

2021 was another challenging year for Theology House. Apart from further restrictions and cancellations due to the ongoing pandemic, we moved with the rest of the Anglican Centre to our new location in central Christchurch. Heather Fraser (Administrator) and Sarah Dunning (Librarian) worked tirelessly to oversee the packing and move of not only our office but our library collection to Tuam St. A big thank you to Edwin Boyce, Gavin Holley and the parish of Christchurch – St Michael’s for overseeing the move and fit-out of the new Anglican Centre at Cardale House. Delays due to COVID mean that, at the time of writing, the new site is still not completely finished but it is already starting to feel like home. It’s already wonderful being in the CBD and the new building has many great features including flexible spaces for everything from small meetings to seminars. We hope to see increased foot traffic in the library and to offer more seminars and short courses as the pandemic wanes.

We partnered with Wellington Diocese in the production of our annual Lenten studies, *Rebuilding the Ruins* in 2021 and *Sentinels* 2022. Despite COVID and the associated challenges of running study groups, we have been very encouraged by strong sales. Studies from previous years are still popular too and we have those and *God’s Never-Ending Story* for sale alongside *A New Zealand Prayer Book/He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa* and other resources.

2021 saw the successful pilot of a new educational programme. The Theology House Certificate in Ministry and Leadership is intended primarily as something of a “gap year” for younger students but this is not the only application. A good grounding in Biblical Studies, theology, discipleship practice and a set of ministry skills are intended to equip students for ministry and further study. Scholarships from the St John’s College Trust Board have meant that a small cohort are undertaking the programme in 2022.

Theology House’s finances continued to benefit from strong investment performance. The current market instability may mean a challenging year for our portfolio, but the high returns of recent years mean we are in a strong position to ride out some volatility. Our operational budget is funded from investment returns and grants from the St John’s College Trust Board.

We continue to host the local delivery of St John’s College’s Regional Studies programme which allows students from Christchurch Diocese to undertake the Diploma of Christian Studies with no tuition fees. From this year St John’s are offering Te Reo Māori by distance study which is an exciting development. I have also been working with the College on their new Anglican Worship paper. I am teaching the first delivery of this paper in semester one 2022. This is a progression from the previous summer school paper on liturgy and the greater scope of the paper allows me to include consideration of more aspects of worship like contemporary charismatic worship.

The Theology House board comprises: Rt Rev Dr Peter Carrell (Chair,) Peter Hart, Rev Cameron Pickering, Rev Margaret Neate, Tom Elliott. I am very grateful for the guidance and support during my first years in officer of Rev Dr Meg Harvey and Rev Stephanie Robson who left the board in late 2021.

Gareth Bezett
Director

May 2022