



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



New Faces AT LAIDLAW COLLEGE

BY DR ROD THOMPSON | NATIONAL PRINCIPAL

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit (2 Cor 3:18).

Glorious faces! Transformed lives! This is the promise of 2 Corinthians 3:18. Concerning this passage, theologian Paul Barnett writes:

It teaches that "we all" in whom the image of God is defaced, are able through the gospel to "see" that image in its perfection, in the face of Jesus Christ. And we are enabled not only to see that image but to be progressively transformed into it by the sovereign Spirit.¹

At the College, we prayerfully seek to see lives renewed in Christlikeness as staff and students work together for the task of graduating godly teachers, counsellors, pastors, theologians and leaders for churches and throughout society more widely. We seek to work with our faces turned *towards* the triune God and *towards* one another in all our rich diversity as people who have come from many cultural groups into the Laidlaw community.

However, we also seek to be face-to-face with new people in new contexts as the College works to realise its ministry more fully across Aotearoa New Zealand, the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

As we move into the second half of 2014, we are turning our faces to new opportunities, new challenges and new people. Three which are worthy of highlighting follow:

- **Face-to-face in Manukau** – the new Laidlaw campus in Manukau will be officially opened in prayer and dedication to God on Saturday 12 July. Missionally we are thrilled to offer evangelical, biblical and theological education to Manukau, a vast and growing population centre within Auckland. The new campus on the ground floor of the building at 20A Amersham Way will be a vibrant, high-quality Learning Support Centre with lots of spaces for community to form. We prayerfully look forward to equipping God's people for ministry and mission, influence and leadership from the new Manukau campus.
- **Face-to-face with Churches** – we are meeting with more and more pastors and church leaders, throughout Auckland and around the nation. Recently at the *Mission of the Church in the 21st Century* conference, Scot McKnight from the USA and other church leaders from Aotearoa New Zealand, including Tavale and Alison Matai'a and Lyndon Drake, reminded us of the centrality of the church to the kingdom of God and God's mission throughout the world. It was a stirring reminder that God

is knitting together a Church made up of people from all nations, peoples, tribes and tongues.

- **Face-to-face with new students** – we have students studying though the Centre for Distance Learning, at the Christchurch campus and in Henderson. Now through our Learning Support Centre in Manukau we will grow a new and diverse student community. And in Henderson, for the first time, a new cohort of students will study the Certificate in Christian Studies part-time in the evenings. These are exciting times! Ultimately, the College will be measured by the godly character, wisdom and skills of its graduates. It will be known by the calibre of those who go out into ministries in churches, schools, counselling and pastoral practices, and into leadership throughout various sectors around the nation and nations further afield.

New faces! We are dependent on God's grace to renew us daily. Please pray the ancient and wonderful words of the Aaronic blessing for our staff and students:

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine
on you and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward
you and give you peace.*

¹Barnett, P. (1997). *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (p. 209). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
²Numbers 6:24-26, TNIV



Laidlaw in Manukau

Meet Sefa Lafaiali'i, Laidlaw's new campus developer! We asked Sefa a few questions to help you get to know him and what his hopes for Laidlaw's campus in Manukau are:

1. What are you passionate about and why?

I am passionate about working with people through education, and I have my parents to thank for this. I am the product of Samoan parents who migrated to New Zealand in the 70s with little English, but with big dreams. Their life's mission was to ensure that my brothers, sisters and I were afforded the best education and opportunities in life. My father was a trailblazer and a leader – in church, school and community reference groups. He was also a Justice of the Peace and a Marriage Celebrant (not bad for someone for whom English was a second language). His influence has played a big part in the path I have chosen to follow.

2. What are your hopes for Laidlaw's presence in Manukau?

What I love about Laidlaw is that we are an interdenominational centre of learning, with a huge variety of programmes and courses on offer – catering for people of different ages and stages. My hope is that as students grow in their knowledge and

love for God and others, that they would see the Manukau campus as their home; that they would feel safe enough to dream big and to understand their value and contribution to their community groups.

3. Why do you think it is important to bring theological education to Manukau?

When you hear comments like: "it's about time Laidlaw has come out south", or "I've always wanted to study at Laidlaw but have found the travel to Henderson a challenge", it simply reaffirms the value and necessity of Laidlaw opening a Learning Support Centre in Manukau. Not only will our programmes be more accessible to a rapidly growing population, but we will be able to equip and prepare leaders to transform their local communities.

4. When you did some study through Laidlaw, what was your experience and why would you want others to study at Laidlaw?

I did a paper at Laidlaw in 2013 under Dr Mark Keown. It was thoroughly transformational and I would recommend study through Laidlaw to anyone, for this reason. Given that I was brought up in the EFKS Samoan Church, in nearly every session I had a light bulb moment!



Come and see for yourself...



Manukau Campus development team (L to R): Michael Hanson, Rod Thompson, Allan Officer, Christina Partridge, Sefa Lafaiali'i

On Thursday 3 July at 7pm, Laidlaw College's new campus in Manukau will be opening its doors to anyone who would like to come and explore their study options, meet staff and students and experience our great new Learning Support Centre for themselves. During the evening, you will hear from Dr Rod Thompson (National Principal of Laidlaw College), Dr Stephen Garner (Head of the School of Theology Mission and Ministry), graduates of the College and current students.

Bring your families, and join us for an evening of great conversation, food and friends.

When: Thursday 3 July, 7pm – 9pm

Where: Laidlaw College
Manukau campus
20A Amersham Way
Manukau

RSVP: by 1 July to events@laidlaw.ac.nz

For more information call 0800 999 777 or email manukau@laidlaw.ac.nz

Messy Ministry

BY IMMANUEL KOKS | LECTURER, SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, MISSION & MINISTRY | EDUCATIONAL ADVISOR FOR DISABILITIES

The news that there is no barrier – we can think of – that can put people beyond the reach of God's love, is good news for those with disabilities. No disability – no matter how profound – can stop God saving, redeeming, restoring and loving us. Yet, for us here at Laidlaw and in our churches, that news confronts us. We are called to embrace others because God works with them, no matter their differences, ability or disabilities (academic or otherwise).

For Paul in 1 Corinthians 12, God is not only working with the diverse people within the Corinthian church, he is gifting them, as he is gifting us. In the mess of individually gifting each one of us in our uniqueness, Paul has the gall to say: you *need* each other – “for the body does not consist of one member, but of many.”

In 1 Corinthians 13, we learn that, for

Paul, the only way this messy church, or messy college, will ever work is through love: a rugged covenantal commitment to be with the other, to work for the other and to embrace them.¹

Let's not wrap this in the fluffy romantic stuff of star-struck wedding days. The love Paul calls us to, is hard work.

We don't learn to be patient if we never wait for someone who dillydallies. We don't need to be kind, if the person beside us wears an impenetrable emotional skin. We don't need inflated egos, if no one appears to succeed when we fail. We don't need to keep score, if “they” never did anything wrong. We need love, because whenever “they” enter our lives, “they” will make a mess. If we need “them” – those inherently messy others – in the church, and in our classrooms, then when those places become neat, tidy, and well-oiled, perhaps



Immanuel Koks

we need to ask: “who's not here making a holy mess?” Real life, real churches and real colleges require real grace to engage in messy ministry.

¹ Scot McKnight, *Mission of the Church in the 21st Century* conference (May 2014)

Teachers who long for transformation

BY WENDY FOWLER | LECTURER, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

As someone who trains teachers, I am constantly asking the question: how do we ensure that our graduates are seen to honour the unique bicultural context of Aotearoa while fostering meaningful dialogue between cultures (particularly as they enter New Zealand's multicultural classrooms)?

Aware of their own cultural biases, educators have the choice to be agents of change. They have the choice to create classrooms where children encounter one another in ways that celebrate difference, while encouraging unity. To educate for success the student-teacher relationship is crucial – teachers need to know and love their learners. They need to find out who the children in their classrooms are, in the context



of their whanau, their friends and their backgrounds. A 2013 snapshot report on Maori Education in Auckland tells us that Maori succeed as they see and hear their culture and identity affirmed. When Te Reo Maori is used seamlessly in the classroom through waiata, karakia, in basic

instructions, or in greeting and farewell, such affirmations lead to well-being, positively influencing achievement.¹

When we begin to practise biculturalism well, we feel more confident to investigate other cultures and to strive toward deeper understanding and meaningful dialogue, as opposed to assimilation or prejudice. A biblical example of cross-cultural dialogue is Christ, who enters into discourse with the Samaritan woman, reaching into her vastly differing culture and drawing her close, transforming her world (John 4:1-45). What an expectation! But what transforming hope this outlook brings for the future of Aotearoa New Zealand.

¹ Ministry of Education, *Ka Hikitia accelerating Success 2013-2017*. P 16

Embracing Diversity

BY WATIRI MAINA | LECTURER, SCHOOL OF COUNSELLING



Counselling cross-culturally has been important in New Zealand for many years due to the bi-cultural nature of this nation. In recent years the need to intentionally broaden learning has grown as many other cultures migrate into New Zealand. My hope for my classes, is that each individual and their particular culture is met with deep interest, empathy, respect, hospitality and genuine embrace which seeks understanding. This hopefully models the environment they in turn create when working with each other and as they begin working with clients – an environment which invites the stranger into an embracing dialogue that values diversity.

Kenneth Bailey (2008), in his book, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*, while speaking of what the Jewish community could learn from the Gentile heroes of faith says:

The gospel is not safe in any culture without a witness within that culture from beyond itself...In every culture the message of the gospel is in constant danger of being compromised by the value system that supports that culture and its goals. The stranger to that culture can instinctively identify those points of surrender and call the community back to a purer and more authentic faith (165- 166).

It is sometimes very difficult to fully understand or appreciate what I bring to my Counselling classes as a Kenyan. Culture is not always obvious to the person who is immersed in it. A stranger to my culture is therefore valuable as he/she helps me understand myself better and highlights the cultural nuances that make me who I am. Simultaneously, being made to feel different can be threatening, and sometimes I find myself adopting a defensive stance. Over the years I have learned to invite this emotional response, and in the process my eyes have been opened to what I value and most treasure. My eyes are also open to what I can let go of.



HENDERSON CAMPUS
 PHONE +64 9 836 7800
 FAX +64 9 836 7801
 EMAIL henderson@laidlaw.ac.nz
 80 Central Park Drive, Henderson
 Private Bag 93104, Henderson
 Auckland 0650, New Zealand

MANUKAU CAMPUS
 PHONE +64 9 836 7800
 EMAIL manukau@laidlaw.ac.nz
 20A Amersham Way, Manukau
 Private Bag 93104, Henderson
 Auckland 0650, New Zealand

CHRISTCHURCH CAMPUS
 PHONE +64 3 354 4270
 FAX +64 3 354 4279
 EMAIL christchurch@laidlaw.ac.nz
 70 Condell Avenue, Papanui,
 Christchurch 8053, New Zealand

WEBSITE www.laidlaw.ac.nz
 FREEPHONE 0800 999 777

Upcoming Events

30 June | 7.30pm – 9pm | Christchurch Campus
PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE 2014: *an evening of reflection and strategic direction for members, alumni and friends of Laidlaw College*

9 August | 9.00 am – 6.00 pm | Auckland
NATIONAL ALUMNI GATHERING

16 August | 9.00am – 6.00pm | Christchurch
NATIONAL ALUMNI GATHERING

Keynote speaker for both gatherings: Prof. Chris Marshall
 For more information and to register go to www.laidlaw.ac.nz



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