

# ENCOUNTER

*Oh, the joys of those who... delight in the law of the LORD....  
They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season.  
Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.*

PSALM 1:2-3



## Te Rongopai THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS!

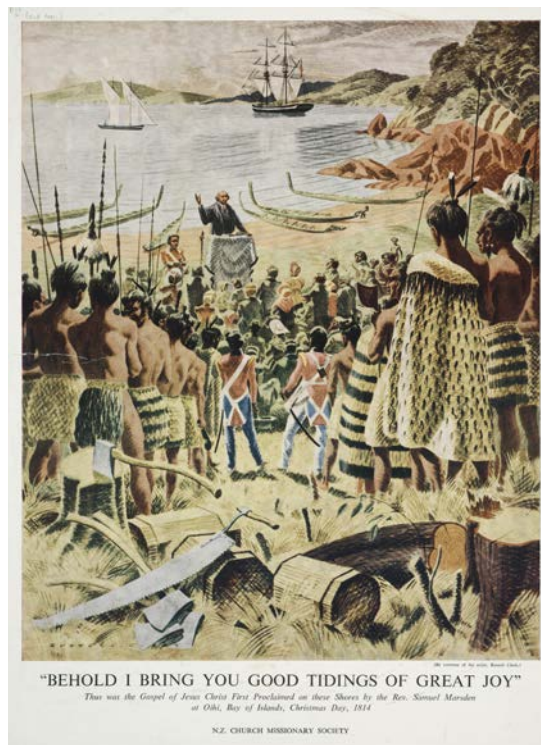
BY DR ROD THOMPSON, NATIONAL PRINCIPAL

**About 11.00am Sunday 25 December, 1814 – from the diary entry of Samuel Marsden:**

... it being Christmas Day, I preached from the Second Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and tenth verse: "Behold! I bring you glad tidings of great joy." The Natives told Duaterra [Ruatara] that they could not understand what I meant. He replied that they were not to mind that now for they would understand by and by, and that he would explain my meaning as far as he could. When I had done preaching, he informed them what I had been talking about. In this manner the Gospel has been introduced into New Zealand; and I fervently pray that the glory of it may never depart from its inhabitants, till time shall be no more.

**About 10.00pm Sunday 6 September, 1987 – the murder of Rohan Dissanayeke:**

Rohan Dissanayeke was a delightful student, full of practical jokes and pranks when he studied at the College in 1970-71. By the 1980's Rohan and his family were serving the Lord in Sri Lanka. War raged in that troubled nation. Hartal days were times of protest when government offices, public transportation and shops had to be closed. Rohan had a prayer meeting at his church that Sunday evening. With seven others in the back



Clark, Russell Stuart 1905-1966: Samuel Marsden's first service in New Zealand. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

of the van, he set out. As they drove into the night a red flare lit up the sky. Within moments the van was ambushed by Tamil Tiger militants. Rohan was shot in the head. The flare had been a signal to attack. Three others were also killed, including a recent convert to Christian faith named Upali. Five years later, a training centre was built and dedicated to the memory of Rohan and Upali.

Two hundred years ago the first Christian sermon was preached on the shores of Oihi Bay. Twenty-seven years ago, one of our graduates was murdered bearing witness to the gospel of Christ in Sri Lanka. Today, as a College community, we remain deeply committed to the unique, life-giving gospel of Christ.

Our graduates proclaim that gospel in nations such as Thailand, India and Papua New Guinea. And we recognise the crucial importance of proclaiming the gospel, in word and deed, in homes and workplaces, in the arenas of business, education, politics, media and entertainment across Aotearoa New Zealand.

It has been affirmed that it is not the church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission that has a church in the world. We join God's mission. We don't have a mission – God has a mission to reconcile the world to himself through Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19). The church

exists to serve, to be an expression of God's mission. So does this College.

In the words of Paul:

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*  
(Romans 10:13-15, TNIV)

<sup>1</sup><http://www.gospel2014.org/marsden>

<sup>2</sup>[http://www.cbfnc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=M\\_7XkHbIUN1%3D&tabid=195](http://www.cbfnc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=M_7XkHbIUN1%3D&tabid=195)

# NZCMS 200 years of equipping Kiwis for mission

NZCMS

The name "New Zealand Church Missionary Society" may sound like it's over 200 years old – and it is – but the organisation and the people behind it are at the forefront of keeping mission alive today. 2014 is the bicentenary of the Gospel being preached in Aotearoa New Zealand and there is no better time to celebrate, participate, and engage with how we as Christians partner in God's mission.

NZCMS have been partnering with people to share the Good News across cultures, oceans, fences and dinner tables for 200 years. Today we continue to encourage, equip, prepare, send and practically support Kiwis to do all things mission: cross-cultural ministry and living missionally in their context. As a society we are impelled by a longing to see the world reconciled to its Creator in every dimension, including seeing individual lives transformed by Christ.

We are intentional about cultivating a heart for mission in young people.

Since 2013, NZCMS Youth Mobiliser Kirstin Cant has been working out of Laidlaw College Auckland helping young people discover their part in God's Big Mission Story. The Haerenga Mission Internship is one such way of participating in this; a ten-month programme split between NZ and overseas contexts, where young adults get the opportunity to learn, grow and be equipped for mission, (including studying theology in partnership with Laidlaw).

We see mission as central to the Christian Life, whether in West Auckland or West Africa. To bring this conversation to life, on



April 12th NZCMS is partnering with Laidlaw for a Hui: **Cultivate: Does Mission Matter?** This day-event will include hearing from some key missional thinkers and doers in New Zealand such as Bishop Justin Duckworth from Urban Vision.

Go to [laidlaw.ac.nz](http://laidlaw.ac.nz) or [nzcms.org.nz](http://nzcms.org.nz) for more information about the event.

## The workplace: FRONTLINE MISSION CONTEXT

**The largest mission force the Christian church has is the people of God engaged in the life of the world every day in the course of their daily work.** Many fail to understand the strategic significance of this missionary encounter they are involved in and we seldom work to intentionally resource Christian people for mission and ministry in daily life.

Fortunately, resources like this do exist and can be accessed at the simple click of a button. They are the result of a six-year project undertaken by members of an international team who have produced online commentaries on every book of

the Bible, exploring themes that have special relevance for Christians engaged in their daily work. Alistair Mackenzie (from Laidlaw's Christchurch campus) has been part of the **Theology of Work Project** ([www.theologyofwork.org](http://www.theologyofwork.org)) from its inception as a member of the international Steering Group and chair of its Theological Foundations sub-committee. Tim Meadowcroft from Laidlaw's Auckland campus also contributed to the commentary, writing on the Minor Prophets. The TOW Project has also produced a series of papers on faith and work related issues and a series of

video resources. Alistair wrote the papers on 'Ethics and Work' and 'The Equipping Church'. The commentaries, papers and video materials are available free on the website above. Take a look for yourself!

On a more local level and resulting from his own research work, Alistair has also developed courses, books and other research and video resources exploring issues of God's work and our work, ethics at work, career and life planning, everyday spirituality and how churches can support Christians at work. These resources, along with links to other helpful websites, are available on **the Faith at Work (NZ)** website ([www.faithatwork.org.nz](http://www.faithatwork.org.nz)).

They include a series of books written by Alistair Mackenzie and Wayne Kirkland including, *Where's God on Monday?*, *SoulPurpose: making a difference in life and work*, *Just Decisions: Christian ethics go to work* and *Churches Supporting Christians at Work*.

We encourage you to explore the resources made available through these two excellent websites for the equipping of God's people in their working and everyday lives.



Theology of Work Project Steering Group, Boston 2013

# Where we are

BY SHELLY TAIT, ENCOUNTER EDITOR



As a white, middle-class twenty-something living in Auckland, I have found myself asking the question: **what does it look like to be a faithful follower of Christ?** What is a good, honest, biblical definition of “mission” that fits the context in which I find myself? A conversation with some friends over dinner last week highlighted that I am not the only one asking these questions. There seems to be a restlessness among Christians my age, constantly whispering: *do something*; and a simultaneous frustration that what we are currently doing is not enough – not big enough, impactful enough, world-changing enough. Either we are longing for visibility, for fame, for something against which we can measure our perceived value (in a world where success = worth), or we are genuinely wrestling with the mandate that God has stamped into our hearts to be a blessing to and for his world. Perhaps there are elements of both warring within us. How desperately we need the humility of Christ. How urgently we need courageous love and imaginations soaked in the redemptive story of Scripture.

In the words of Chris Wright: “it’s not so much that God has a mission

for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission – God’s mission”. Wherever we show up in history, as God’s people—the church—we are created and called to be a blessing; to embody the life, love, hope and creativity of the one true God who is bringing “unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ” (Ephesians 1:10). Realising that we are invited into a story that God is unfolding, rather than seeking to construct our own methods of saving the world, is both freeing and challenging. Taking on God’s mission as his church, means daring to love the seemingly unlovable – wherever we are and whatever we happen to be doing; it means choosing to encounter and embrace difference even when it is uncomfortable; choosing to listen well, care deeply, speak truthfully and depend fully on God; it means living in a way that proclaims the Lordship of Christ – even in the small things – and invites others into the hope of God’s redeeming power and love.

In short, we need to *be* where we are, *love* where we are, *know* those who are where we are and ask the Spirit to show us where He is at work, where we are, so that we can join in.

## Upcoming events:

### AUCKLAND

3 April | 7.30pm – 9pm

**Forming radical communities: why the rich and poor need each other**  
*Public Lecture with Greg Paul*

12 April | 9am – 4pm

**Cultivate: does mission matter?**  
KEY SPEAKER: Bishop Justin Duckworth  
Hosted by NZCMS in partnership with Laidlaw College

14 April | 7.30pm – 9pm

**Hatred. Exclusion. Discrimination: stories of God’s people in Myanmar**  
*Public lecture with Dr Aung Mang*

29 April | 7.30pm – 9pm

**From genocide to reconciliation: a personal story of hope from Rwanda**  
*Public lecture with Pastor Protais Nshogoze*

2 May | 7pm – 9pm

**Laidlaw College Annual Meeting**

7–8 May | 9am – 9pm; 9am – 4pm

**Mission of the Church in the 21st Century**  
*Conference with Scot McKnight*

7 May | 7.30 – 9.30pm

**God’s people celebrate in song and word**  
Diverse churches and nations gather together to testify to the Gospel in song and word

### CHRISTCHURCH

17 March | 7.30pm – 9pm

**Losing our Religion?: changing patterns of believing and belonging**  
*Public lecture by Rev Dr Kevin Ward*

9 April | 10am – 3pm

**Laidlaw’s Leaders’ Day**  
*With Katherine Leary Alsdorf*



# In India, for India



Haven of Hope Handicraft Centre

***"...I began by inviting one girl named Mettilda to come to my home [in Chennai, India] so that I could teach her embroidery, typewriting and the word of God. Mettilda was such a slow learner and she took ages just to thread a single needle and learn hemming. Many of those who stayed with me saw this and they discouraged me saying, "she can't learn anything", but I was determined to help Mettilda and she slowly started to learn."***

From the humble beginnings of a craftwork ministry held in a garage, Colleen Redit (1964 College graduate) was led to start the ministry of Christian Missions Charitable Trust (CMCT) in and around Chennai, a bustling city formerly

known as Madras, the capital city of Tamil Nadu state in India. Along with the Haven of Hope Handicraft Centre – a centre equipping women with skills in various crafts including tailoring, embroidery and jewellery making (just to name a few) Colleen has been involved in countless projects and ministries, opening hostels, orphanages, soup kitchens, rehabilitation centres, churches, camping ministries (founding Mount Carmel Camp Centre), vocational training programmes, a hospital and a school, as well as adopting more than sixteen children of her own!

It has been 50 years since Colleen left for India – just two months after graduating from College – and she is still there, faithfully serving God and the

people of Chennai. Colleen has written an autobiography, *Realising a Vision through Faith*. If you would like to purchase a copy, please send your request to: [colleenmredit@gmail.com](mailto:colleenmredit@gmail.com).

In the concluding pages of her book, Colleen issues this challenge to us:

Jesus' heart was not filled with disgust, fear, hatred, indifference and anger, but he was filled with compassion...I believe that the same petition hangs over every follower of Christ today. Are we willing to reach out and love the poorest of the poor, so that we will see thousands of them flocking to, and longing to love, the Lord Jesus?

May your prayer be – "Lord, use even me, whenever and wherever, according to Your will; You take my tongue, my hands, my feet; You take my heart, my life, my love. Burn out the rubbish and use me in your service, Lord".



**LAIDLAW  
COLLEGE**  
TE WANANGA AMORANGI

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## Te Rongopai: 200 years of the Gospel in New Zealand, 1814-2014

This 65 minute five-part series DVD about the history of Christianity in NZ, has been written and narrated by Dr Stuart Lange, who teaches the history courses at Laidlaw's Auckland Campus. It will be available for purchase during and after its official Première:

**Thursday 20 March  
7.30 – 9.30pm  
Laidlaw's Auckland campus**

See [laidlaw.ac.nz](http://laidlaw.ac.nz) for more details about the première and how to purchase this DVD (only \$20)!



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