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Hokitika Bound

By Karena de Pont



Welcome to Hokitika—Archdeacon Carole Hughes, Revd Erice Fairbrother, Archdeacon Mere Wallace, Revd Amy Chambers & Revd Numia Tomoana share the joy of being together again.

I was starting to panic. It was the early hours of the morning when most people were still fast asleep and I was driving around the back roads of Mangere as a result of having to take more detours off the recommended website detour due to road works. It was dark and I had no idea where I was on these back streets, but knew that I was not getting any closer to my Park n Ride destination and time was quickly ticking away when a woman in a white van heeded my desperate waving of hands and stopped. “Follow me”... and despite it being out of her way she led me back to the bright lights of Auckland airport surrounds. Thank you Lord for answering my prayer and sending me a Guardian Angel to guide me – it just reinforced my faith in others in times of need.

The reason for the early morning start was that the Anglican Women’s Studies Council was gathering in Hokitika for our first meeting of the year. We had been invited by tikanga Maori Councillor Archdeacon Mere Wallace, to come and get to know her place and so this was our first trip to Te Waipounamu as a Council. Over the years that she has represented tikanga Maori, it has always been Mere making the early morning starts to come to us for meetings and now it was our turn to go to her. Everyone met up in Christchurch airport before we headed off to Hokitika across the snow dusted Southern Alps on a beautiful summers morning to see Mere’s backyard. The

genuine delight in seeing each of our colleagues is what helps make this Council be so effective.

Unfortunately, my bag (the one with all our meeting notes) was still in Christchurch but was assured that it would follow later in the day. Never mind, flexibility is the key and we were able to start our first day of our meeting with a theological discussion about 'empty rooms' followed by a beautiful home-cooked meal prepared by Richard, Mere's husband. Meeting away from everyday distractions is a great help to three tikanga relationships. Being able to discuss openly, honestly and with gentleness has always being the kaupapa of this Council. We all may approach a problem differently and that is okay. So often in this world, we think we understand something when actually we could be talking at cross-purposes, not enough listening or will-



listening, I reflected on how this reading could be adapted to the work of the WSC, how the Council endeavours to empa-

tise with those that we serve in order to meet their needs, to become all things to all people, e.g. an advocacy group, a mentoring body, a support network, a fellowship of sisters in Christ. We shared this Eucharist with women visiting from Te



From top: Hokitika hosts an annual driftwood sculpture competition; the Council in the pews of All Saints Hokitika; Front page news; Abandoned building in Greymouth with a message of hope.



Tapu wae o te Aratika Anglican Church at Arahura as well as women from All Saints Hokitika, and afterwards over a fabulous morning tea it was a great opportunity for us to talk about our work and to witness the good relationships across tikanga bonds and Dioceses of Christchurch and Te Waipounamu working together on the West Coast in support of one another.

ingness to empathise. So going to each other's 'patch' for a more informal gathering helps to break down those barriers to understanding, ensuring better and more effective decision making within the three tikanga working model.

Day two dawned clear and bright and the Council had been invited to share the mid-week service at the local parish with Vicar Vivian Harber before continuing with our meeting later that day. The reading for the day was from 1 Corinthians 9: 16-23 and as I sat there



We woke on our final morning to see that the Council had made the front cover of the Hokitika Guardian newspaper! On our drive up to Greymouth, we were able to call in and see the little church that the women from Arahura had

talked about the day before. Apparently the church building is currently on the market and the women expressed their sadness at losing this precious community focal point of their



I was looking at the photo of Erice and I standing on either side of the church signage in Hokitika and it reaffirmed for me that no matter how far apart we are either by distance, age, culture or positions, we are bound together by our faith in the Lord who provides, empowers, enriches and embraces. That's the church we are. I could also see behind and around us in the shadows cast by the tree, the faces of those who have gone before us, standing under the same tree or around the signage talking, sharing and listening to each other. That place spoke about relationship, bonding and a faith that's been there for some 200 years since the gospel came to Aotearoa and then found its way to Pasefika. We own that legacy and have a responsibility to carry it as well as pass it on.—

Revd Amy Chambers, Tikanga Pasefika Councillor

faith. This lovely little church is called Te Tapu wae o te Aratika (The Sacred Pathway to Righteousness) and it used to be St Andrews Church in Otira before being gifted by the Greymouth and Kumara Parishes in 1999. It was relocated to Arahura when their former church St Paul's was blown away in a whirlwind. The land the church stands on was given by Canon Miriam Henderson on a lease arrangement. Miriam was the first Kai Tahu women to be priested and we were fortunate to meet Miriam's sister Aunty Tilly and her grand-daughter and carer, Ruahine at the gathering. Many of the women present have whakapapa to the new marae. Tuhuru is the whare nui and Papakura is the name of the whare manaaki. Ngati-waewae are the Mana whenua.

We then continued north to Greymouth, where the hills surrounding the town are a constant reminder of those lost in the Pike River mining disaster. Fortunately, Revd Marge Tefft from the Anglican Parish of Greymouth and Kumara was in her office and we were able to have a quick but fruitful visit with her. This parish is part of the Diocese of Nelson so the Council's visit to

the West Coast encompassed visiting parishes from three different Bishoprics'.

From being on the coast, we learnt that although the townships may appear at first glance, quiet and 'sleepy', many of the buildings and churches have been damaged from the earthquakes and remain empty and forlorn. From conversations with women, we learnt how living on the coast can be isolating, especially when the weather cuts off road access, how the general population maybe aging but maintains a fiercely held independence. Fortunately, modern communications, e.g. skype conferencing allows coasters to participate in meetings without spending days travelling back and forth to fulfil these commitments. As this technology is embraced and becomes more widespread through the Province, some may argue the toss as to whether it is economically viable to meet in person at all in preference to video conferencing. However when that time comes, we must always keep in mind that when you visit another context you are more able to pick up the nuances that contribute greatly to understanding each other and that can be of great value to building relationships across the Church. After our visit, the Council now understands that for Mere and fellow

The Council visit the church at Arahura called 'Te Tapu wae o te Aratika' (The Sacred Pathway to Righteousness)



women clergy of the West Coast, the nearest neighbouring parish can actually be from a different Diocese. So when talk of resource sharing and pastoral care response to community needs – especially in light of the Pike River mining disaster so recent – comes into the conversation, we delight in witnessing these women of ministry who have built strong working relationships, who trust and support one another across tikanga and diocesan boundaries.

Karena de Pont is the Administrator for the Council of Anglican Women's Studies



Christmas Day Bi-Centenary Service



From the Diocese of Dunedin: Ian Wilson, Keith Gover, Libby Wilson, Clemency Wright, Bishop Kelvin Wright, Kirsty Ferguson, Karis Wilson (9), Anne Gover, Katherine Wright (absent Pauline Boyce & Hayden Wilson (5))

By Kirsty Ferguson

ground all eager to be a part of this unique celebration. To see both Māori and British influences of the service was something to be seen. All had gathered round with a common cause – the 200th celebration of the good news to come to Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Song after song, speaker after speaker the service became more and more alive and filled with the presence of Christ and the realization of just how memorable and exceptional this place and event was 200 years ago and today. I couldn't help but think to myself *I wonder what it looked like all those years ago!*

Samuel Marsden spoke very fondly about his great, great, great grandfather "I, as a descendent of Samuel Marsden, carry his genes," he said. "And so I have an advantage over most historians, be they British, Kiwi or Aussie. Because I can feel, from the inside out, rather than looking, as they do, from the outside in what it means to be Samuel Marsden." It was clear that Samuel Marsden is just as enthusiastic about spreading the Gospel with others just as his great, great, great, grandfather once did. "And I have that same passion for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ to the people of my own generation..."

Archbishop Phillip Richardson brought with him a challenge for us all, to love and support each other more than ever. "We are *created* in love, we are *redeemed* by love and we are *called* to love. Love is **the** essential element of our DNA. We are built for relationship with God and with others." His challenge also extended for us to work as a community as times become more

"My name is Samuel Marsden". When I heard these words from Samuel Marsden's great, great, great grandson it was then I knew that this was something really special.

As the boat approached Oihi Bay and the Marsden Cross came into view I could see the 1500 people who had gathered to hear and be a part of the "Very Special Christmas" service. The atmosphere was overwhelming and enriching as I disembarked the boat to join this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Looking around and taking in all the people who had gathered round to hear the messages was incredible. The different denominations of Catholic, Presbyterian, The Salvation Army, Baptist and more were apparent with the influence of the Anglican Bishops sitting up the front by the Marsden Cross. Children playing along the shore, boats with their anchors down, rowers and jet skiers along with the many who gathered on the grassy

difficult as the gap between poor and rich widen, housing is becoming more of an issue everyday and more people are relying on food banks to eat. "Christian mission is not a form of palliative care. We are called to radical intervention to build societies, communities for human flourishing – because this is God's intention for human beings."

Oihi Bay, the history and spirituality it holds is something we all need to experience in our lifetime. For me, the hymn *Te Harinui* was just another song to sing during Christmas. Now, it has more of a significant meaning that it ever did before!

*Not on a snowy night
By star or candlelight
Nor by an angel band
There came to our dear land*

***Te Harinui, Te Harinui
Te Hari nui
Glad tidings of great joy***

*But on a summer day
Within a quiet bay
The Maori people heard
The great and glorious word*

*The people gathered round
Upon the grassy ground
And heard the preacher say
I bring to you this day*

*Now in this blessed land
United heart and hand
We praise the glorious birth
And sing to all the earth*



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The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the **Women's Studies Centre** was set up to serve and to advance the interests and needs of the women of this Church particularly those undertaking Theological training.

The Link Representatives from each Diocese and Hui Amorangi have been chosen for their leadership ability to identify, gather, facilitate, resource and encourage women in their educational preparation for ministry whether lay or ordained. It is hoped that the Women's Studies Centre can continue to enjoy the support of each Diocese and Hui Amorangi in this endeavour.



The issue of increasing numbers of women in representative positions across the councils and committees of the Church is seen as a high priority and the practice of intentional mentoring by those already in national and international representative roles is seen as a good way to expose women of this church to fulfill their potential as leaders.

Ensuring that women's voices and stories are heard now and in the future is also one of our continued aims whether it be by traditional methods of publication or using more contemporary technologies like website publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.



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EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER: The Women's Studies Centre is committed to encouraging and enabling women's voices and perspectives from across the diversity of the Church to be shared more widely. We acknowledge that women's experiences of church differ considerably and that resultant theological perspectives also differ considerably. In general the WSC does not exercise editorial control, rather we welcome as many voices as are willing to contribute.