

# encounter



ENCOUNTER LOVE EQUIP LEAD

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## The Intersection

Dr Roshan Allpress  
National Principal/CEO

In the mysterious and beautiful opening imagery of *The Descent of the Dove*, Charles Williams describes the Church as beginning at the intersection of two pathlines: the ascent of the risen Messiah, and the descent of the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>. Williams' friend C.S. Lewis spoke of the triumphant Church, "spread out through all time and space and rooted in eternity, terrible as an army with banners", but then contrasted that image with the experience of a recent convert, "when he gets to his pew and looks around him he sees just that selection of his neighbours whom he has hitherto avoided."<sup>2</sup>

We hold these two faces of the Church in tension. The Church is the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit. We are the people of God engaged in God's mission to renew the world, and a living, communal witness to the oncoming New Creation. The Church is also a community of broken people, too-often disappointing – even hurting – one another, and a set of institutions that requires patient and sacrificial maintenance so that the mission of the Gospel can be well-supported.

As a theological college, Laidlaw exists to serve the Church in its faithfulness and challenges in New Zealand and beyond. Training pastors, ministers, preachers, teachers and leaders for local churches remains a core part of our mission, even as we offer professional qualifications and vocational theology for those who serve the Gospel through countless other callings. Among our 2017 lecturing team are eleven currently-serving pastors and ministers, ensuring that what we teach in our ministry leadership and pastoral theology programmes is engaged with the lived realities of ministry. As you will read inside this *Encounter*, we have a growing network of partnerships through which we are helping equip the current and future leaders of a wide range of denominations and congregations.

Beyond our training of leaders, what excites me about being part of a theological college is the opportunity to serve the Church by being a community committed to the life of the renewed mind, as Paul describes in Romans 12. We get to wrestle with critical issues facing the Church and society, in conversation

with colleagues who have spent years of their lives thinking deeply about what faithful living and leadership looks like in Aotearoa New Zealand. As a college on behalf of the churches, we aspire and are working hard to be a collegiate community of scholars who are a trustworthy resource and a prophetic voice.

What this looks like on the ground is rarely glamorous, just as being the Church is often messy and complicated. However, I am inspired nearly every day to hear stories of how our team are serving churches through running training workshops, preaching, or by offering specialist theological or counselling advice to church boards and leadership teams. A strategic priority for Laidlaw is to continue to find ways to better connect with and serve the churches, as in the Spirit we together seek to serve the risen Messiah. If you are involved in church leadership or attend a church and would like to talk about ways we might partner together, please get in touch by emailing Esther Sila'ila'i ([esilailai@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:esilailai@laidlaw.ac.nz)).

<sup>1</sup> Charles Williams, *The Descent of the Dove* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2002), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (London: Centenary Press, 1942), pp. 15–16.



# Serving the Church through Research and Action

It is the motivation of the simple vision of 'making disciples everywhere' that has seen Laidlaw student Justin O'Malley spend his last 19 years involved in student ministry in France, the USA and New Zealand where he pioneered Student Life at the University of Canterbury. For the last four years Justin has been the National Director of Tandem Ministries (the name for the NZ ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International). Tandem's six field strategies all share the common purpose of making disciples, whether it be with students, athletes, in the military, workplace, marriages, or helping churches reach their communities.

Alongside his leadership and coaching role at Tandem Ministries, Justin has been working away part-time at his Master of Theology, a degree he started at Trinity



Justin O'Malley, National Director - Tandem Ministries and Laidlaw student

Evangelical in the USA before cross-crediting to Laidlaw in 2011. When it came to choosing a research topic for his Masters dissertation, Justin chose to focus on a group of six churches in Auckland's North Shore to discover what motivates them to do regular evangelism. While church mission statements and preaching revealed a motivation to evangelise, Justin's survey of both church leadership and lay people revealed a disconnect between what was said from the pulpit and in documentation and what was actually happening.

With research revealing that 95% of Christians do not share their faith out of fear of people's reactions or being unable to answer questions, the challenge for

the church and for organisations like Tandem, is how to inspire, train and equip Kiwi Christians to be involved in the Great Commission. Justin reflects that his research "has changed the way I have viewed my work". His clear motivation now is to "come alongside the church rather than feeling Tandem has to do it all". One direct result of his research has been a recent total revamp of Tandem's website, tandem.org.nz, with the home page now featuring two buttons "equip me" and "inspire me". "Equip me" offers free resources, advice and tools to help Christians communicate their faith better, and "inspire me" gives stories of everyday Kiwi believers communicating their testimony to those in their workplace or community.

With Justin due to finish study in July, it is exciting to see the results of his research are not staying contained within his 20,000 word dissertation but are leading to a better resourcing of Christian believers as Tandem seeks to fulfil its mission to "help people reach their world with the good news of Jesus".

## Laidlaw celebrates 95 years!

On 1 March we celebrated this College's 95th birthday! Ten students (five men and five women) started classes in a large house in Hopetoun Street, Ponsonby on 1 March 1922. During a special cake-cutting ceremony at the Henderson campus we passed around a notebook that has been compiled of Laidlaw alumni, tracking their service and life events where possible. The stories that emerge from that book are remarkable - hundreds after hundreds of lives lived in service to the Gospel through missions, churches, teaching, counselling, building businesses, raising families, leading communities and more.

Photos of the College's history were displayed throughout the day, reminding students of the heritage into which they now step. And, of course, a number of cakes were consumed at campuses in Auckland and Christchurch to mark the occasion!



National Principal Roshan Allpress and Vivienne Richmond (1967 graduate)

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

Wednesday 17 May, 4.00 - 5.30 pm  
Henderson campus

*Psychotherapy: Loving Shame to Death*

Public Lecture with Curt Thompson

Tuesday 23 May, 3.00 - 4.30 pm  
Henderson campus

*Diaspora Missiology: When the mission field comes to us*

Public Lecture with Dr Terry Casino

Saturday 5 August | Henderson

Saturday 12 August | Christchurch  
*National Alumni Gatherings*

Friday 29 September | Christchurch

*The Sturt Lectures*

with keynote speakers Chris Clarke and Dr Sue Bagshaw

# Serving the Church through Partnerships

A number of partnerships have developed over the years as Laidlaw College seeks to help resource the church in New Zealand. Our diploma and degree qualifications are being taught at Bishopdale Theological College in the Anglican Diocese of Nelson; Salvation Army officers-in-training study the Diploma in Christian Studies at Booth College before embarking on specific officer training, and interns from two large New Zealand churches, Equipppers and ARISE, are studying towards a Laidlaw certificate or diploma through a mixture of distance learning and local tutorials. Youth ministry interns in Anglican and Presbyterian churches are also being trained through a combination of denominational programmes and Laidlaw papers.

Laidlaw's newest partnership is with ARISE Church, one of New Zealand's fastest growing churches. Commencing this year, 40 enthusiastic young interns are being trained for church ministry and leadership through either a one year certificate or two year diploma qualification.

These partnerships enable churches to keep their denominational 'flavour' while equipping young people with a deeper understanding of the Biblical story and leadership tools. The College greatly values the opportunity to partner with these churches as we join together to equip Christian leaders in this nation.



## Equipping the Church

Over five Monday evenings last term a group of enthusiastic people, aged from early 20s to 70s, and from an equally wide range of denominational backgrounds, gathered at the Christchurch campus for a taste of Biblical Theology. Lecturer, Alistair Donaldson, led the 26 participants through the Biblical story from Creation through to New Creation, revealing the central place of Jesus in the unfolding history of redemption and renewal from the effects of sin and how the church can find its place in God's mission to reconcile all things.

The atmosphere each evening was one of anticipation and eager involvement! Aspects of theology many grew up with were challenged, leading to deeper reflection and some new understandings. Discussions continued into breaks and at the end of each lecture.



Alistair Donaldson, Lecturer – Christchurch campus

Mitch, a young man in his 20s, reflects that, "hearing God's word as a whole story and learning to frame everything with the big picture so changed the way I look at my life, future and place in God's story". Annette, who "thoroughly enjoyed the course", affirmed that the course "changed my thinking, especially around looking at Scripture and its pragmatic outworking to be in a more holistic way".

The Biblical Theology lectures were the first in a series of three five-week lectures being run in Christchurch this year. Each is a stand-alone block, with "Bringing

the Old Testament to Life" starting on 23 May, and a series on Christian Apologetics commencing on 29 August. Go to [www.laidlaw.ac.nz/events](http://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/events) to register or call the Christchurch office on 03 354 4270.

## LAIDLAW LECTURE SERIES

### CHRISTCHURCH CAMPUS

Get a small taste of what study at Laidlaw College is like!

**Bringing the Old Testament to Life**

Tuesdays 23, 30 May and 6, 13 and 20 June | 7-9 pm

**Faith has its Reasons**

Tuesdays 29 August and 5, 12, 19 and 26 September | 7-9 pm

Please visit [www.laidlaw.ac.nz/events](http://www.laidlaw.ac.nz/events) for more details and to register.

# Engaging and Sustaining the Church

Six years ago a group of Laidlaw staff sat down to imagine how we might better serve and resource the church in New Zealand. Out of that gathering *Engage - Laidlaw Centre for Church Leadership* was born and a number of initiatives commenced.

Each year visiting theologians and practitioners are invited to speak to gatherings of church and youth leaders.



Bishop Justin Duckworth speaking at a public lecture at the Henderson campus

In 2016 Bishop Justin Duckworth spoke to over a hundred people at Laidlaw's Henderson campus on the challenges facing the church in New Zealand. More recently, Rev Dr Ian Paul spoke on the topic "*Has Preaching Had its Day*". Talks are videoed and freely made available on the College's website as a way of resourcing the wider New Zealand church.

A monthly breakfast for church and mission leaders was initiated and has achieved strong relational networks over the years. The breakfasts have become an energising space of engagement as practitioners grapple with contemporary



Rev Dr Ian Paul lecturing at Laidlaw's Henderson campus

issues and enjoy the depth and breadth of perspective which each other brings. A breakfast regular, Pastor Mike Yates from Shoregrace Church, enjoys the mix of pastoral, mission and faculty leadership. "I always come away inspired and with my understanding expanded for how it relates to my ministry context."

This engagement with pastors and mission practitioners has seen mutual benefits, with some teaching Laidlaw papers in preaching and missions, and others speaking at a "Church at Large" week run by *Engage* to raise awareness of ministry opportunities among Laidlaw's student body.

Affiliated to *Engage* is *Sustain: network for Women in Leadership* which has the aim of linking women leaders together, to offer support and encouragement. Contributors at four evening events a year share insights from their leadership journey, with time given to share and pray together. These gatherings draw women from a diverse range of leadership roles, ethnic and church backgrounds, and include emerging leaders from among Laidlaw's student body.

Kylie Provan first started coming to *Sustain* meetings while a student at Laidlaw. Now the Intern Minister at Knox

Presbyterian Whakatane, she drives to Auckland to attend the gatherings; "I always get something amazing and timely from the speaker. I get to have conversations with women in senior ministry roles, those who have been in this vocation a lot longer than me, and I get to ask questions I cannot ask in other settings". Church Administrator, Carolyn Officer, is another regular who finds that "*Sustain* helps to equip me better; sparks my creativity; and strengthens me for the journey".

Between meetings, *Sustain* publishes a newsletter with input from a woman in leadership which reaches women beyond the Auckland region. The vision of *Sustain* has been picked up by a group of women in Christchurch, with their first meeting planned for August 9. Christchurch Campus Administrator, Gill Pawson, would love to hear from any Cantabrian women keen to come along (email [chch@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:chch@laidlaw.ac.nz)).

To connect with ongoing *Engage* and *Sustain* events, contact Graeme Flett on [gflett@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:gflett@laidlaw.ac.nz) or Linda Flett on [lflett@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:lflett@laidlaw.ac.nz)

If you would prefer to receive *Encounter* by email, please contact Jenny Mackie (Editor): [jmackie@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:jmackie@laidlaw.ac.nz)

## HENDERSON

P +64 9 836 7800  
F +64 9 836 7801  
E [henderson@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:henderson@laidlaw.ac.nz)

80 Central Park Drive, Henderson  
Private Bag 93104, Henderson  
Auckland 0650, New Zealand

## MANUKAU

P +64 9 905 4960  
E [manukau@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:manukau@laidlaw.ac.nz)

20A Amersham Way, Manukau  
PO Box 97704, Manukau City  
Auckland 2241, New Zealand

## CHRISTCHURCH

P +64 3 354 4270  
F +64 3 354 4279  
E [chch@laidlaw.ac.nz](mailto:chch@laidlaw.ac.nz)

70 Condell Avenue, Papanui  
Christchurch 8053, New Zealand



AFOR 500+ EMPLOYEES  
SINCE 1922  
**LIDLAW**  
COLLEGE  
TE WANANGA AMORANGI



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