cancer in any lymph nodes." The surgical team were excited about the unlikelihood of this. For me it meant I wouldn't be going to heaven

after all. But God knew best and here I am 'on the other side of the cross' beginning my fourth year since treatment.

The love and prayers of my family, church family and friends were answered with the miracle they had hoped and believed for. My prayer was answered too, in a way that I had not been expecting. That's God for you, full of surprises!

The hardest part has been trying to figure out who I am now, and what I am meant to be doing in this world where 'everything has changed' (as I am not the teacher that I loved being), and yet 'nothing has changed' (I am still the same child of God). Why me and not the worthy church family friend, a husband and father who died a year or so later? ("Why not you?" my vicar said.) What jobs does God still have for me to do?

It seems I have more to learn and do. So here I am God, thanks to you. With your help the journey continues...

Pauline Sparks

Pieces of my heart

There was a little girl who lost her mum and dad when she was five years old. Her mum ran away and no longer wanted her. Her father did his best, but soon needed to return to work. So she was sent to live with other families around the country, until her mother came back.

That was a sad and confusing time for the little girl. She felt no one loved or wanted her, and a piece of her heart broke off...

As a teenager she always did her best in the hope that others would notice, and love her. By now though, she was mixed up in a large step family and her mother had no time for her. She hardly saw her father, and felt that no one loved or wanted her. Another piece of her heart fell to the ground...

At 19, she married and had two little girls of her own. The following years were very busy. She continued doing the best she could for others, but she was growing weary. Her husband and daughters took her for granted and treated her with disrespect. She again realised that no one really loved her, and another piece of her heart crumbled away...

Her daughter had a baby boy when she was very young. She loved this grandchild dearly, but when he was just two, her daughter went away and left him behind. She looked after him while continuing with her job and caring for everyone else. Soon she became ill and could not care for him any longer. He went to live with another family.

A broken woman, she felt she had failed and her

life was worthless. A huge piece of her heart withered away...

Her marriage ended and both daughters rejected her. She was completely alone. Her mother wished she had never been born and her father turned his back, refusing to help her get back on her feet. The tiny remaining piece of her heart shattered... knowing no one loved her, she decided to slip away from the world.

She slowly recovered, however she guarded her heart and covered up her true feelings. Those around her thought she was doing well because she was always smiling and laughing. The truth was, that she was slowly dying on the inside.

One day she met an old friend. Someone she had forgotten about during the hard times. God loved her for who she was even though her heart was badly damaged; he could see the warmth and compassion in it. Eventually her heart was healed and became even bigger than it was before. This loving and patient God showed her that she had been loved all along and eventually restored her faith in humanity.

Today she brings people together and shares a radiance of joy with those around her. Her happiness is obvious to see, and people comment that she has never looked so good. She now touches other people's lives in a compassionate and positive way, living by grace and with faith. With God anything is possible.

'Never give up, just keep giving, for it will be given back to you.'



Bishopdale Theological College

Muscle up and dig into some study



Brett Hitches, from Grace Church, will graduate with a Bachelor of Ministries degree at the end of 2014. He tells his story.

Getting a degree has been a journey of 30 years, so you might understand when I say I don't enjoy assignment pressure, long words, thick text books, ultimatums, exams, study

and having to finance them. They are emotionally draining and exhausting... but... I also love thinking and talking about ideas. It feeds my soul!

For me the only thing worse than having to study is having to do it alone, by correspondence, my best being able to verbalise, ask questions and bounce ideas around. Studying at BTC has brought life and vigour to the process.

My youth ministry has really benefited from the tools I have received at BTC. It has enabled me to stay sharp, through fresh scriptural insight, challenged my thinking and has helped me to stay relevant as I have grown spiritually and theologically. I am now stronger in my faith, and have benefited from the insights of other denominations and points of view... and that can only be good.

I would strongly encourage others in ministry who struggle with the severely cerebral to 'muscle up' and dig into some study at BTC. Your ministry and your personal spiritual lives will never be the same.

Victoria Askin grew up going to church with her mum and got involved with a music group when she was at secondary school. It wasn't until she finished university and was in a band for a 'Women with Focus' camp at Teapot valley that she actually became a Christian.

She says, "I went to the camp really wanting to meet with God and to have some questions answered. During the camp God sat me down and told me who I was. Since then I have been growing in my faith and understanding of God."

Part of this growing has involved her spending two years in Christian communities in England, culminating in her decision to study at Bishopdale Theological College.

Victoria is in her third year of studying towards a Bachelor of Theology and says, "I feel that my faith has grown stronger as I have been challenged and stretched by the teaching at BTC as well as through interacting with other students."

She uses her musical gifts as a worship leader through her internship at St Barnabas in Stoke, Victoria also helps out with the youth group. Her favourite Bible passage is 1 Corinthians 12, which teaches us how we should work together as the body of Christ, but also assures us that God equips us through the Holy Spirit to do this.



A word from the Dean – Rev Dr Andrew Burgess

Everyone involved at the College is encouraged to have an increased intake of new students this year. Some are doing one paper at a time – even for interest only – while others have enrolled in a full-time programme. Our numbers in Nelson are up significantly and we have a good mix of people from a range of churches and denominations. 2014 looks like being a pretty good year.

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We Want You



There is an important saying I once heard, "The people are not there to enable the ministry of the clergy; rather the clergy are there to enable the ministry of the people."

An important part of the Strategic Plan for the diocese is the emphasis on equipping 'every-member' ministry in the parishes, through deepening commitment to worship and discipleship (Aim Two) and developing leaders (Aim Three). Over the past three years regional training has been occurring under the banner of 'EQUIP Ministry Education' – an interactive, day-long training event that occurs in each region three times a year (Marlborough – St Christopher's; Nelson/Waimea – St Paul's, Brightwater and now St Stephen's; Mawhera – Holy Trinity, Greymouth / St John's, Westport).

This training is designed to include both theory and practice in a number of topics: Mission of God; Handling the Bible; The Heart of Worship; Mission-Shaped Ministry; Discipleship and Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Contemporary Issues in Pastoral Care; Christianity in Aotearoa New Zealand: Engaging Biculturally; Everyday Evangelism; Working with the Vulnerable (SafeHere Programme 1 and 2)

These units can be attended by anyone, where people can come to a topic of interest, or people can attend all of the units over a three-year period and receive the Bishopdale Ministry Certificate – a diocesan certificate recognising three years of ministry training.

2013 saw the first group of 20 people from across the diocese complete the three-year cycle and receive their

Bishopdale Ministry Certificate. Some comments from those who have been involved over that time:

Wonderful courses – I have enjoyed them so much and they always make me think deeply (Rita Bell, Wakefield)
I have learnt more about many aspects of church life and also enjoyed meeting others from other areas (Peter White, Greymouth)

So what is happening in 2014? This year we are beginning the three-year cycle again and I encourage anyone interested in learning more about Christian ministry to come along and give EQUIP a go. It is important to note that you can join at any stage – you do not have to wait for the beginning of each three-year cycle; and if you miss a unit, don't worry – they have all been video recorded so you are able to catch up easily.

This is a valuable opportunity to gather and learn together, so keep an eye on your parish notices for reminders and if you want more information you can email – graham.obrien@bishopdale.ac.nz.

Rev Dr Graham O'Brien
– Ministry Education Co-ordinator



Caring for Children

Do you want to make a real difference in the life of a child?

Open Home Foundation, a Christian Child & Family Support Service, invites you to join our team of foster families.

We are currently seeking to increase our team of available foster parents in Nelson and Blenheim and particularly the Motueka area.

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For more information and/or an information pack, please contact Alice Winter (03 545 9172) or Christine Campbell (03 578 0807).

Alice.Winter@ohf.org.nz
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The Anglican Church FOR DUMMIES

A regular column that seeks to explain in simple terms some of the traditions, organisation and language of the Anglican Church.



Shrove Tuesday

The day before Lent begins came to be known as 'Shrove Tuesday', because on that day everyone went to church to be 'shriven'. 'Shriven' (past tense 'shrove') involves a person confessing their sins and receiving forgiveness. Usually along with forgiveness a person was given a special task designed to modify behaviour or strengthen faith. Everyone's 'task' for the duration of Lent was 'fasting'. That is not eating any food at all on certain days, and not eating certain foods on any day. Eggs, meat, milk and rich buttery dishes were off the menu for the whole of Lent! So people had to use up all of these foods – remember there were no freezers or refrigerators - it was a case of 'waste not, want not'! One way to use up eggs, milk and fats is to combine them with flour and make pancakes. For hundreds of years people have done this, giving rise to another name: 'Pancake Day'. It has also been called 'Fat Tuesday' and is associated with 'Carnival/Mardi Gras'. Whatever its name, this Tuesday came to signify the last chance to let your hair down before the sombre days of Lent.

Maundy Thursday

'Maundy' is a strange word. From the Latin 'Mandatum' meaning 'commandment', via Old French 'mandé', it became corrupted to 'maundy'. 'Commandment' because on this Thursday night, at the Last Supper, Jesus gave the disciples a new commandment: 'Love one another as I have loved you' (John 13:34). Jesus also shared bread and wine with the disciples saying 'This is my body and blood, given and poured out for you'; which we now celebrate as the sacrament of Holy Communion. On top of that Jesus did something unthinkable, which has for many people become the focus: he washed the feet of his disciples. Then

he challenged them, and us, saying: 'You also ought to wash one another's feet'. Christians ever since have wrestled with this and even kings and queens used to wash the feet of some of their subjects! It seems appropriate that church services on this day highlight love, service and giving of self – the hallmarks of Jesus' life that his followers are to embody.

Good Friday

It seems rather a misnomer to call the day on which the Son of God was cruelly killed 'good'! There are two main schools of thought on this, one is that the name comes from the church in Gaul where it was known as 'Gute Freitag' – literally 'good' or 'holy' Friday. The other possibility is that 'good' comes from the word 'God', with this day originally being called 'God's Friday'. As early as the first century, the Church set aside every Friday as a special day of prayer and fasting. Then in the fourth century the Church began observing the Friday before Easter as the day associated with the crucifixion of Christ. First called 'Holy' or 'Great Friday' the name 'Good Friday' was adopted around the sixth century. Today many churches hold services between noon and three pm, being accepted as the time Jesus was on the cross. It certainly is a unique day in the Christian year. In Anglican observance it is traditional for the church to be completely stripped of decoration – no candles, colour or crosses. Often those leading services wear black vestments and the purpose behind the solemn presentation is to create an awareness of grief over the sacrifice of the Son of God. This contrasts sharply with the joy and celebration of Easter Sunday, which can only happen because of that Friday; and for many people this is what makes it 'good'!

Wayne Thornton

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