



# Anglican Diocese of Christchurch

## AnglicanLife eMagazine (Peace)

**From Bishop Peter Carrell**

### Peace

As I write, the NZ government has advised Kiwis to leave Lebanon and Iran "now". Threat of invasion of Taiwan could easily become a major, wider conflict across the Asia-Pacific region. The Second World War ended in 1945. That was well before I was born, and I am now in my 60s. Do we take peace for granted? Has the good material life we have enjoyed for so many decades, with many choices to travel and explore a mostly peaceful world, led us to assume peace is the norm and war the unthinkable exception? Ought we to be more worried about current wars or threats of war becoming major wars?

We could put these concerns another way. Peace is important, too important to take for granted. We should be vigilant about maintaining regional and global peace. What could we do to maintain peace, to prevent war and to protect the preciousness of life?

There is no easy answer to that question if the answer is sought in human politics and diplomacy. As we have seen in Ukraine, if an aggressor wants to be aggressive, they will be. Short of Ukraine bending the knee to Putin's naked ambition to incorporate Ukraine into Russia, there was no path to peace two years ago without Ukraine fighting for it. The horror of war presses us to pray for peace. Sometimes it is humanly impossible to see how we can work for peace by peaceful means.

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, Jesus said, for they will be called the children of God". (Matthew 5:9)*

We may not have opportunity to prevent the next war, save for our interceding before the throne of God for peace. But while we enjoy peace, we can day by day work for peace to continue, in our homes, our communities, our places of work, in our nation and beyond. May our attitude be attuned to the prayer popularly attributed to St Francis, "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace, Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon."

+Peter



### AnglicanLife eMagazine (Peace) issue 81

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give peace to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid." (John 14:27, NLV)

The word 'peace' is mentioned about 249 times in the Bible. To mark its importance, one of the names of Christ Jesus is the 'Prince of Peace', and "Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end." (Read the full verses in Isaiah 9:6-7)

'Peace' in our time is often contentious, mind-boggling, and even 'aspirational'. In this issue of AnglicanLife e-magazine, we learn more about peace in 23 articles: how do we respond to what we read in the news; what it means when we extend 'the Peace' on Sunday at church; and about being Influencers and Ambassadors for Peace as we are called to be peacemakers in this troubled world.

Sometimes, it is wise to hold our peace when there is a misunderstanding or conflict. When we receive a hurtful remark, we can choose an appropriate response after quickly bringing it to the Lord in prayer, and to forgive.

As we pray for our world and live faithfully as Peacemakers, let us remember the costly sacrifice Jesus Christ died on the cross to achieve: the eternal peace between us and God.

Coincidentally, Bishop John Bluck wrote a [book review in Anglican Taonga](#) for a new biography by Anne Manchester of the great hymn writer, Shirley Erena Murray, titled 'Peace is Her Song'.

May we sing and extend God's peace to one another.

Shalom, 'peace be with you' always in Christ.

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## Zooming out of the News onto Peace

Words: Julanne Clarke-Morris

*Julanne Clarke-Morris used to avoid the news for its constant focus on all that's wrong with the world, but after years of scanning the news every day, she's realised it's never the full story.*

Every time we tune in or open up the news we are confronted with so little peace and so much to fear: we see war, hatred, violence, death, and destruction. We see bloody human conflicts, abuse of innocents, floods, storms, wildfires, bombed out cities, droughts and people starving right there on our screens.

So often peace feels hopeless against such monstrous odds.

As Christians, we know that war and injustice must drive us to stand up and make peace in our own rohe (region) – in ways that make sense here – and we look for how we can join the beloved whānau working and praying to see God's kingdom of peace and justice arrive.

Sometimes even then, the news can set off a spiral of doom.

But first we have to remember that the news is never the full story, in fact it is only a tiny fraction of the truth. So why is that?

### **Bad news is cheap**

Crime and bloodshed is low effort clickbait. Of all the news values, bad news takes the least time, money and effort. So bad news is easy news. It gets out much faster and more often than anything that's a nuanced or beautiful, good news story.

For every day a murder makes the news, millions of innocent, peaceful folk spent their day on ordinary acts of living, with neither malice or malcontent. Some even managed an act of kindness or two as they went along. That huge unreported quotient of peace and kindness is always cause for hope.

### **Good news is just out of sight**

When the weight of the world threatens to overwhelm, I look for the story just out of sight. Google or ChatGPT can work wonders. ChatGPT: "What are the top five ways that organisations are helping children out of poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand?" Five seconds later, I'm looking at more ways to join the blessed company of people building peace and hope than I'll find in a week's worth of news. Peacemakers like our own [Christian World Service](#) or [Anglican Missions](#) don't let evil swamp their compassion or undermine their power to do good. Find them and join them, or send some money to back them up.

### **All news is 'extraordinary', but it feels like 'the norm'**

Editors choose news that is 'the new, the unusual, the edgy, the famous'. That means our lovely middling successes and daily doses of happiness never make the news – even though they make up the stuff of life.

So if the news is getting you down – zoom out! Then you'll remember the millions who protected, cared for or looked out for another human being that day.

### **The peacemakers are always there**

No reporter posting the news from a war zone, crime or a natural disaster will turn their camera onto the people keeping well and doing fine. There's no avoiding sadness, grief, shock, frustration or anger when disaster or injustice occurs. And they have their place, as journalists use those shocking worst angles to drive urgently needed support and change.

But even in the centre of a war zone, where there is great suffering, someone will be there sharing acts of love. Remember they are there, and look for your daily chance to be that person. Even better, work to stop the next crisis from taking place.

When I feel swamped by the scale of what's going on, in Palestine, Yemen, Myanmar or Ukraine, I remember a friend from Malawi who told the story of a refugee crisis that never happened - according to the news.

A million people fled a brutal war into the country next door, where they took refuge from harm for many months, but not a single refugee camp was raised. That's because in every hamlet, village and town along the way, a different family opened their doors and took in one or two people, or four or five, until slowly the stream of thousands of people fleeing across that country was absorbed.

Instead of fearing or rejecting the refugees that country expanded their families, opening their humble homes until, one by one, family by family the crisis became a triumph of hospitality and peace.

So when it looks like there is no peace and the world is falling to ruin, zoom it back out into scale –and like we hear each Sunday, get up and join the unreported legion of humble folk doing their best to foster peace every day. That's the way Jesus would do it.



## **Called to be God's Influencers for Peace**

Words: Ven. Canon Mark Chamberlain

The world is full of ironies. At the very time the Olympic Games are being held, violence has erupted in the United Kingdom, there is a widening conflict in the Middle East, and the Ukraine war grinds on. The Olympic values are "Excellence, Respect and Friendship", the French motto, where the games are being

held, are "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" – and yet our world seems more riven by conflict today than at any time in living memory. So much for respect, friendship and peace!

Where then lies the source of the conflict? In many cases, the role of misinformation seems to play a crucial role – in wars as well as civil unrest. For example, authorities in the UK reported that there was no single organising force in the riots, but far-right influencers appeared to be driving an anti-immigration message and urging citizens to take to the streets.

At Jesus' birth the angelic influencers passed on another message to shepherds urging them to take to the streets of Bethlehem. Their message was "Glory to God on high and on earth peace among those whom he favours". This message announced good, right and true information about what God was doing through Jesus – for the peace and wellbeing of us all. The message was about a new world order, initiated by God through Jesus, which would enable the flourishing and peace of all people.

So what exactly is peace and why does it play such a central role in Christianity? Christianity says that peace is more than just a state of international affairs, the absence of conflict, or an external experience of calm. Ultimately peace is a person – the Lord Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 9, he is called "The Prince of Peace" - the one who stands for and fully embodies peace.

Furthermore, in his life and through his death, Jesus died to set us free from sin and death. He broke every power that holds us in the thrall of evil and that subverts human flourishing. In other words, through Jesus' death on the cross, we are reconciled to God and need never shrink away from God's presence. We are accepted, loved, reconciled – we are at peace.

As well as that, Paul teaches in Ephesians 4:3 that "Jesus came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who are near". This is another layer in our understanding of peace. It is a reference to both Gentile and Jew - the 'far away' and the 'near', coming together in bonds of peace

enabled by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Christianity brings together otherwise disparate and even conflicting tribes, peoples, and languages.

So we are now people of peace, enlisted by God to be his influencers in the world. We will not stir up emotions and activism online as other influencers do, but rather we will seek to influence people and invite them to belong to God's kingdom of peace.

How do we do that? By embodying, as much as we are able, the peace of Christ that passes all our understanding. As we indwell our Lord Jesus Christ, we will more and more come to express the peace of Jesus to those around us. And we can work on it! Again, from Ephesians, this time from chapter 4:3, Paul says, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace". We are to strive for peace, we are to "make every effort" to make peace, we are to lead others toward peace.

I close with a challenge to us all. Are we truly grateful for our peace with God, and do we strive for peace with each other? Do we invite people who have no faith to explore the glories of the gospel and ultimately experience the peace of Christ? And do we strive for right relations and not rest until there is peace and reconciliation among our sisters and brothers in Christ?

So let us be influencers – in word and in deed. Let us be people of peace.

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## Monitoring Safe Behaviour

Meet Clare Ayers, our Diocesan Monitor and Bishop's Reconciliation Advisor.

### Monitoring Safe Behaviour

The Diocesan Monitor is an independent and confidential person who is available to hear the concerns of anyone who feels they have experienced professional misconduct by a person within the Anglican Church, including unethical behaviour, abuse of power, and/or sexual harassment. The Monitor is aware of any associated legal and civil issues.

The Monitor is not a member of the Anglican Church, and is therefore considered independent and impartial. Although the Monitor reports to the Bishop, they have the authority to follow through the responsibilities, functions, and duties of the role.

### Did you know?

The Diocesan Monitor role is explained in the [Diocesan Handbook](#). See pages E45-54 of Section E.

### Our Diocesan Monitor—the person

#### Clare Ayers (Monitor since April 2022)

[www.peoplematters.space](http://www.peoplematters.space)

Clare is the Founder/Owner of [People Matters](#) Life and Business Coaching. Her primary role is working as a Leadership Coach working with individuals, and teams.

As well as being a fully trained and qualified Coach, Clare is also a trained Supervisor, working primarily with clergy and healthcare workers from across the country. She has worked with teams in several countries around the world.

Clare has a background as a Registered Nurse which was built on with Counselling training, and then Life, Business, and Positive Intelligence Coaching training. She has extensive work experience in the health care profession, counselling, hospice, businesses, schools, churches, and with a wide variety of individual clients.

### Contact Clare

Clare is available to talk through any issue or concern you have regarding unethical and unsafe behaviour practice. This can range from discussing a concern and how you manage it, through to having guidance regarding the need to escalate reporting of unsafe or unethical behaviour higher.

Please feel free to contact Clare at any time you could benefit from a conversation or have a concern.

Phone: [021 217 1581](tel:0212171581)



## Inside the Cathedral: Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Project (CCRL)

Words + Photos: CCRL

With the unprecedented interest in the project and desire for tours of our Cathedral, Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Ltd (CCRL) made the decision to hold an Open Weekend in June 2024.

Organised in three weeks by our small but committed CCRL Team, 16 tours were offered to the public over the two days. Advertised in Anglican e-Life and social media, they were very quickly fully booked, and we welcomed 800 people through the Cathedral over the duration of the weekend.

The wider team that rallied around to help so willingly to make the weekend a success was humbling. Dean Ben Truman, Jenny May, and Chris Oldham robed up and took the main lead, with appreciation also to many others including CCRL Directors, consultants, and their families volunteering to feed and help in all manner of ways. Special thanks to Mayor Phil Mauger who opened the event on a Saturday morning along with a number of Christchurch City Councillors.

It was perhaps the spontaneity and willingness of the businesses immediately around the Cathedral, as well as the Transitional Cathedral community, who demonstrated a massive support for the occasion which made a clear and strong statement that our city needs its Cathedral back.

Staff from Tūranga, our fabulous library, got into the spirit of the occasion, organising a programme of Cathedral themed events throughout the weekend. There were book displays, a *Whanau Stories* programme, and the monthly sketch session had the Cathedral as its subject. Helen Peters kindly ran an Arts and Crafts session for tamariki which were so popular with whanau taking home their own version of our rose window.

Parents could be seen heading off to Foundation Café to get their morning coffee fix while their children were engrossed with crayons and coloured cellophane. Foundation Café entered into the spirit of the occasion with biscuits in the shape of the Rose Window and an outline of the Cathedral on their coffees.

OGB Cocktail Bar provided a more grown-up focused offering with a Bishop Harper whisky cocktail, referencing it was the Bishop's favourite tippie and we have it on good authority there is a bottle contained in the Bishop's effigy in the Cathedral. The Distinction Hotel offered a Devonshire Cream Tea in honour of our Patron, HM King Charles III. It was a right royal affair!

The Transitional Cathedral volunteers organised by Susan Rendall had a very popular stall in the Square throughout with any profits donated to the Reinstatement Fund. We especially appreciated Conspiro, a choir of friends, some of whom were former choristers, bringing their voices to the opening of the weekend with a performance in Cathedral Square. And young busker, Van Pender who under his own initiative busked underneath the Chalice donating his takings to the fund as well.

A big **Thank You** to everyone who contributed to sharing the Cathedral with others. It has forged important relationships which we all look forward to deepening as we move towards our vision of a reinstated Cathedral and a vibrant Cathedral community.

Please keep your support coming. For those who have, and are continuing to support, a heartfelt thank you the collective support is making a difference.

For those who would like to support [you may do so here](#)

**Or**

by direct credit to:

Account name: Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Ltd

Bank Account Number: 38-9019-0866729-04

Thank you.

[Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#): Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement. Have a look and please follow us.

### Update from Mark Stewart, Chair, CCRL 20 August 2024:

Following Government's decision not to provide further funding towards the reinstatement of the Christ Church Cathedral construction will now be paused while all options are considered.

"It is with a heavy heart that construction will be paused until further funding is found. We care deeply about the reinstatement of the Cathedral, and we are incredibly sad to have to stop construction. However, we understand that the current economic times are tough." He was clear that the Board is not walking away from reinstatement, nor had it given up on securing a funding pathway.

"We are committed to keeping funding conversations alive with both the Government and the Christchurch City Council, as well as our generous existing and potential donors."

Read the [full release here](#).

*'With all of our hands the roof of the Cathedral will rise again.'*

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## Becoming the Peace-Making Children of God

Words: Rev'd Bosco Peters, and Photo: Kevin Malik

Forty years ago, a tolls telephone operator, then known as Naida Povey (now Dame Naida Glavish) nearly lost her job for answering the phone with "kia ora". Her refusal to stop was a key moment in helping this Māori greeting to become widely-used. Like all translating, *kia ora* has no simple English

equivalent. "Be well" is one way of expressing it.

"Wellbeing" is a popular concept in the world now, with well-being "practices" incorporated into schools and businesses, and even with a Minister for Mental Health in our parliament. It is easy to think this is a secular fad, but perhaps God is working in the world and helping us to rediscover the Christian and biblical focus on wellbeing. In John's Gospel (10:10), Jesus describes his purpose as bringing us more abundant life. In the second century, St Irenaeus says that the glory of God is us being fully alive.

*Shalom* in Hebrew (שָׁלוֹם) and *eiréné* (εἰρήνη) in Greek appear over 400 times in the scriptures. Like *kia ora*, these can be used as greetings. The concept of peace in the scriptures is about the weaving together of God, humans, and all creation in flourishing, wellbeing, and wholeness.

Jesus calls us to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). More than that, the Risen Jesus greets us with "Peace be with you" (Luke 24:36; John 20: 19, 21, 26). St Paul enjoins us to greet each other with a "holy kiss" (Romans 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thes 5:26). This was a sign of peace which in those Mediterranean cultures displayed a radical inclusivity, breaking the social boundaries of blood relatives to form a new whanau in Christ. This kiss of peace is described by Justin Martyr in the Eucharistic liturgy of the second century as coming between The Prayers of the People and The Great Thanksgiving (the Eucharistic Prayer). Similarly, Tertullian, in the next century, calls this sign of peace the "seal of prayer". But slowly, this congregational action (as so much of the action that made up liturgy) died out (as did The Prayers of the People).

After India achieved independence from the United Kingdom, Anglican, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches united in southern India to form the Church of South India. Their order for the Communion service, known as the CSI Liturgy, revived the Sign of Peace in 1950. When Anglicanism in this land began liturgical revision in the mid 1960s, the CSI Liturgy was hugely influential, and our first revision, in 1966, had intercessions followed by words of the peace. The Roman Catholic Church re-introduced a sign of peace in 1970 (although after the Eucharistic Prayer where, in Rome and North Africa, it had moved to around the fourth or fifth century). By our 1984 Anglican revision, a rubric was added encouraging people to exchange "a sign of peace".

In my book [Celebrating Eucharist](#) (Chapter 9), I write:

"... sensitivity is appropriate. The Peace is part of worship, it is a liturgical action. To seek out our friends and ignore the stranger or visitor or the one with whom we really need to seek reconciliation is to miss the point of the Peace. The Peace anticipates the coming kingdom, it is not a foretaste of the morning tea after church! To put this in another way, it is the Peace which should shape the atmosphere of morning tea after church, rather than the atmosphere of an ordinary New Zealand morning tea being that which shapes the way we relate at the Peace." I would now add that, in a COVID world, sensitivity includes being alert to people who do not want to make physical contact. And this is true more generally: there are people for whom a physical greeting increases anxiety rather than peace.

The adage, "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing" can be applied to Christian worship. We, the children of God, play. There is a "Let us play" dimension to liturgy. In liturgy we play with bread, wine, water, candles, oil,... We dress up. We make up rules... When children play, they prepare for beyond playing – they simulate beyond playing. Similarly, liturgy can form us, as a community and individually, to live out beyond church walls what we have been rehearsing within them.

After the Risen Jesus says, "Peace be with you" (John 20:21), he declares, "As the Father has sent me, so send you." In the Eucharist, St Augustine of Hippo reminds us, "When you hear 'The body of Christ', you reply 'Amen.' Be a member of Christ's body, then, so that your 'Amen' may ring true!" We are sent out, at the conclusion of the Eucharist, to be salt and leaven of peace in the world. We go out in the name (and nature and as the body) of Christ. We are sent out "to love and serve the Lord." And we are sent out to "Go in peace".



## The Good News Project Part Two: Justice and Creation Care at Spencer Park

Words + Photo: James Beck (Eco Church Project Manager, A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand)

On 22 June 2024, a transformative event took place at Spencer Park, the site where Southern Easter Camp is held annually. The second iteration of Good News Project, in partnership with the World Vision 40 Hour Challenge, brought together A Rocha, Eco Church, Wilberforce, and World Vision in a remarkable partnership with Spencer Park, Christchurch City Council and youth groups from across the Ōtautahi Christchurch.

This event aimed to inspire young Christians to engage in practical environmental action, creating a space where participants could not only hear the Good News but actively embody it through environmental stewardship.

The Good News Project saw over 30 enthusiastic young volunteers come together to restore and rejuvenate Spencer Park. These participants, united by their faith and commitment to environmental care, planted over 350 native trees and plants.

One of the most significant achievements of the 40 Hour Challenge Good News Project was its ability to engage young Christians from diverse backgrounds. This initiative fostered a sense of belonging and a shared mission among participants, emphasising the importance of integrating faith with tangible action for the environment. The event also strengthened relationships between local churches and conservation projects, creating collaboration and a sense of connection to place that will endure for years to come.

Participants expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to combine their faith with environmental action. Many highlighted how this experience highlighted the importance of these types of projects within the Christian community. The project not only provided a platform for young Christians to make a positive impact on the environment but also allowed them to grow in their faith and understanding of Christian stewardship.

It is essential that young people develop a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between their faith and the care for God's creation. By planting native trees and plants, and contributing to the restoration of Spencer Park, not only were they part of creating a habitat that will support local biodiversity and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, but the plants will grow alongside them as they grow in faith.

James Beck, Eco Church Co-ordinator, encapsulated the essence of the event:

"We are here as part of the World Vision 40 Hour Challenge, tackling global justice issues around climate change. And we're also here with A Rocha and Eco Church, which are trying to get churches involved in conservation and climate action. So those two things have come together, and here we are, a whole bunch of young people from different youth groups, getting their hands in the dirt and doing a little bit to make the world just a little bit better."

The Good News Project also carried a profound message of peace, especially from a Christian perspective. By engaging in environmental stewardship, participants were not only caring for creation but also fostering peace within their communities and their own hearts.

Spencer Park holds a special place in the hearts of many young Christians as the venue for the Southern Easter Camp. The Good News Project added another layer of significance to this location. As these young people return to the camp each year, they will witness the growth of the trees and plants they helped to nurture. This growth will serve as a powerful symbol of their own spiritual journey, growing in faith as they watch the natural environment flourish.

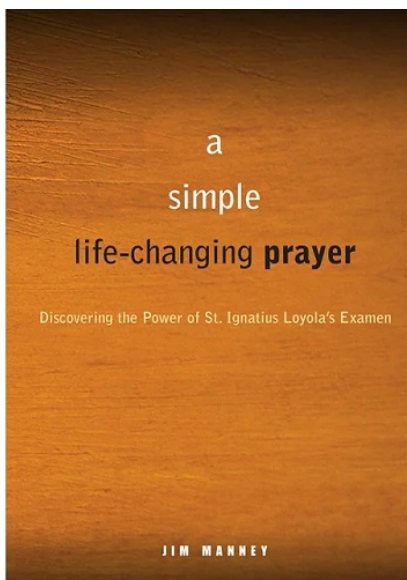
Levi Whiting, a young volunteer, shared his excitement:

"Yeah, it's just cool to get out there, get the environment pumping again, get the plants back in the place where they should be."

The Good News Project is a striking example of the need for faith in action, demonstrating that young Christians can make a significant impact on the environment while deepening their faith and building stronger community ties. This initiative offers a practical and faithful way forward in a world increasingly aware of environmental challenges. It shows that faith communities can support and encourage meaningful change, embodying the gospel's call to love and care for all of God's creation.

As more churches and young Christians join the Eco Church movement, the impact will continue to grow. The Good News Project provides a powerful example of how the church can lead in building a more just, equitable, and sustainable world, fostering peace through the stewardship of God's creation.

Find out more at [ecochurch.org.nz](http://ecochurch.org.nz)



## Book Review: A Simple Life-Changing Prayer

Discovering the Power of St Ignatius Loyola's Examen by Jim Manney

For me, reading "A simple life-changing prayer: *Discovering the Power of St Ignatius Loyola's Examen*" by Jim Manney was a little bit like a refresher course.

I originally discovered the Ignatian Examen years ago and liked the rhythm of its simple steps. For me it was a great way of focussing on God's presence in our world. I discovered a rhythm of prayer that worked for me – one that focusses on gratitude, that can be prayed anywhere whenever I had some downtime. Gratitude is the hallmark of Ignatian Spirituality – it is like a training exercise designed to encourage a habit of the mind to look for God in our everyday world.

The description of this book begins by saying:

*For most people most of the time, prayer is hard. It is especially difficult—not to mention unsatisfying—when people experience it as formal, dry, and repetitious. But what might happen if you discovered a simple prayer that changed all that?*

The Ignatian Examen itself consists of five simple steps, which Manney describes in his final chapter "The Realtime Examen" as:

1. *Pray for light\* Begin by asking God for the grace to pray, to see and to understand*
2. *Give thanks Look at your day in a spirit of gratitude. Everything is a gift from God.*
3. *Review the day. Guided by the Holy Spirit, look back on your day, pay attention to your experience. Look for God in it.*



4. Look at what's wrong Face up to failures and shortcomings. Ask forgiveness for your faults. Ask God to show you ways to improve.\*\*

5. Resolve what to do in the day to come where do you need God in the day to come? What can you do today?

\*Personally, I prefer to include "Be still" as at least part of Step 1.

\*\* In the chapter on step 4, Manney reminds the reader that the whole context of the examen is love – if God loves us more than we love ourselves, then we're free to look clearly at what's wrong and do what's necessary to set things right.

"A simple life-changing prayer" is a little book – only 85 pages – that is written in a simple, friendly style with great insights and recommendations. In his book Manney covers some of the difficulties people experience with praying, and how this style of prayer can solve some of these. Probably the stand-out recommendation for me was to try praying the Ignatian Examen for a month – long enough for the novelty to wear off and get comfortable enough with it so that it doesn't seem artificial anymore. Manney goes on to cover each of the five steps, giving examples and stories that are relatable. There have been many books published about the Daily Examen of the years, but I liked this one for its readability and simplicity.

I also noticed that 80% of the 478 reviews on Amazon.com.au for this book gave it a 5-star rating! Published by Loyola Press in 2011, "A simple life-changing prayer" is available to borrow from Theology House:

[A Simple Life Changing Prayer - Theology House](#)

It is also available to buy in print or audiobook online from Amazon.com.au or direct from Loyola Press.

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## As a City for Peace

Words + Photos: Olive Lawson

In a quiet corner of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, there is a peace bell, surrounded by trees. This massive bell, weighing 365 kilograms, has the words "World Peace Bell" inscribed on it in English and Japanese. Behind are Japanese maple trees: trees which symbolise peace, serenity and tolerance. A

Camphor tree grown from seed that survived atomic bombing also flourishes. Paving stones, engraved with the word "Peace" in 40 languages, surround the bell.

This bell was a gift to Christchurch from Japan. Following the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II, Peace Bells, like this one, were gifted, from Japan, to cities all over the world, with the goal of promoting world peace.

Christchurch, known as the first New Zealand City for Peace since 2002, was chosen to receive a peace bell. The Christchurch peace bell is rung on special occasions, such as the earthquake memorial service, the mosque shooting remembrance day, and holocaust survivors day.

Not far away, in South Hagley Park, there is another tangible peace symbol. A miniature train offers free rides, starting at the Multicultural Recreation and Community Centre carpark. Between 10.00am and 4.00pm on the first and third Sunday of each month (except the winter months of June, July and August) this train chugs happily around the gardens. The train, named "Peace Train," was gifted to the city by singer Yusuf Islam, also known as Cat Stevens. Cat Stevens promotes world peace and wrote the song "Peace Train", which he sang at the Mosque Remembrance Service in 2019. Then he donated the peace train. At the launch, Mayor Lianne Dalziel said, "He wanted to put a smile on young people's faces and inspire them to dream of a better world and good things to come."

Christchurch, the garden city of Aotearoa, is a city of trees, flowers, green grass, bird song, fresh air, blue skies, rivers, and mountains. While we walk freely in beauty, unspeakable horrors in the name of war are happening around the world. Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan...

We all want peace. Inner peace: a peaceful heart, a peaceful mind, a peaceful society, and **no war**. Violence brings more violence. War brings more war.

On 16 July 2024, Pope Francis spoke about the way to peace. He said:

"The world must have a culture of encounter and a culture of dialogue. ***This is the only way to peace.***"

Encounter: meeting together. Dialogue: speaking to one another.

Every church service is an encounter. Services are an opportunity to speak to one another, communicate, learn a little about each other; every kind word spoken, every friendly gesture made, every bit of hospitality offered, helps "break down the walls that divide." When walls go up, suspicion breeds, division brings distrust, and hatred begins to fester.

After church worship, a cup of tea is usually provided. This is an encounter. It provides a chance for dialogue. Speak to one another.

Migrants to New Zealand may find this hard. English is not their first language. They may feel cold, homesick, struggling to find work and pay bills. They may be worried that their pronunciation is not good enough, or perhaps they will use the wrong word. They may be thinking that the person they are speaking to might ignore or laugh at them.

Speak to one another! If we know and understand one another this is a way to peace. And New Zealanders when you meet a migrant, smile and say a few words. Every interaction counts for a newcomer. If we can all do this, hopefully, walls will never go up and we will live peacefully here together.

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace. Blessed are the peacemakers for they are the children of God.

*Adapted from a homily given at the Multicultural Combined Service on Sunday 4 August, 2024 at St Barnabas Anglican Church, Fendalton Parish, Christchurch by Olive Lawson.*

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## Experiencing Cathedral Worship

Words: Braden Ramsell + Photos: Ainsleigh Fitch & Sammy Mould

Once a month, the Transitional Cathedral hosts a worship evening that is open to all parishes and anyone who wishes to join too.

The vibe of this service is very relaxed and uplifting, with dimmed lights, worship music, night prayer, and some colourful lights too! You are free to worship in whatever way you feel comfortable. That can be singing along, closing your eyes and feeling the Holy Spirit's presence, or even laying down to enjoy the underfloor heating! Regardless of where you come from or who you are, you're welcomed. One regular parishioner told me, "It's like entering a realm where it's just God and me."

This year, I was welcomed into the Cathedral Worship Band to play drums, which has been such an exciting experience for me! Paul Hegglyn, Diocesan Under 40's Leadership Developer leads the band which consists of musicians from multiple parishes. They are such an incredible and encouraging group. We meet up beforehand to setup, chat, pray, and reflect. There isn't a specific music setlist, rather we choose known worship songs that speak to us in the moment, complementing the atmosphere of the service. For me, music is one of the vessels that connects me to the Holy Spirit, whether it is playing or listening. Feeling the Spirit during worship is an incredibly uplifting experience.

Being a part of this worship group has also given me the opportunity to progress my musicianship skills too. I first started playing the drums at my church when I was 10 years old, and through the years I have begun learning new drumming skills and techniques through fellow band members and workshops. Fast-forward to now, playing with the Cathedral Worship Band has further opened me to drumming new styles, techniques, and ways to communicate with band members. I've found myself drumming to reflect the message (and ultimately the dynamic) of the songs more now, which has the cool effect of conveying the Spirit to both myself and everyone around me.

In addition to having an opportunity to further my musical skills, I feel the power of music and community which helps cement my faith and connect with the Holy Spirit. During the week I work full time as an IT Systems Engineer, in addition to managing the various technical systems at St Barnabas Church in Fendalton Parish. I also support charities with their IT systems, and am a Youth Leader at my church. As it turns out, I am rather tired by the end of the week, and in need of God to help me reflect on my life and understand what my next endeavours might be. I often have a lot of anxiety, so this Cathedral Worship service ensures I close off my week calm, reassured, and ready for the week ahead.

Some parishioners and youth from my church attend this worship evening, so I often like asking them how they find it. There are a few common themes in their responses which are: the enjoyment of worshipping with other parishioners, the sense of community and belonging, and feeling safe to worship in their own way.

So, should you come along to the Cathedral Worship? **Absolutely!** We can't wait to see you join us for worship!

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## Church Property Trustees Update

Words + Photo: CPT

### Church Property Trustees

#### Earthquake Recovery Programme

It has been a long 14 years but the last of the earthquake repair projects has been completed [St Paul's, Glenmark-Waikari] and CPT staff are working through final administrative matters with projects and a few 'tail' claims from a small number of parishes regarding repair issues. These will be fully addressed shortly, and CPT will then be able to advise that no further claims will be considered. At that point, a final reconciliation can be made, and any remaining surplus insurance funds distributed to ministry units.

The final distribution is likely late in 2025 and will be smaller than the first tranche as it is funds held back from the first payment to cover any late costs.

#### Earthquake Prone Buildings [EPB]

A big thank you to the approximately 20 ministry units who are working with CPT to address strengthening or sale of earthquake prone buildings. Whilst many of these buildings have not yet gone through the Territorial Authority process and become 'officially' EPB, the insurers will only cover these for indemnity value [i.e., depreciated]. Experience with the 2010/11 earthquakes shows us that this level of cover is insufficient if the ministry unit wishes to repair to the original standard of the building following possible damage.

The government has embarked on a review of EPB rules and have extended timeframes by four years as this review is undertaken. The CPT Board policy remains that ministry units continue to progress strengthening or divesting of earthquake prone buildings as a matter of priority and irrespective of regulatory deadlines.

#### Insurance

CPT staff are very aware, both personally and within the Diocese, of the financial difficulties being felt from ever-increasing insurance premiums.

The insurance market has changed dramatically since the 2010/11 Canterbury earthquakes. Some of the factors include:

- Increased awareness of the real risk of earthquake, both through the experience of the Canterbury and Kaikoura events and work being undertaken on the Alpine Fault [AF8] and Hikurangi Subduction Zone risks.
- Following the Japanese tsunami, an increased awareness of coastal inundation risks.
- Development of modelling with respect to potential sea level rises.
- Development of more stringent engineering requirements for earthquake resilience of buildings.
- High construction cost inflation causing the insured value to rise at an unprecedented rate – for example, the insured value of the CPT property portfolio has risen from \$348 million in 2017 to \$578 million for the 2024 renewal.
- Insurers are now requiring more information on each building to identify risks and amending cover accordingly – for example only offering Indemnity Value cover to buildings they deem to be earthquake prone. Indemnity Value [IV] is a value lower than Replacement Value [RV]. It can broadly be defined as the depreciated value of the asset.
- Withdrawal of a number of insurers from the New Zealand market.

There is little doubt that insurance costs will continue to increase and that ministry units will find these costs increasingly difficult to meet. At Synod September 2024, the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch will debate two Motions addressing the future affordability of insurance. CPT will work closely with Standing Committee to implement any resolution that Synod may reach on this important and challenging matter.

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## Book Reviews: Peace

Words: Theology House + Photos: Various

Peace is one of the Fruits of the Spirit and a good gift from God.

We often think of it as quietness, stillness, contemplation and rest - all elusive concepts in our modern lives of noise, busyness and constant connectivity.

Attaining peace requires taking time out, resting, restoring and living counter-culturally, which are challenging ideas. However, by intentionally nurturing stillness and quiet in our lives we make space for God's peace to grow in us and through us to

others.

Here are three little books from the Grove Spirituality series (available to borrow from Theology House), which each suggest ways to increase the peace in our lives.

**Simple Tools for Stillness: following the way of Jesus**, by Wanda Nash This exploration of stillness takes Jesus as our example to show how Christ used stillness and what it could look like in our lives. It details some simple ways to nurture stillness, and includes patterns for doing this both individually and in a group. I found it inspiring, and very helpful to have the 'how' provided!

**Silence: the gateway to God**, by David Runcorn. This is "a book about silence for those who do not find it easy but know they need it". The author encourages us to examine our lives and make space for God to meet us in the quiet. He looks back to silence as a place of waiting, listening and refreshment in the Bible, and as a necessary support for Christian mission and activity. He gently encourages self-examination with questions for reflection and suggestions for increasing our comfort with it. I found his approach affirming and gently encouraging.

**Enjoying Sabbath: a guided exploration of the Sabbath landscape**, by Andrew Schuman Andrew examines Sabbath as a gift from God to his creation, which allows us to rest from the need to be productive and working. He encourages us to look at our resistance to it, using simple explanations and 'exploring' questions. I particularly liked his acknowledgement that Sabbath can vary for different people, times and contexts and his suggestions of ways to grow it in our lives.

All three books highlight these practices must be intentional and will take effort and practice to achieve, but gently encourage gradual growth towards greater peace.

You can borrow a copy from Theology House (enquiries to [library@theologyhouse.ac.nz](mailto:library@theologyhouse.ac.nz)), or purchase from Amazon UK.

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## "Jesus is not in Jerusalem."

Words + Photos: Russell Gifford

I have made this point to several friends who have joined tourist trips to the Holy Land.

I know he is not in Jerusalem because he is in Mathare Valley in the suburbs of Nairobi. Mathare Valley had its beginning in the early years of last century when Nairobi was beginning to grow as the administrative centre of Kenya.

Employment has always been difficult to find in Kenya, but the growing city has always offered opportunity to at least begin the search for a job. You could live at Mathare Valley for nothing. You could knock up an elementary shelter from discarded materials. There was no running water available and no sanitation. It was soon an overcrowded hovel and it was a stinking horrible environment. However, there, in the middle of it all, was Father Grolle. We saw his modest little shack cum-chapel in the early 1970s. He had been there ministering to his community for decades. He brought Jesus to his community in this unlovely setting.

And then, out of the blue, I came across this story from Malcolm Muggeridge in his book *Jesus* (1975, p. 13). He was on site in and around Jerusalem working on a TV series on the Life of Jesus. In a sudden moment of revelation, he realised he was actually standing on the road to Emmaus. Two thousand years of history had of course left their mark but the essential geography was still in place. He realised that the ground beneath his feet was very close to where Jesus had walked. He was deeply moved.

So, Jesus was in Jerusalem after all.

We grow a little when we can be generous enough to see someone else's perspective.

So, it occurred to me to check out Mathare Valley as it is now, some 50 years later.

It is no surprise to find that it is still there and the living conditions are as bad as ever, probably worse.

The magnetism of the city continues unabated so it is no surprise that other slum settlements have evolved over the years.

Kibera, for example, houses some 750,000 people. It is an overcrowded, unpleasant environment almost totally lacking the infrastructure that we would take for granted. But the people living there display a remarkable resilience. Despite the overcrowding, the lack of sanitation, and the constant crime there is hope for the future.

The evidence is provided by the parents of Kibera. They are concerned about the future opportunities for their children as are parents everywhere. Therefore, schools have been built out of very meagre resources. A glowing example is [the SEED school](#). Minimal fees are charged.

Teachers are utterly committed to their task and day by day neatly dressed children turn up for another day's learning. One child talks of her ambition to become a nurse. Another, an accountant. That optimism compels one to believe that they will succeed.

There are other examples of that inner conviction that drives young people to hope for a better future. It drives the young to keep working hard. The boys we taught at our trade school ([the Christian Industrial Training Centre](#), Pumwani) came to us without any secondary education. They went on to work in the industries of Kenya and beyond. Some have found their way to the USA. How they managed to venture that far is beyond imagining but someone has recognised their worth as industrious and skilled young men and offered them opportunity. We wish them all well.

As we visit Mathare, Jerusalem, Kibera, and Pumwani we perceive the Spirit of God at work. We sense presence and growth and optimism. The Kingdom, little by little, is being established here on earth as it is in Heaven. Hallelujah.

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## AI Songs

Words: Rev'd Dr Tim Frank

### Songs created by artificial intelligence

Recently, in one of my sermons I contrasted the news of the resurrection with the news generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI).

On the Saturday my brother-in-law, who works in the sound and recording industry, showed me how to easily have a song generated by AI. I thought that this is an example that could underline the message of my sermon. I therefore asked the website to write a song about the parish church – St Paul's.

[This is what it came up with.](#) I quite liked the song and decided to play it during the sermon. The website allows users to download a video, but that is normally in the vertical format, which is suitable for phones, but not so much for screens in church. Combining the lyrics with the audio for a video suitable to be shown in church, took a whole lot longer than getting the song written.

One of our musicians liked the song so much she wrote out the music. That took a whole lot longer, but I'm sure in future some programmes will be able to spit out the sheet music for a song as well. That Sunday we also had a parishioner leaving us to move to the North Island. I asked the website to generate a farewell song especially for her. This time it took a few tries to get something suitable, but in the end I had a song that moved her to tears.

It is quite easy to get reasonable songs generated very quickly. For example, I put the following words as prompts:

*I love you Jesus!  
I always want to be with you!  
You're the best!*

At the click of the mouse, the website generated the following lyrics:

*[Verse]  
In your presence  
I find peace  
You're the light that never cease  
Every heartbeat  
I feel you near  
In your love  
I have no fear*

*[Verse 2]  
You're the anchor in my storm  
In your embrace  
I am reborn  
With every breath  
I sing your praise  
My heart's devotion  
A sacred blaze*

*[Chorus]  
Jesus  
My Savior  
My guiding star  
With you beside me  
I'll never be far  
Forever faithful  
Our love is true  
I give my all  
'cause I'm devoted to you*

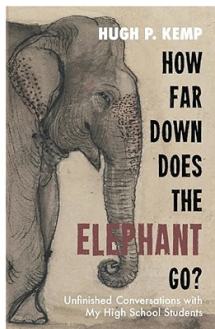
That is probably better than many other songs we sing occasionally. At the click of another button, two recordings with different tunes were produced. Changing the style of music, two more musical versions were produced. They may not have the most memorable tunes, but they are sufficiently motivating – [sample one](#) and [sample two](#).

But the website is also able to put some fairly complex theology into simple words. For example, I put Colossians 1:15-23 as the prompt for lyrics and [this fairly catchy song](#) was created.

While at the moment the songs are still fairly formulaic, they have a recording quality, which is otherwise difficult to attain without good equipment. Songs can also easily be tailored to the occasion and very quickly produced. Might we soon sing along to our very own tailored songs produced by AI?

But there are bigger theological and pastoral questions. What does worship mean if it is undergirded by AI? Where is the Spirit in that? Is it in the vast data that AI draws upon, which after all are the results of human creativity across the ages, creativity that was moved by the Spirit? Or is AI just another tool of praise, similar to how musical instruments have been used in the praise of God for millennia? Or does such music lack spirit and inspiration? Will the content of such songs still be guided by Biblical reflection?

We will have to wrestle with these questions. My hunch is that AI music will slowly make its way into our churches and homes without proper reflection and soon it will influence our faith, our theology, and our outlook on life.



## Book review: How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?

Words: Amber (Year 10 student)

**"Helpful and hopeful."**

A review of Hugh P. Kemp's new book *How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2024)

**Amber - Year 10 student**

Hugh Kemp's new book, *How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?* addresses big questions that teenagers from his classes over the years have raised: it is subtitled *Unfinished Conversations with my High School Students*.

The book is written in the style of letters, inviting conversations about the assumptions behind our questions. With headings like, "If God is so good, then why is there evil in the world?" and "What is the right thing to do, and why should I do it?" these letters are conversations from real life, and Kemp encourages his pupils to keep asking them.

Kemp investigates the assumptions behind each question and takes time to build a foundation of understanding: he gives good evidence, and other times he poses further questions. For example, in Chapter 2 – "Are you actually serious when you claim that Jesus rose from the dead?" – Kemp gives convincing evidence that Jesus was dead, and that He came back to life.

In his chapter on Ethics – What is the right thing to do? – he discusses AI becoming more humanoid. He asks the question: "how many artificial parts would a human have to have before we could declare they are not humans anymore?"

*How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?* made me think about my Christian Faith. One question really stood out: why is there so much evil in the world? Kemp compares Jesus' first coming as D-Day in WWII (6th June, 1944). This is when the Allies got a foothold in Europe: in this metaphor, it is when Jesus destroyed evil on the cross. His coming back is like V-E Day (8th May, 1945), when the war was finally over, and the enemy was defeated. Right now, we are in between these two days, and so the process of cleaning up evil is still in progress, but the victory is guaranteed. The ending of the book also really resonated with me. Kemp ends all his correspondence with the word *shalom* – "peace". The last paragraph explained how *shalom* carries the hope of the fulfilment of promises. This was powerful, and I was deeply moved.

Sometimes I found that I wanted more evidence in Kemp's answers. In one chapter, he writes about how the Bible is trustworthy. I would like to have included the evidence about the number of manuscripts that we have of the New Testament, and that the events were recorded by eyewitnesses. At some points I wanted more context surrounding a book or movie that he mentioned. I am still not entirely convinced about the way Kemp suggests Genesis was written, when compared to what scientists think about the start of the world today. Could the earth have been formed in seven days if God wanted to? The Creation story in Genesis may well have been written in more of a descriptive and poetic form: discerning its factual substance is a challenge.

There are countless books that help us to understand Christianity and to help answer questions about the world we live in. Another recent one is Rebecca McLaughlin's *10 Questions Every Teen Should Ask*

(and Answer) *About Christianity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021). I came away from McLaughlin's book like I had not actually learnt much, despite the evidence it provided. However, Kemp's left me feeling like we have so many reasons to be hopeful.

*How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?* is suited for teenagers because the questions come from them. Kemp gives good background to most of the points that arise, and it would be useful to readers who are new to Christianity, from other religions, and appreciate worldview conversations. Youth group leaders and parents should also read this book. It will give answers and more deep-thinking questions for teenagers on a more personal level. It will be a helpful book for parents to coach their teenagers about how to ask questions and find some answers. In fact, I would recommend this book to everyone!

Out of ten, I think this book is a nine. Some of my own personal questions were answered in a helpful way - this book gave me hope. Overall, Kemp's new book left me feeling completed, and that I had learnt a great deal of information to help me in my life. It was interesting reading what other teenagers wonder about, and this book prompts me to share what I have learnt.

*How Far Down Does the Elephant Go?* is variably priced and is available from amazon.com.au, directly from the publisher Wipf and Stock (wipfandstock.com) or [directly from the author](#) for \$20 + p&p if applicable.



## Farewell to an Old Site, and Hello to the Future

Words + Photos: Bell, Lamb & Trotter

For over 150 years - 152 to be precise - [Bell, Lamb & Trotter](#) have provided care and support for Cantabrian families through one of life's most difficult times.

A lot can change in over one and a half centuries, and as the city's oldest established funeral home, [Bell, Lamb & Trotter](#) has been there throughout, innovating and introducing new

technologies over the years, but maintaining local ownership by local families.

The move to a new premise since early 2024 at the centrally-located 420 Saint Asaph Street is the next step forward into the future. [Managing Director](#), Andrew Bell explains the relocation, "Our old Ferry Road premises were nice, and served us well for 40 years. But they were limiting in what we were able to provide. This move, only a two-minute drive away from the previous location, allows us to give better care to the families we are looking after."

The shift into new premises involves the renovation of a number of character buildings and their transformation into contemporary, welcoming spaces, that offer three main innovative new options:

### **Our [Little Chapel](#)**

Andrew recounts: "When I first started helping out at the family funeral home two decades ago, I remember seeing a small service in our then chapel, which was built for 150 people. Two people were in attendance to say their goodbyes and that always stuck with me - it was something we could better provide for. Now we have a space that is more comfortable for smaller gatherings and there aren't a lot of options like this in Christchurch. People have been very receptive to this our Little Chapel since it recently started operating."

### **Water Cremation**

As recently featured on [Spinoff](#), Bell, Lamb & Trotter have partnered with Water Cremation Aotearoa New Zealand to bring this novel alternative to flame cremation to Christchurch. Also referred to as 'aquamation' and 'alkaline hydrolysis', the process itself results in no emissions, as opposed to the 250kg or so of carbon emitted by flame cremation - roughly the equivalent of driving a car from Christchurch to Cape Reinga.

Ashes are returned to the family similar to flame cremation but lack carbon, so aren't harmful to the environment if scattered or buried.

The practice of water cremation has been operating in funeral homes in the United States for over a decade and will be a first for New Zealand.



Notably, at the end of 2021, Archbishop Desmond Tutu chose water cremation for himself, due to its lessened environmental impact.

## A Large Event Space

Coming soon is a large space for 250 people that will be a unique space for the people of Christchurch to use, incorporating modern design elements, flexibility in layout, and undercover carparking.

As Andrew says, "The whole project is shaping up to be something we're really proud of and we are really looking forward to how we can care and provide for people from the [new Saint Asaph Street address](#), going into the future."

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## Help Wash Away Neglected Tropical Diseases in the World's Poorest Places...

"Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham..." – Genesis 26:18

Living in New Zealand, most of us are fortunate to have a constant supply of clean water to use for our everyday living. But that's not the case in many of the world's poorest places. Around the world, there are millions and millions of people

who do not have access to clean water.

With generous support from kind people like you, [Christian Blind Mission \(cbm\)](#) continues the fight against Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), such as River Blindness which has shown incredible success over many years in Nigeria. Alongside the successful delivery of parasite-killing medication, which breaks the lifecycle of parasites that cause NTDs, **cbm's** Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project focuses on clean water and good sanitation to prevent NTDs from taking hold again.

**Good health and clean water go hand in hand. So, having access to clean water from well-maintained boreholes, helps free children and adults from contracting NTDs such as River Blindness.**

It also means men, women, and children no longer have to spend hours walking to gather muddied and contaminated water.

Clean water helps keep people healthy. And healthy people are more likely to be able to access education, have better livelihoods, and have a far greater chance of breaking the cycle of poverty and disability.

The major success factor of **cbm's** WASH programme is to provide clean water through fixing broken boreholes, also making them accessible for people with disabilities.

*As we celebrate International Day of Charities on Thursday, 5 September, and having recently visited Nigeria, I ask for you to prayerfully consider making a special gift to help ensure clean water, and good sanitation and hygiene practices are accessible to communities, including people with disabilities. This will help prevent children and adults in local villages losing their sight due to River Blindness.*

**With support from generous people like you, new or refurbished boreholes will provide communities with a centrally located source of clean water.**

The addition of wheelchair ramps will make the task of gathering water safer and more accessible to people with disabilities.

Right now, there are children, adults and whole communities in great need of clean water in places like Nigeria... but your generous support can change that.

By sending your gift, you selflessly make it possible for clean water to be made available to communities, and you will also be helping to provide education to primary schools, including setting up WASH Clubs and installing handwashing stations.

When I was in Nigeria, I visited a small community and their school where a WASH Club has been set up. The children were excited to have access to clean drinking water, and to learn about improving their personal sanitation and hygiene practices.

The children happily demonstrated their new hand-washing skills, and showed me how to wash my hands using soap and 'tippy-taps'. These 'tippy-taps' were filled with fresh clean water from the refurbished community borehole, and constructed from low-cost recycled materials.

Whilst in the area, I also spoke with people in the community who were trained by **cbm's** partner to repair wells. One of them was Chetachi, who could not walk unaided, and had a friend carrying his tools.

"Before there was no clean water and now, this is no longer an issue," he said, with a beaming smile.

Chetachi is trained by **cbm's** partner to maintain borehole pumps, and repair them when broken.

Because of this training, Chetachi, and other people with disabilities, now have jobs and feel valued and included in the community.

I spoke with other people in the community who now have access to clean water from their newly refurbished borehole. They spoke of their gratitude to thoughtful people like you.

**I am also grateful for kind and loving people like you, who are willing to help WASH away the misery of NTDs in the world's poorest places.**

Whilst this community is now thriving, right now in other villages in Nigeria there are many children and adults in desperate need of clean water... and your generous support can help change that.

The Director from **cbm's** WASH partner said to me: "Many charities want to come in at the end when we are winning the battle against NTDs. But **cbm** has been there from the start."

My challenge to you is, let's continue the incredible progress made over many years to combat NTDs. Please prayerfully consider sending a gift today by phoning 0800 77 22 64 or on **cbm's** website [www.cbmz.org.nz/wash](http://www.cbmz.org.nz/wash).

With your generous support, let's WASH away the misery of NTDs!

Thank you for your kind and caring heart. May God bless you.

*Dr Murray Sheard received his PhD in Ethics and Philosophy  
from the University of Auckland. He has worked in  
international development for over 15 years  
and is the Chief Executive Officer of **cbm** New Zealand.*



## Women Seek Peace Together

Words + Photos: Ewan Sargent (City Mission)

The Christchurch City Mission's day programme for women who are battling to manage their alcohol and/or drug addiction problems can be an important step to move from chaos and misery to peace. **Ewan Sargent reports.**

City Mission staff Heather and Belinda call them the "bombshell" or "lightbulb" moments – a point in the group meeting where a shock of insight has affected one of the women present.

"And you feel it and can see it too," Heather says.

The group will be together in Wahine Whai Ora's upstairs day programme rooms, and someone will be sharing something, it might be a facilitator or it might be another group member, then suddenly "oh" a listening woman's jaw will drop and her face will light up with the realisation she has just heard something very significant.

Trying to describe it, Heather and Belinda rub their arms and say it gives them goosebumps to recall these times that a client has been moved so strongly. It's often a big breakthrough in a client's journey to take control back of their life.

Wahine Whai Ora is a women's day programme run at the City Mission in Hereford Street for those who are trying to manage and overcome alcohol and drug misuse problems. The women come to groups and can also get individual counselling - whatever works best to help them.

About 160 women are on the books at any time and they come to the City Mission through many ways, including self-referral, or by being referred by other City Mission services, or by other city agencies.

Service manager Heather says many women who come to Wahine Whai Ora have little or no sense of themselves. They don't know what they truly think and feel alone in their distress of their current circumstances. Life seems to be lived in permanent chaos.

One of the powerful things about group work is they discover others have similar experiences, fears, challenges, and this can feel like a huge weight has lifted off them. They feel less isolated, and it can be the start of feeling more at peace. Moments of peace also rob the drugs of some control.

Heather says funnily enough when some do find a sense of peace, they can struggle with that too.

"It feels like something is missing. They miss the adrenalin rushes ups and downs, and sometimes self-sabotage comes in. We help them discover it is okay to be... okay. It's okay to have a day that there's no chaos or, you know, there's no chaos in their head either."

The group meetings have themes like "tools for change", "improving self-esteem", "relapse prevention", "reflections", "mind-body awareness", and all these are ways in which the women can strengthen themselves and for some rediscover their identity.

That can also bring peace.

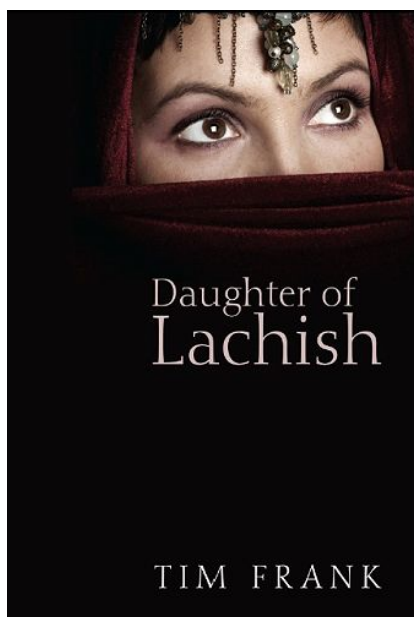
Belinda says drugs and alcohol can strip so much that matters from a woman. Many have lost everyone important to them, especially children and family, and they carry a huge sense of loss.

Heather says when women use alcohol and drugs from a young age this becomes their identity. They become stuck there and miss the later developmental growth that leads to finding out "who am I?"

"If you've lost it all, you are on your own, you are homeless, you are up to your eyes in debt, your health is bad, your mental health is suffering... it's like, well, what is it that I actually want? You know, 'who am I? Look at this chaos around me'."

In Wahine Whai Ora's safe, airy, warm upstairs rooms along with practical advice on how to manage their overuse challenges, they find support from others to find their own sense of identity and how they want to be. An inner peace comes from regaining this sense of identity and a sense of worth.

With inner peace comes strength, resilience, hope, and a belief that things can and will be better.



## War and Peace in the Assyrian Empire

Words + Photos: Rev'd Dr Tim Frank

I doubt many Christians use the words of the prophet Nahum as their devotional reading. His message seems crass and vengeful.

*"The Lord takes vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his enemies."*

*"Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims!"*

*"Draw water for the siege [...] the fire will devour you; the sword will cut you down, and, like grasshoppers, consume you".*

The book ends:

*"Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?"*

All these words were hurled at the city of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, which fell in 612 BCE.

Why was the defeat celebrated in Judah and much of the Ancient Near East? Because Assyria was a

cruel military empire that through its heavy-handed oppression exacted crippling tribute payments from its vassals. It reigned by fear and terror. It did this through the best-equipped army seen until then. To get greater tribute the Assyrian empire continually had to expand to new territories. Assyria had fallen into a vicious circle: it needed to make war to obtain resources for its army; it needed a professional, well-equipped army to make war. No wonder that those who had seen their relatives tortured by the Assyrian army and their nation reduced to economic servitude were glad at the downfall of this superpower.

However Assyria saw things differently. The Assyrian kings justified their military campaigns in their accounts. These justifications for war in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions have been examined in a 1992 book by Bustenay Oded.

Assyrians went on military campaigns under the auspices of the gods, whether only one, such as Ashur, or a whole host. Generally, the Assyrian king claimed to prefer peace. Nevertheless, Assyrians saw war as a frequent necessity, for "peace will not be concluded without a fight[...]; good relations will not come about without a battle" (Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta). The Assyrian King Sargon felt compelled to destroy the land of Ashdod—a Philistine city state—for example, because its king "had uttered numerous lies and evil things to incite [other kings] to rebel against me". The Assyrian army also frequently intervened if in one of the vassal states rebellion was brewing or a local leader loyal to Assyria had been replaced by someone whose loyalties were not as clear. A vassal who "disregarded the oath he took by the great gods and decided not to pay tribute" was considered not only to have offended the Assyrian king, but also the gods. Punishment by war was necessary.

From the Assyrian viewpoint, outside the Assyrian imperial order there was only chaos. War was used to impose order and peace. The Assyrians saw themselves as saving the peoples from the powers of anarchy and "bringing rest to the weary people".

Sennacherib, one of the most ruthless Assyrian kings, said that the god Ashur made him the shepherd of mankind, leader of all people. To ward off dangerous and hostile forces Assyrian kings saw themselves obliged to resort to violence to keep world peace, which was only attained by spreading terror and fear. Through war Assyrian kings also showed their glory and justified such descriptions as "the brave one, fearless in battle". King Esarhaddon could state: "I am powerful, I am supremely strong, I am lordly, I am glorious, I am strong". It was the mission of the Assyrian kings—and the army and state—to bring control and order to the world through conquering and keeping subject the nations. The Assyrian king Ashurbanipal proclaimed that the gods "decreed as my fate to exercise dominion over all inhabited regions and made their kings bow down at my feet". In Assyria the wars and stated reasons had broad public support. From the Assyrian point of view the enemy kings either did not know what was good for them or were evil.

War and terror were justified by words about peace, justice, and security. Little has changed across the millennia, as advocates of the military complex still maintain that well-equipped and practiced forces are required to keep order. It was the Romans who coined the phrase *Si vis pacem, para bellum!*—"if you want peace, prepare for war!" The theologian Karl Barth pointed out that such a peace undergirded by weapons always looks forward to war. Rather, the motto should be *Si non vis bellum, para pacem!*—"if you don't want war, prepare peace".

Peace is hard work. It requires justice—including economic justice, a fair distribution of resources, and reconciliation of old wrongs. As those who follow the Prince of Peace, we are called to continually work for peace.

Tim Frank has participated in several archaeological excavations of ancient cities destroyed by the Assyrian army. His historical novel [Daughter of Lachish](#) is set in ancient Judah during the time of the Assyrian invasion led by Sennacherib.



## Peace and Conflict

Words: Rev'd Jolyon White

We all have friends or family members who are avoidant. In my family, it's me.

Classic conflict avoidance by letting things go or shutting down instead of opening the conflict. But when there is an issue on the table and someone is angry or hurt, avoiding the conflict isn't peace, we all know what the atmosphere feels like. Just because we are not currently fighting doesn't mean there is peace. The same is true for a nation. As long as one group has grievance there is no peace. The main difference being that standing in your living room the tension at home is obvious;

the tension across town may not be.

In Matthew 9:35-10:1, Jesus was going throughout the villages. He saw the people and had compassion. Jesus responds by asking the disciples to pray, then he sends them to be the answer to that prayer in a way that proved to be costly. Jesus goes, sees, has compassion, and responds. He does what he does because of what he feels, feels what he feels because of what he sees, and see what he sees because of where he is standing.

*Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'*

*Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. (Matthew 9:35-10:1, NRSVA)*

Take just two issues: There is deep-seated pain from the dispossession of land and alienation from tikanga (customary practices or principles) among mana whenua (the indigenous people i.e. Māori); and there is hopelessness, grief, and poor health because of insecure, over-priced, poor-quality housing in many parts of our country. Both are matters of who we are and want to be as a nation. And both are matters of biblical relationship and justice. How we respond will likely depend on how we feel, how we feel will depend on what we see, and what we see will likely depend on where we are standing.

We may come to different conclusions about how we should resolve these national problems. But without deep, thoughtful, genuine, and costly action there can never be peace, there is only avoidance.



## A very holy Holy Week (and Easter)

Words: Jenny Dawson

I was born, baptised, married, and ordained in the Diocese of Christchurch. For the last twenty years I have lived in the North Island but earlier this year I sensed God inviting me to make a pilgrimage home, to spend in Holy Week in Ōtautahi Christchurch, participating in all the liturgies that I could attend at the Transitional Cathedral. It was truly a blessing.

I booked an AirB&B just off Latimer Square and flew into Christchurch just in time for the Palm Sunday eucharist. The Dean reminded us in his sermon that we could/should not go through the drama of Holy Week pretending no awareness of how it would all unfold but urged us instead to find meaning in each part of the journey.

Each morning that I participated in my own home parish's online Morning Prayer (from Daily Devotions in *A New Zealand Prayer Book*) then joined the Cathedral congregation for whatever was on offer, including the Te Reo eucharist on Thursday. I had deliberately not arranged to meet with lots of different friends during what I hoped was to be a kind of retreat, but it was a particular joy to attend the Renewal of Vows and Chrism service, at St Christopher's, with someone with whom I was ordained deacon in 1988.

Back at the Cathedral there was choral music (with various combinations of choir members including the delightful girl choristers), symbols, and powerful words as we recalled and re-engaged with the last week of the life of Jesus.

On Maundy Thursday I had a few hours between the lunchtime eucharist and the evening stripping of the altar. For some time, I had wanted to see a movie called "Perfect Days" which I found showing at Lumiere Cinema (in the part of the Arts Centre where I had attended NZ History lectures decades ago). It was the right thing to do: contemplative, gentle, with a powerful yet understated story of faithful loving service that never mentioned footwashing explicitly but was all about that.

From Good Friday, I will not easily forget the choir singing right through the two crucifixion chapters of John's gospel as we sat in the starkly empty Cathedral. Saturday was as hollow and empty as it should be, including when I decided to join with several hundred people on their regular weekly march in support of Palestine. Then in the evening, I was back in the Cathedral: we all sat down, then trooped outside again to where a roaring fire had been kindled outside near Hereford Street. The Paschal

candle was lit, the Exultet was sung, we processed together into the now flower-filled cathedral, large chunks of scripture were read powerfully, we lit our candles and affirmed our baptism. It was indeed a Great Vigil.

On glorious autumnal golden Easter Day, my husband came to join me for the celebration then we went away on holiday together. I feel profoundly grateful to the huge team at the Transitional Cathedral for making this season of diverse liturgies powerful, and for the manaakitanga (hospitality and generosity) that included us all in such a way that we are empowered to share the good news of Christ's new and ever-present life.



## Retreat: Deeper into the Heart of God

Words + Photos: Yvette Koo Butcher

"In the bleak mid-winter..." I walked towards a local Baptist church for a women's winter retreat to hear an American author called Sharon Garlough Brown of 'Sensible Shoes'.

Having yet to read any of Sharon's books, I went there with open ears and no expectations. I first heard about this retreat from a fellow parishioner who invited me to go along with her. While thinking and praying about it, I felt a strong pull on my heart to go. My life was hectic and demanding (still is) but I obeyed and registered for this retreat.

The following one-and-a-half day of sessions turned into a restful and meaningful retreat. We were welcomed by Sharon in a native Zulu greeting which means "I see you". And the

usual response to this greeting is "I see you seeing me". This is how God sees us. On the next day, Sharon was told that "Tēnā koe" means "There you are" in te reo. I heard the room went 'mental' as a lot of us then realised the significance of this phrase when someone says to us, "Tēnā koe": "There you are". You are noticed and your entire being is acknowledged. Tēnā koe. There you are.

To summarise the sessions, Sharon skillfully directed our attention to: the One Who Sees me (in the story of Hagar, Genesis 16:13); the Scriptures (the Prodigal Son - Sharon encouraged us to listen to this parable just like the first century audience with Jesus); our emotional healing (the naming of our emotions); and go deeper into the heart of our Almighty God by celebrating the spiritual disciplines every day (to be attentive to God, receiving, remaining, resting, enjoying, and then responding to the love of God, not as a chore).

Sharon is an exceptional speaker. She gets into the heart of the matter quickly and throws in witty stories that resonate with life's journey. To the delight of many women present, Sharon shared meaningful quotes from her book characters.

As a spiritual director and a pastor of many years, Sharon facilitated each session afresh with much care. Her gentle, probing questions seemed to address questions at the back of my mind. Sharon also shared many gems from her life experience including how the Holy Spirit is a great excavator and works in us where there is resistance. Sharon walked with us through each Bible story unhurriedly: we listened with our hearts and minds; learned; sometimes laughed with delight at our shared experiences; prayed together; reflected; and journalled.

This was Sharon's third visit to New Zealand, and this retreat was attended by 170+ women (from a newborn baby to women in their winter years) in Christchurch. Aside from meeting a group of lovely women from Darfield, I heard a lady in her 20s travelled from Wellington just for this retreat. To cater to "out-of-towners", it was livestreamed to Karori Baptist Church, to Nelson Anglican and Baptist churches, including for those who stayed at home because of winter illness/Covid, bringing a total of 220+ attendees.

I am very glad to have paid attention to the Holy Spirit's pull on my heart to join this retreat. It was an irreplaceable experience, being present with other women gathered to seek God, to be refreshed, and to be reminded to receive our Abba Father's love on a daily basis.

You can find out more about [Sharon's retreats and more on her website](#) and about her work [on Facebook](#).

# Invest in What You Believe in

Words + Photos: Anglican Financial Care



The General Synod/Te Hīnota Whānui 2024 fully supported a Motion from Anglican Financial Care / Te Maru Mihinare (AFC), to strongly encourage all Anglican Church-related employers to apply to AFC to have the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme as their [employer chosen](#) KiwiSaver scheme.

In fact, employers in any Christian organisation whose primary activities are Christian mission or ministry can apply to AFC to have the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme as their employer chosen KiwiSaver.

When AFC approves the employer, new employees who are not already KiwiSaver members, or do not choose a different KiwiSaver Scheme, will be auto-enrolled into the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme. If employers do not have a chosen scheme, the employees will be randomly allocated to a default KiwiSaver provider by Inland Revenue if they do not choose a KiwiSaver Scheme. Employees can change their KiwiSaver scheme provider at any time, but they can only belong to one at a time.

Of course, New Zealand Christians and church workers don't have to wait for their employer to suggest joining the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme. [Click here to find out more](#) – it's simple to do online!\*

So, why would you want to join AFC's Christian KiwiSaver Scheme? Well, why wouldn't you?! If your being Anglican, and AFC being established by the General Synod isn't enough of a reason, how about this: AFC has been providing financial services to the Anglican community for more than 50 years. It is the manager and issuer of the New Zealand Anglican Church Pension Fund, which provides pensions to the Anglican clergy across the entire Province, including Polynesia.

AFC extended its superannuation services in 1991, to offer a superannuation savings scheme called The Retire Fund to all New Zealand Anglican Church workers and workers employed by other Christian Churches and charities in New Zealand.

When KiwiSaver became established in New Zealand in 2007, AFC was an early adopter, and set up the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme (previously called Koinonia KiwiSaver Scheme). It was established as, and remains, a restricted KiwiSaver Scheme, meaning that it is not open to the general public.

## Restricted Scheme

The Christian KiwiSaver Scheme is based on Christian membership and values. It is restricted to those with an active Christian faith, immediate family members of those with an active Christian faith, and employees of Christian organisations with a Christian mission or ministry. That latter aspect means that non-Christians and non-practising Christians *can* join, if they are working for a Christian charitable organisation.

## Ethical Investments and focus on Performance

AFC has an in-house investment team who apply AFC's Ethical Investment Policy to all investment decisions. This ensures that AFC's investments are made and maintained in accordance with Christian values. Check out the [Ethical Investment Policy here](#), found under Guides & Policies.

To be transparent, the one exception to this is for the international fixed interest and private equity portfolios, which are managed by experts who are subject to their own ethical standards. All three of the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme's investment funds (Growth, Balanced, and Income) have some holdings in these portfolios. If you want to check this out, have a look at the Fund Updates under the Documents tab on the website.

The Christian KiwiSaver Scheme is the second largest of New Zealand's four restricted KiwiSaver schemes. Most KiwiSaver schemes (there are more than 30) are open to the general public, with the 16 largest schemes holding more than 90% of all KiwiSaver savings. The larger a scheme is, the greater the economies of scale it achieves which should enable it to have lower fees per scheme member, especially for passive schemes that track investment market returns.

While AFC's fees are higher than the average fees, they are not significantly out of line with the market. AFC is an active investment manager that places a high priority on diversification and capital preservation. AFC's belief is that it's not just superior investment performance that is important, but superior performance while managing risk and endeavouring to avoid losses. AFC seeks to participate in the good times but also protect Scheme members when the investment climate is not so good. The goal is to deliver performance for members across the full investment cycle.

As a charitable organisation, AFC only needs to cover its costs. It does not have shareholders or other interested parties for whom it seeks to make a profit. As the economies of scale of the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme grow, Scheme members may ultimately enjoy lower fees.

If you are an employer reading this, the Employer Chosen Application form can be found [here](#), under "Other Forms".

\* Anglican Financial Care is the manager of the Christian KiwiSaver Scheme. A copy of the latest Product Disclosure Statement can be found on our website <https://christiankiwisaver.nz/documents/>. The New Zealand Anglican Church Pension Board trading as Anglican Financial Care is the issuer.

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## Did you know?

Click on the image to watch a new one-minute video introducing our new Diocesan logo. This new logo is used alongside the Diocesan Crest as seen in the new signage outside the Anglican Centre.

The new logo was designed by Tim Hewitt from Digital Journey, while this short video was produced by our Anglican

Centre staff, Yvette and Scott.

The new logo elements are:

- **History:** Bishop's Mietre, church arch, stained glass windows.
- **Faith:** The three star shapes represent the Trinity and the Southern Cross.
- **Whenua:** The three-pointed shapes represent the Southern Alps.
- **Region:** Our Diocese extends from the Chatham Islands, across the Canterbury to the Westland regions.
- The **braided rivers** of the Canterbury plains, interlinked circles of regeneration, mission, and Anglican life.
- **Weaving:** An interplay and weaving of people, ideas, and diverse communities.

The Diocesan Crest remains the official crest/identity of our Anglican Diocese of Christchurch.

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