



LIDLAW
THEOLOGY

HOPE CONFERENCE

26-28 MARCH 2025

*Growing Flourishing Church Communities
that Transform and Heal People*

IN A WORLD WHERE THE TOXICITY OF THE CONTEMPORARY WESTERN CHURCH IS REGULARLY, AND OFTEN JUSTIFIABLY HIGHLIGHTED, THIS CONFERENCE EXPLORES HOW CONTEMPORARY CHURCHES CAN AND SHOULD BE PLACES OF TRANSFORMATION AND HEALING.

Indeed, it is our strong contention that God's specific plan and design for churches is that they are places of hope and restoration, both as overarching communities, and for the individuals within these communities.

Hope 2025 therefore undertakes a multidisciplinary and practical exploration of how, guided by the Spirit of God, we can positively create and sustain flourishing communities that heal and empower individuals within them. Gathering the voices of practitioners, biblical scholars, systematic theologians, practical theologians, counsellors, and sociologists, the aim of the conference is to discuss, explore, and draw some conclusions about how contemporary Western churches are and can become flourishing communities, which provide health and healing both to the overarching church body and to the individual bodies of which they are comprised.

HOPE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY

12:30pm	Gathering
12:55pm	Prayer and Introductions
1:15pm	Rev. Dr MaryKate Morse <i>Flourishing in the inner life (resurrection hope)</i>

SECTION ONE | Chair: Dr Roshan Allpress

Individual Healing: Bodies Flourishing in the Body

2:10pm	Introduce Speakers
2:15pm	Rev. Jonathan Dove <i>Discomfort and diversity as catalysts for individual transformation within the church body</i>
2:45pm	Afternoon Tea
3:25pm	Rev. Dr Mark Keown <i>The human body and Christ's church: Extending Paul's metaphor through his somatic understanding</i>
3:55pm	Rev. Dr Maja Whitaker <i>Healthy and holy bodies: Reimagining Christian practice and discourse to promote flourishing in diversity</i>
4:30pm	Discussion
5:30pm	Close

THURSDAY AM

8:30am	Prayer and Introductions
	SECTION TWO Chair: Rev. Dr Brian Harris Church Healing: Growing Communities that Restore and Transform
8:40am	Dr Christa McKirland <i>Shepherding Well: A theology of interpersonal power and authority</i>
9:10am	Rev. Dr Karen Kemp <i>Compassionate realism: How does the church reclaim her core identity as a hope-filled community of healing and restoration?</i>
9:40am	Rev. Watiri Maina <i>The church body as a healing sacrament</i>
10:10am	Discussion
10:45am	Morning Tea
11:15am	Rev. Dr MaryKate Morse <i>Flourishing in community (relational holiness)</i>
12:15pm	Lunch

HOPE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THURSDAY PM

1:15pm

Parallel Sessions - 3 x 30minutes - Contributors will speak on a range of topics in relation to church flourishing and hope, with examples of positive instances of transformation from within their churches (see Breakout Sessions Pg18-19)

SECTION THREE | Chair: Rev. Dr Myk Habets - Church Flourishing: Sustaining the Healing Power of the Church

2:45pm

Introduce Speakers

2:50pm

Rev. Dr Geoff New *At a loss for words: How the Spirit prays when the children of God can't* (Romans 8:18-27)

3:20pm

Afternoon Tea

4:00pm

Rev. Dr Sarah Penwarden *A means of grace: A church community listening to its own vision as a way of sustaining the body of Christ*

4:30pm

The Venerable Dr Lyndon Drake *Tūmanako Me Whakahounga: Forms of hope and renewal in the context of contemporary Aotearoa*

5:05pm

Discussion

6pm

Close

FRIDAY

8:30am

Prayer and Introductions

8:45am

Rev. Dr MaryKate Morse
Flourishing in context (radical hospitality)

9:30am

Parallel Sessions - 2 x 30minutes (see Breakout Sessions Pg18-19)

10:30am

Morning Tea

SECTION FOUR | Chair: Rev. Dr Sarah Penwarden - Missional Hope: Nourishing the Wider Community Through our Hope

11:00am

Introduce Speakers

11:05am

Rev. Dr Greg Liston *Different with distinction: Revitalizing the church's mission in New Zealand through applying Newbigin's insights*

11:35am

Rev. Dr Brian Harris *Beyond "them" and "us": Bumping into God in the marketplace*

12:05pm

Dr Lynne Taylor *Sharing faith, imaging God, nourishing hope: Faith and hope that is relational, mysterious, and transformational*

12:40pm

Discussion

1:30pm

Close

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
MARYKATE
MORSE**

**Flourishing in the inner life
(resurrection hope)**

*Wednesday 26 March 2025
1:15pm*

**Flourishing in community
(relational holiness)**

*Thursday 27 March 2025
11:15am*

Flourishing in context (radical hospitality)

Friday 28 March 2025 | 8:45am



ABSTRACT

Thriving in uncertain times is often defined more by outward success, but for Christian believers it is also defined by a deep conviction that Christ is the source and the reason for why we do what we do. We are Christian pastors, educators, and leaders. We have a holy calling. We are engaged in a holy vocation. We lead from the center of Christ in us.

This type of leadership is more than following Jesus' teachings. It is a life lived out of an inner conviction of the indwelling presence of Christ. Therefore, ours is a uniquely embodied leadership, and even more so when our work is in churches and institutions that are shaped by faith convictions. We must live out our callings in specific, physical ways and in specific places. Jesus came in the flesh to physically express the nature of God and God's work in the world in a specific place. By routinising our physical behaviours in physical spaces, we can lead more implicitly like Jesus. These behaviours are central to effective leadership and inspire hope within us and with others, especially during difficult times.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr MaryKate Morse is the former Executive Dean of Portland Seminary at George Fox University and serves now as a professor of Leadership & Spiritual Formation. She is the Lead Mentor in the Doctor of Ministry program on Leadership & Spiritual Formation. She is a church planter, spiritual director, leadership mentor and coach, speaker, and author including *Making Room for Leadership: Power, Space, and Influence*, *A Guidebook to Prayer*, and *Lifelong Leadership*. She is passionate about companioning and resourcing people on the front lines of ministry.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV.
JONATHAN
DOVE**

**Discomfort and diversity
as catalysts for individual
transformation within the
church body**

*Wednesday 26 March 2025
2:15pm*



ABSTRACT

Transformation happens best at the intersection of discomfort, community, and the divine. Using stories derived from Gracecity church, this session will look at the valuable contribution ethnic, political, and social diversity have all played as individuals in church have grown amidst learning from diverse communities, such as through political round table conversations, ethnic stories, and the experiences of a couple serving in ministry to the homeless. Stories of church leaders from Auckland Church Network (ACN) will also be shared to examine the valuable contribution that exposure of different church prayer practices has had among church leaders learning from each other, such as in Pentecostal Christians embracing contemplative prayer practices from Catholic leaders. Additionally, this session will unpack lessons from a 12-week leadership challenge at Gracecity church where individuals were placed in situations with practices which caused some discomfort - all designed to help them hear and see afresh what God might be saying to them personally. It will show the way this discomfort and the role of this community was a catalyst for their leadership formation and mission engagement.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Jonathan Dove is married to Robyn and father of four. He is the Senior Pastor of Gracecity Church. He has a Master of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary. He convenes Auckland Church Network, composed of bishops and senior leaders. He is a visionary, gifted teacher, life-long learner, passionate about people coming to know Jesus and building a strong community of believers. His spare time is made up of family adventures, quality coffee, a good book, an All Blacks game, and walks at Te Mata Peak, Hawke's Bay.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
MARK
KEOWN**

The human body and Christ's church: Extending Paul's metaphor through his somatic understanding

Wednesday 26 March 2025
3:25pm



ABSTRACT

Paul has a rich understanding of the human body. He affirms its createdness and supreme value. In Romans and 1 Corinthians, Paul also speaks of the local church as the body of Christ made up of many members. This session argues that Paul's view of the individual human body can be legitimately applied to his understanding as the church as the body of Christ. As such, we can appropriately extend his understanding beyond what he says in passages specifically focused on the local church as the body of Christ. In this session, first, Paul's understanding of the human body is summarized. Next it outlines Paul's understanding of the local church as the body of Christ. Then, it draws the two ideas together considering the church in light of Paul's understanding of the human body. Like the human body, the local church is a creation and composition of God. However, it is prone to the weakness of its flesh whereby it becomes corrupted. If unabated, the church will die. Yet, the church is also a temple in which God's Spirit dwells. The path to its healing and growth is a community living in Christ by the Spirit. Such a community is formed together into the image of the Son through the power of the Spirit. Implications for the church today are then suggested.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Mark J. Keown is the Director of Evangelistic Leadership at Laidlaw College and a Presbyterian minister who presently attends Massey Presbyterian. He has served in a variety of spaces in evangelism, children's and youth ministries, worship, and senior leadership. Mark has written a number of articles, essays, blog posts, and books including *Evangelism in Philippians* (2008), *What's God Up to on Planet Earth?* (2010), *Philippians, EEC, 2 vols.* (2017), *Jesus in a World of Colliding Empires, 2 vols.* (2018), *Discovering the New Testament (3 Vols, 2018–21)*, *Reading the New Testament* (2024), *Galatians* (2024), *Pneumaformity* (2024), and *Jesus as the New Joshua* (2024). Married to the Rev. Dr Emma and owned by Redmond the dog, he loves cycling and playing in his band AllReady Not Yet.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
MAJA
WHITAKER**

**Healthy and holy bodies:
Reimagining Christian
practice and discourse
to promote flourishing in
diversity**

Wednesday 26 March 2025
3:55pm



ABSTRACT

A biblically-grounded understanding of embodiment offers much-needed hope to the modern Western struggle with the body as a project to be worked on to reflexively shape the self in the pursuit of the good life. Health, theologically understood, entails holistic flourishing and this flourishing incorporates holiness expressed in right relationship with God, self, other, and creation. However, historically the Christian tradition has struggled with the nature of human persons as embodied beings, often dismissing the body or viewing it as primarily something to be disciplined. These issues continue in contemporary Christian communities which have too often uncritically promoted body-projects shaped by the aesthetic ideals of Western culture. For example, the hidden toxicity of diet culture and its questionable claims to produce health and wellbeing have been uncritically absorbed, Christianised, and marketed from Christian celebrity platforms and the common pulpit. This session will draw on the richness of the Christian tradition, both in terms of theological reflection and embodied practice, to outline ways that contemporary Christian communities can support the holistic flourishing of their members. The telos of the body is not conforming to an ideal of health or beauty, but loving God and loving neighbour, and within this there is space for the generous hosting of diverse bodies. It will explore how the discourse and practices in Christian communities might be reimagined to focus on the discipling of the embodied person rather than the disciplining of the body.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Maja Whitaker is the Academic Dean and Lecturer in Practical Theology at Laidlaw College, based at the Christchurch campus, and a pastor in the Equippers network of churches. Her recent publications include *Pursuing Perfection: Faith and the Female Body* (SCM Press, 2025) and *Perfect in Weakness: Disability and Human Flourishing in the New Creation* (Baylor University Press, 2023). She is passionate about spiritual formation and helping others understand how to follow the way of Jesus in contemporary cultural contexts. Maja's research interests include the theology of the body, theological anthropology, disability theology, and eschatology. She is married to Dave and they have four daughters.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**DR CHRISTA
MCKIRLAND**

**Shepherding well: A theology
of interpersonal power and
authority**

Thursday 27 March 2025
8:40am



ABSTRACT

The metaphor of God as Israel's Shepherd (Psalm 23), leaders of Israel as shepherds of the people of God (both good and bad), Jesus as the Good Shepherd (and sacrificial lamb), the church as the flock that knows Good Shepherd's voice, and NT leaders as undershepherds, provides a pastoral throughline across the Christian canon. But what is the relationship between the Shepherd, undershepherds, and sheep meant to be like today? Using this metaphor as a lens, this session will look at interpersonal power and authority, and will propose that each member of the flock is meant to hear the Shepherd's voice, but not in isolation. We need the flock, especially members of the flock that know the Shepherd well and are living a life worthy of imitation. These other members do not have authority over the flock or individual sheep, but they do have power to point other members to the Chief Shepherd. Importantly, every member of the flock has the potential to guide other sheep to the Chief Shepherd. We will conclude with a prayer from the sheep that we might tune our hearts to hear the Good Shepherd's voice whether we are in the valley of the shadow of death or green pastures. The Good Shepherd is with us no matter where we go.

SPEAKER BIO

Dr Christa L. McKirland is a Lecturer in Systematic theology at Carey Baptist College in Tāmaki Makaurau Aotearoa. She is also the Executive Director of Logia International which encourages women to pursue postgraduate theological education for the sake of the academy and church. Her research has focused on humanity's fundamental need for union with God in her most recent publication: *God's Provision, Humanity's Need: The Gift of Our Dependence* (Baker, 2022).

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
KAREN
KEMP**

Compassionate realism: How does the church reclaim her core identity as a hope-filled community of healing and restoration?

*Thursday 27 March 2025
9:10am*



ABSTRACT

From the earliest days the church has been known as a place of refuge, healing, and restoration. However, it is not possible to talk about the church as a healing community without probing the current reality of a church that has become known as a place where the very things which traditionally made it a haven for the broken have tragically enabled harm. So, how does a church mired in 'bad news' become hope-filled good news again? Healing and restoration lie at the very heart of what it means to be the people of God, but we cannot talk about hope in a vacuum. Indeed, the Good News of the Church is less that she is free of brokenness, but rather that she embodies a healing and restoring Gospel with compassionate realism in the midst of her own brokenness. Healing begins with lament, so this session probes the conditions which contribute to the current state of affairs. It is from this place of lament and humility that the church can find her place in God's bigger story of reconciling all things in Christ Jesus. The litany of moral failure and abuse throws down a challenge to the church to reclaim her core identity and purpose, and to embody both collective and individual dimensions of that calling in ways that engender hope in a broken world. This session locates restoration as a necessary precursor to the transformation we seek both individually and collectively. Finally, this session calls for a reorientation toward a compassionate realism to underpin both the posture and practice of church leadership in recognition of the key role that leaders play in cultivating the church's faithfulness to her core identity and calling as a healing and restorative community.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Karen Kemp is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Theology at Laidlaw College and a Senior Coach in the Laidlaw Centre for Church Leadership. She holds a research Masters in conflict transformation, and a Doctorate in leadership and spiritual formation. Research interests gravitate around peace and reconciliation and include practices that support healing the wounds of history, formation of emerging leaders, and the role of "third culture" persons in building peace. Karen is an Anglican scholar-priest deeply formed by her intercultural experiences in nursing, community development, ministry, missions, and theological education. Karen shares life with husband, Hugh, and three adult daughters.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV.
WATIRI
MAINA**

The church body as a healing sacrament

*Thursday 27 March 2025
9:40am*



ABSTRACT

This session will discuss the concept of the church body as a healing sacrament, emphasising the importance of creating flourishing communities that nurture healing, restoration, and transformation. It will acknowledge that while the church community is often envisioned as the body of Christ, there are times when it struggles, hindered by conflict and dysfunction. To foster flourishing, this session will suggest intentional practices such as restorative approaches, constructive language use, and envisioning transformation. Drawing from biblical models and metaphors, it will explore how these practices can transcend conflict and promote healing. It also highlights the significance of intersubjectivity and relational depth in creating spaces for transformative encounters. This session will outline various practices essential for building healthy communities, including prayer, preaching, modelling wholeness, restorative conversations, and peace-making initiatives. It will emphasise the role of communal commitment and leadership in facilitating healing and transformation within the church. Furthermore, it will present the idea of sacramental churches, which embody sanctifying, social, and subversive sacraments, demonstrating unity in Christ and sharing His love with the world. It will argue that through unity and love, the church can attract others to experience healing and transformation within its community. Overall, this session will advocate for a holistic approach to church community building, where members actively engage in practices that promote healing, restoration, and transformation. By embodying the values of Christ and fostering unity, the church can serve as a healing sacrament, inviting others into transformative encounters with God.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Watiri Maina is an Anglican priest serving in Nelson diocese. She is also a spiritual director, retreat facilitator, supervisor and counsellor in private practice. She has a Masters in Counselling Psychology and a Graduate Diploma in Theology. Her interests are in supporting flourishing ministry and ministry leaders, prayer, as well as in peace building and conflict transformation. She is married to Steve and they have two daughters.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
GEOFF
NEW**

**At a loss for words: How
the Spirit prays when the
children of God can't
(Romans 8:18-27)**

*Thursday 27 March 2025
2:50pm*



ABSTRACT

"We do not know what we ought to pray for . . ." (Rom 8:26). In Romans 8, the effects of suffering, groaning, hoping, and waiting culminate in a realistic and startling admission; the people of God are weakened and prayerless. Yet, amid such anguish, the thread of groaning is seen not only in creation and humanity, but in the ministry of the Spirit; "The Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans" (Rom 8:26). The intercessory ministry of the Spirit is presented as a crucial theological response to the plight of creation and the children of God. However, in a context of suffering and the call to adopt the posture of patient hope (Rom 8:24-25); what does it mean for the children of God to groan? And is such groaning genuine prayer and spirituality? What is the church's response to the promise of the Spirit's intercession? When weakened and prayerless, does the church demonstrate a spirituality that attests to divine agency instead of human activity? What are we to make of the mystery that the children of God do not know what to pray, and neither do they know what is being prayed (the Spirit prays in "wordless groans")? This session will explore the distinct nature of the Spirit's intercessory ministry and offer reflection on how this shapes the church's life and ministry. Such life and ministry is infused by hope by virtue of the church's groaning in concert with the Spirit's "wordless groans" in the presence of the Trinity.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Geoff New is the Principal of the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (Dunedin). Geoff has previously served as a minister for 17 years, a police chaplain, and as Adjunct Lecturer in preaching (Laidlaw College). He has authored four books on preaching and regularly trained preachers in south Asia for Langham Preaching.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
SARAH
PENWARDEN**

**A means of grace: A church
community listening to
its own vision as a way of
sustaining the Body of Christ**

*Thursday 27 March 2025
4pm*



ABSTRACT

We walk towards God in community. We are the Body of Christ and we are being the Body of Christ together. The church is thus both the work of the Spirit and the work of us, the people. How do we do church together with each other in a way that enables hope and flourishing to occur? This session imagines a church community responsive to each other, where leaders and people are in tune with each other. It begins by highlighting how listening within a church community can help it align or re-align with the overall vision and purpose of being the Body of Christ. It focuses on a practice of attunement. Sarah presents a survey designed and completed within her own church where congregants were invited to identify which elements of church life created flourishing and hope in their lives. Such practices are tools through which to listen within the Body – with our mind, hearts and ears – to hear the promptings of the Spirit.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Sarah Penwarden is a counsellor, supervisor, and trainer in private practice based in Auckland. She has a PhD in Counselling from the University of Waikato. Her interest is in grieving and how writing stories can help a person journey in and through grief. She is a Lecturer in the School of Theology at Laidlaw College on a part-time basis and is interested in holding in tandem the realities of life struggles with the hope of the gospel. She co-edited the book, *Stories of Therapy, Stories of Faith*. Sarah is an ordained Anglican priest in the Local Shared Ministry context of the Auckland Diocese. She is married to David, with three adult step-children and lives in leafy West Auckland.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

THE VENERABLE DR LYNDON DRAKE

**Tūmanako Me
Whakahounga: Forms of
hope and renewal in the
context of contemporary
Aotearoa**

Thursday 27 March 2025
4:30pm



ABSTRACT

A theological approach to restoration needs to draw on plausible forms of hope. For the church, plausible hope is grounded in the promises of God and the corresponding obligations of the church. God's promises in scripture portray a future where the church is effective and fruitful. They portray a restored world, which has become once again a temple for God's worship, filled with humans whose identity as God's children is brought to light in allegiance to Jesus and transformed lives. The church receives from the same scriptures obligations about its collective behaviour in the world, in the vocation of heralding the coming king. This session problematises hope for renewal that is based on programmes for churches to implement, or on concepts of leadership and structure. Instead, it draws on biblical texts that connect God's promises to the collective action of God's people in repentance, and suggest methods of reading these texts that draw from the Māori prophetic movements. It then offers some concrete proposals for the church in Aotearoa/New Zealand to draw from these exegetical insights and build a constructive approach to renewal that is grounded in righteous action, and then builds a prophetic voice.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Lyndon Drake (Ngāti Kuri, Ngāi Tūāhuriri, Ngāi Tahu) until recently served as Archdeacon of Tāmaki Makaurau in the Māori Anglican bishopric of Te Tai Tokerau. Lyndon has a DPhil in Theology at Oxford on economic capital in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, degrees in science and commerce (Auckland), a PhD in artificial intelligence (York), two other degrees in theology (Oxford), and a number of peer-reviewed academic publications in science and theology. Lyndon has written *Capital Markets for the Common Good: A Christian Perspective* (Oxford: 2017). Until 2010, Lyndon was a Vice President at Barclays Capital, trading government bonds and interest-rate derivatives. Since then, he has served in church ministry, as well as teaching theology and serving in a range of Christian leadership roles. He sat on a number of boards, including as chair of Te Whare Ruru hau o Meri Trust Board, and is married to Miriam, with three children.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**REV. DR
GREG
LISTON**

**Different with distinction:
Revitalizing the church's
mission in New Zealand
through applying Newbigin's
insights**

*Friday 28 March 2025
11:05am*



ABSTRACT

By embracing Newbigin's insights and relying on the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit, the church in New Zealand can embark on a journey of missional revitalisation. The central insight undergirding this journey is the recognition that it is the church actually being the church—living a gospel-centred existence—that is and always has been its primary and most effective missional strategy. In contrast to the syncretistic accommodations which see the church increasingly melding into society, Newbigin offers an attractive picture where the church leans into the differences it has with societal norms, confidently owning those distinctions, and thereby missionally affecting the community surrounding it. Recognising and embracing the tensions and challenges of choosing such an eclectic but attractive ecclesial lifestyle is central to the church's ongoing missional witness. This session explores how the Spirit can empower us together to embrace this ecclesial calling. It argues that by leaning into our distinctive differences with society, the church in New Zealand can become a dynamic agent of God's love and reconciliation in the nation, offering hope and healing in a complex and changing world.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Greg Liston is a Senior Lecturer in Theology at Laidlaw College. Previous roles include being the Senior Pastor of a suburban Baptist church and business management consulting. Greg holds PhDs in quantum physics and ecclesiology. He is the author of several books including *Kingdom Come* (T&T Clark, 2022) and *The Anointed Church* (Fortress, 2015). He is married to Diane and has two adult children.

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

REV. DR BRIAN HARRIS

**Beyond “them” and “us”:
Bumping into God in the
marketplace**

Friday 28 March 2025

11:35am



ABSTRACT

In this presentation the speaker will discuss his transition from 17 years as Principal of a theological college to heading a leadership consultancy in the commercial marketplace. It notes that the “church - world” divide is not as large as expected and discusses three engagements which required him to draw upon his theological training to assist his clients. The first was a mining company wanting a healthier staff culture for one of their teams. The second was an aged care provider desiring to honour their Christian heritage though no longer claiming to be a Christian organisation. The third was a Christian school worried about changing employment legislation and its potential impact on their right to preference staff based on their Christian faith. Assisting each client involved identifying their “theological architecture” – the big ideas shaping who they wanted to be. This session discusses the concept and relevance of “theological architecture”, arguing that to be a genuine sign of Christian hope in the marketplace it should be infused with three “orthos”: orthodoxy, orthopraxy and orthopathy - and that the greatest of these is orthopathy.

SPEAKER BIO

Rev. Dr Brian Harris is a sought-out speaker, teacher, thought-leader, podcaster, and writer. A respected theologian, after 17 years as Principal of Perth’s Vose Seminary, in 2021 he became the Founding Director of AVENIR Leadership Institute. While leading the Institute, Brian continues with some part time lecturing, is a Director of the Australian College of Theology and a Distinguished International Visiting Scholar of Spurgeon’s College, London. He has published seven books, the most recent being *Stirrers and Saints: Forming Spiritual Leaders of Skill, Depth and Character* (Paternoster, 2024).

KEY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

**DR LYNNE
TAYLOR**

**Sharing faith, imaging
God, nourishing hope:
Faith and hope that is
relational, mysterious, and
transformational**

*Friday 28 March 2025
12:05pm*



ABSTRACT

Churches are called to be places that support transformation and healing, for those both inside and outside the church. However, they have not always lived up to their calling. This, along with complex secularisation processes, has led to declining religious affiliation and declining Church attendance in Aotearoa as in other western countries. At the same time, many people remain open to spirituality and to exploring faith: some adopt the Christian faith despite not having been brought up in it. This session explores what churches and Christians might offer that is both faithful to the gospel and connective for those beyond the church. It emphasises the importance of communicating a faith and hope that is relational, mysterious, and transformational. Like the triune God, human beings are inherently relational and amid a loneliness epidemic, churches are uniquely able to be places of genuine connection and reciprocal care. Christians are invited to resist modernist tendencies to attempt to rationally explain every element of the Christian faith, and instead to embrace mystery and wonder, and to be honest about complexities – even uncertainties and doubts. A desire for personal and societal transformation can act as a motivation for faith formation as people see in God attributes they aspire to reflect. Emphasising a faith that is relational, mysterious, and transformational can both increase one's confidence in the gospel and bear good and lasting fruit.

SPEAKER BIO

Dr Lynne Taylor is the Jack Somerville Senior Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at the University of Otago (Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka). She is attentive to the contemporary mission and ministry context, and researches and teaches in these areas. Lynne's PhD explored why previously unchurched people become Christians today, and she continues to be curious about how God is at work in the world. She is currently exploring the connection between what Christians appreciate about God and how they view their ideal selves. Prior to (and in conjunction with) her academic role, Lynne has worked and volunteered in pastoral ministry, and engaged in congregational and denominational research. Lynne is married to Steve and they have two young adult daughters.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS OVERVIEW

THURSDAY 27 MARCH
1.15 – 2:45PM

Session A: The Church as a Place of Hope

Facilitator: Lynne Taylor
Location: Kākāpō (Rm 231)

A1 (1:15pm)

Hope in action: Theoria, poiēsis, and praxis
| Myk and Odele Habets

A2 (1:45pm)

Conceptualising shalom: Hope in the Bible's grand narrative | Phillip Larking

A3 (2:15pm)

'Anyone' and 'No One' in Hebrews: Suggestions on mutual encouragement in the believing community | Philip Church

Session B: Hope and Pastoral Care

Facilitator: Karen Kemp
Location: Kiwi (Rm 265)

B1 (1:15pm)

Trauma-informed church: Illuminating 'Immanuel' for those experiencing unfixable suffering | Hyeeun Kim

B2 (1:45pm)

Bringing hope amid spiritual struggles
| Jennifer Billard

B3 (2:15pm)

Healthy discipleship: Re-defining church health metrics in Aotearoa New Zealand
| Emma Brouwer

Session C: Hope in our Contexts

Facilitator: Mark Keown
Location: Kererū (Rm 180)

C1 (1:15pm)

New forms of community | Kevin Wood

C2 (1:45pm)

Preventing radicalisation of Christians in Aotearoa | David Whitaker

C3 (2:15pm)

Communities of discernment: Bastions of hope? | Graeme Flett

Session D: Hope in our Gathering

Facilitator: Jonathan Dove
Location: Ruru (Rm 250)

D1 (1:15pm)

Church for humans: How creating space for life giving conversations in church is mission | Howard & Lynette Webb

D2 (1:45pm)

Hope is already here, let's face it: Reinterpreting Sunday services | Bridie Boyd, Jess Hall & Tepene Marsden

D3 (2:15pm)

Intelligent worship in the church's creative spirit | Hazel Tattersall

BREAKOUT SESSIONS OVERVIEW

FRIDAY 28 MARCH
9.30 – 10.30AM

Session E: Hope and Spiritual Practices

Facilitator: Sarah Penwarden
Location: Kererū (Rm 180)

E1 (9:30am)

*From everyday chat to sacred curiosity:
Re-visioning and democratising
spiritual direction for connection and
transformation | Richard Cook*

E2 (10am)

*Countering visions of control: Forming a
hope-filled community through prayer
| Sebastian Murihi*

Session F: Thinking About Hope

Facilitator: Christa McKirland
Location: Kōkako (Rm 191)

F1 (9:30am)

*Liberating hope: Resources for reclaiming a
misused virtue | Kirsten Guidero*

F2 (10am)

*A hopeful hamartiology: How honest sin-
talk paves a way for hope | Joshua Taylor*

Session G: Hope and Action

Facilitator: Geoff New
Location: Weka (Rm 240)

G1 (9:30am)

*Bounded choice to empowered freedom:
Cultivating agency and autonomy in the
church | Katherine Hurrell*

G2 (10am)

*Is hope a distraction from meaningful
action? Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Hannah
Arendt on hope in times of crisis | Andrew
Clark-Howard*

Session H: Hope and Embodiment

Facilitator: Maja Whitaker
Location: Ruru (Rm 250)

H1 (9:30am)

*From sacrifice to hope: Rethinking
theologies of human dignity for restoration
| Jenny Richards, Lorna Hallahan & Tanya
Riches*

H2 (10am)

*Reclaiming hope with holistic wellness:
A Christian response to diet culture
| Jennifer Bowden*

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THURSDAY 27 MARCH AT 1.15PM

Session A: The Church as a Place of Hope

A1: Hope in action: *Theoria*, *poiēsis*, and *praxis*

Myk Habets and Odele Habets

Divided into three sections, this paper defines the Christian notion of hope (*theoria*), before painting a picture of what hope can look like when embodied by human creatures made in the imago Christi (*poiēsis*), and finally presenting a case study of hope embodied in a concrete faith community (*praxis*). According to Aristotle in the Nicomachean Ethics, *theoria* is the theoretical underpinnings of a thing or an idea, *poiēsis* is the making of a product, whilst *praxis* is an activity that is done in and for itself. In other words, *theoria* is thinking and theorising, *poiēsis* is making, and *praxis* is doing. All three are essential in recommending the theological concept of hope (*theoria*), which can be developed in practice and recommended to others (*poiēsis*), and engaged within one's own context (*praxis*).

By moving from theology (*theoria*) into the lived experiences of a faith community (*praxis*) (Albany Baptist Church), the concept and practices of hope are clarified before critical questions are asked regarding how Christian hope can be further modelled and applied in other contexts (*poiēsis*). The model of Christian hope developed and defended in this paper is one that is Christologically conditioned, teleologically oriented, and eschatologically extended. Drawing on the Patristic idea of *epektasis* ('perpetual progress'), the concept of Christian hope will be explained in a final constructive *poiēsis*, a fictitious dialogue performed between three iconic ecclesial 'persons'— Faith (*pistis*), Hope (*elpis*), and Love (*agape*).

Odele Habets is the Senior Pastor of Albany Baptist Church, having been in this role for the past 4 years. Previous experience includes being the owner-operator of a hand therapy business, a physiotherapist for over twenty years, and an aid and development project manager. Odele is also a trustee of ABC's Community Trust. In addition, Odele serves on the International Board of the Leprosy Mission, after many years of serving on the NZ Leprosy Board including time as Chair. Odele has qualifications in health science, development studies, and theology. Odele is married to Myk, and they have two teenagers (Sydney and Liam).

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Myk Habets has served two stints as a youth pastor, has served as an interim pastor twice, served on various church elderships, and is currently Associate Pastor at Albany Baptist Church. Myk has a passion for teaching and education and is the author of over twenty-five books on theology, church life, and ethics. In his spare time, Myk is the Head of Laidlaw College's School of Theology and serves on a number of academic associations, notably as President of the Thomas F. Torrance Theological Fellowship. Myk is married to Odele, and they have two teenagers (Sydney and Liam).

A2: Conceptualising shalom: Hope in the Bible's grand narrative

Phillip Larking

Experiences of discrimination, oppression and marginalisation, feature as a lead concern for those who hope for shalom (flourishing communities). The presentation takes an interdisciplinary approach drawing on World Christianity as a methodological approach and narrative theology. Conceptualising shalom as hope is an outcome of listening to voices in World Christianity. Revolutionary praxis (conscientisation, resistance, transformative action) offers a means to attend to discrimination and announce a transformative move toward shalom. This move is understood through and inspired by the Bible's grand narrative. Understanding shalom as hope within the biblical narrative prompts prophetic imagination and proleptic action: the Bible offers both a way of seeing, and an anticipatory sensing, that drives Christian communities toward hopeful change.

Phillip Larking is an Educator in the School of Social Practice, Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (Tauranga). He is also enrolled in a PhD programme through the University of Divinity (Australia); the research project seeks to develop a praxis of shalom as a Christian response to anti-discriminatory practice. Phillip has had previous roles in Baptist pastoral ministry and in social work with the Open Home Foundation. Phillip has completed a Masters of Theology (Otago), a Masters of Applied Social Work (Massey), and a Diploma of Teaching (Canterbury).

A3: 'Anyone' and 'No One' in Hebrews: Suggestions on mutual encouragement in the believing community

Philip Church

Anecdotally, in the post-COVID-lockdown era many churches in Aotearoa New Zealand have experienced reduced attendance. Non-attendance seems also to have been an issue in the community to which Hebrews was addressed, as the writer mentions some who had abandoned their community gatherings (10:25). Harold Attridge considers this to be "the strongest indication of the concrete problem that Hebrews ... is designed to address. Some members (τις) of the community are not 'coming to church'" (Attridge Hebrews, 290).

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Hebrews was written to a community of Christ-allegiant Judeans whom the writer considers to be in danger of abandoning their faith in Jesus, one symptom of which was this non-attendance. It becomes evident in the five warning passages that set out the possibility that some could apostatise and fail to reach their eschatological goal, a goal the writer refers to several times in terms of hope. Through Christ, a better hope has been introduced by which they can draw near to God (7:19), and they are those who have taken hold of the hope set before them (6:18). Consequently, they are to continue to hold firmly to this hope (3:6; 10:23) and are to be diligent to the end so that their hope can be realised (6:11).

The writer skilfully varies the personal pronouns he uses when encouraging his readers. When he encourages them to persevere, he usually uses “we” statements, identifying with them (e.g. 2:1-4). When he commends them for their faithfulness, he uses “you” statements (e.g. 6:9-12) and when he discusses the danger of apostasy he uses “they” statements referring to “those who fall away” (e.g. 6:4-6). There is also a group of “anyone” and “no one” statements. These appear in five passages where the writer calls on his readers to ensure that no members of the community fail to reach their goal (3:12-13; 4:1, 11; 10:25; 12:15-16). Central is 10:23-27 where, since apostasy is irremediable, he encourages them to lay hold of the hope they profess, to consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, to not abandon their community gatherings, and to encourage one another as they see the eschatological day approaching. For the writer of Hebrews, mutual encouragement within the believing community is a means to counteract the danger of apostasy.

This paper will explore Hebrews 10:23-27 in its context to highlight the importance of churches being places of mutual encouragement. Rather than attending as consumers, we are called to be present in the gatherings of the community to encourage one another. The paper will conclude by considering ways in which churches can apply exhortations like this in the post-COVID-lockdown era, as they seek to become places of transformation and healing.

Philip Church (PhD, University of Otago) is a Senior Research Fellow at Laidlaw College, where he taught Biblical Studies for 15 years before his retirement at the end of 2016. Since then, he has taught block courses in seminaries in Myanmar, Pakistan, Nepal and Papua New Guinea. His major research interest is the book of Hebrews, on which he published a commentary in 2023. Philip has been part of Royal Oak Baptist Church for over thirty years and has served there in a variety of leadership roles. He is married to Dorothy, and they have three grown children and four grandchildren.

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Session B: Hope and Pastoral Care

B1: Trauma-informed church: Illuminating 'Immanuel' for those experiencing unfixable suffering

Hyeeun Kim

The need to address trauma has become increasingly important to the contemporary churches. Trauma has no boundaries regarding age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, geographical locations or spirituality and faith. Global prevalence of stress and trauma the world is facing today include ongoing economic instability and inequality, violence and abuse, war crime and terrorism, racism, climate changes, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Pastoral care that is based on the sound knowledge and understanding of trauma and its far-reaching implications has become one of the urgent topics to the churches while navigating such complexities in the world. There is a strong need for the church to illuminate hope and restoration of Christ to the world that is filled with shadow and darkness.

This presentation will explore ways the churches can provide places of healing for those with experiences of trauma (unfixable suffering). It will briefly discuss the impact of trauma on the individuals including spiritual abuse followed by key concepts and principles of 'trauma-informed' and 'trauma-responsive' care and approaches (Esaki, 2020; Huang et al, 2014). It will scaffold meaningful ways of embodiment of Immanuel ('God with us'), as part of multiple layers of potential strategies that could create space for healing and hope based on the trauma-informed and -responsive approaches. The presenter's experience being a counsellor educator, trauma therapist and ordained Presbyterian minister may add unique perspectives to the reflection on the topic.

Hyeeun Kim is a Senior Educator at Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (BTI), and holds the role of coordinator for "trauma" majors within their postgraduate program (Master of Professional Practice). Being an ordained Presbyterian minister, she contributes to the training of ministry interns at Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML) as an adjunct lecturer. She also has a private practice for clinical supervision and trauma counselling. In the past, she worked as a counsellor for the University of Auckland Health and Counselling Centre, Papatoetoe Counselling Services Centre, Totara Hospice, and Problem Gambling Foundation of NZ prior to the appointment at Laidlaw College and AUT as a lecturer in counsellor education. She has worked with various organisations and government agencies as a consultant and is invited to speak about mental health issues in various workshops, at conferences and to tertiary institutions.

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B2: Bringing hope amid spiritual struggles

Jennifer Billard

Experiences of spiritual struggles, often also referred to as ‘the dark night of the soul’ and/or spiritual dryness, have the potential to deliver significant personal and spiritual growth or decline. These experiences are distressing, disorientating, and difficult to articulate; thus, frequently misunderstood. For some Christians, without appropriate support, efforts to resolve these struggles results in disengagement from church and from the Christian faith altogether. Thus, the provision of quality pastoral advice is critical. A recent literature review noted that contemporary pastoral resources regularly rely on the writings of ancient Catholic mystics to explain the experience but lack appreciation for the spiritualities and theological traditions that shape them. The review also noted that these pastoral resources rarely draw upon the significant body of empirical evidence on spiritual struggles emerging in psychology. This study will deliver evidence about Australian Pentecostal experiences of spiritual struggles with consideration to the psychological evidence, the spiritual practices of the participants, and the role of the four theological voices (operant, espoused, normative, and formal). The research has implications for contemporary Evangelical and Pentecostal pastoral responses to the experience more broadly. This paper will discuss the key issues arising from the literature on the topic, the study design, and preliminary findings.

Jennifer Billard is a theology PhD candidate at Alphacrucis University College undertaking research on the topic of “Australian Pentecostal experiences of spiritual struggles.” She has a keen interest in the movements of the Spirit and the role of the church in relation to spiritual formation and human flourishing. Jennifer’s PhD research and career reflect her passion for helping others flourish amid life’s challenges. Prior to beginning this research journey Jennifer worked across private and public education, disability, homelessness sectors in the Northern Territory and New South Wales. Jennifer has published articles in two sector magazines and presented at the National Housing and Homelessness forum. Aside from her PhD work, Jennifer is currently a senior consultant for Insight Consulting Australia conducting research for state and international-based organisations in the areas of policy, strategy, and evaluation. Jennifer is based in Sydney, Australia.

B3: Healthy discipleship: Re-defining church health metrics in Aotearoa New Zealand

Emma Brouwer

The Great Commission calls Christians to “go into all the world and make disciples” and at the heart of the gospel is transformation, growth, and discipleship, as we imitate Christ. Whilst many churches in Aotearoa are doing great discipleship work, limited evidence exists as to meaningful outcomes. Metrics often focus on more easily quantifiable outcomes – church attendance, home group attendance, completion of milestones (salvation, baptism, etcetera). A gap exists in identifying, measuring, and celebrating the life-giving work many churches are doing to transform the lives

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of believers through holistic discipleship — growing in maturity, wisdom, and faith spiritually, emotionally, physically, and relationally.

This paper seeks to build a picture of what constitutes a healthy church — to describe a set of ‘thick’ — Gospel shaped, biblically grounded, research based, globally and contextually engaged — characteristics of a healthy church. These characteristics can be used to enable the development of a comprehensive, holistic, and practical set of metrics which pastors/leaders can use to plan for and track congregational flourishing. By implementing metrics that focus holistically on a flourishing Christian life in the church, not just surface-level metrics such as attendance, churches can assess their work and adjust to address discipleship gaps and implement new programmes.

To identify these characteristics and metrics, this paper will draw from biblical motifs and models of discipleship, particularly Jesus and his disciples and the early church; research on human growth and development — particularly the conditions for long-term growth and philosophies of andragogy; and from evidence of flourishing discipleship practice across Aotearoa and the globe, including metrics or key performance indicators New Zealand churches are currently using, where possible.

By encouraging a holistic focus and improving measurability, this paper seeks to celebrate the life-giving discipleship work churches in Aotearoa are doing and to support greater levels of flourishing in the future.

Emma Brouwer is the Coordinator for Laidlaw Centre for Church Leadership and a Lecturer in Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology at Equippers College, Auckland. She holds a Master’s Degree in Theology from Laidlaw College, which focused on how young adults can be supported to integrate their faith in the workplace. Emma attends Equippers Church Manukau.

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Session C: Hope in Our Contexts

C1: New forms of community

Kevin Wood

Since the 1960's adherence to Christianity in NZ has dropped from 90% to 31%, with only half of those again attending Church at least once per month. There are two main reasons for this: large scale changes in society, and the Church's posture toward those changes. Individualism, consumerism and secularism which have shaped social values, have also influenced the Church, attendees and practices, leading to a lack of authentic community and an emphasis on programs and models of church that do not support the greater vision of making disciples. This session will discuss the results of recent research which analysed the journeys of eight church leaders, two couples and four individuals, who over the past 15 years invested their energies in cultivating missions-focused churches in New Zealand. This research allows for a brief overview of the habits, shape, and posture of mission-focused churches in Aotearoa, hinting at signs of hope on the horizon.

Kevin Wood has worked for Athletes in Action (part of Tandem Ministries) for the past 22 years, 16 of those in Germany, serving high-level and professional athletes. More recently he has completed his MTh on 'New forms of Community', researching mission-focussed churches in NZ. On his journeys, he has found a spiritual home amongst the Presbyterian, Baptist, Lutheran, German Evangelical and the Vineyard churches.

C2: Preventing radicalisation of Christians in Aotearoa

David Whitaker

The Christchurch Mosque attacks in 2019 shattered New Zealander's false sense of security as an isolated safe-haven, somehow immune to the global rise of terrorism, inviting questions of how such radicalisation occurs, and how it might be prevented. While often associated with an "other", in the USA "violent terrorist activities resulting in fatalities are [more] likely [to be] committed by extreme right wing Christian groups ... than any other group." This, alongside the 2019 attacks, suggests that Aotearoa churches should not be complacent. Further, the 2022 Parliament Grounds occupation, following the US Capitol Attack, demonstrated the potential for protest activity to move beyond appropriate bounds.

This paper investigates the underlying theological and cultural factors that might lead to and mitigate against potential radicalisation within the Christian Church in Aotearoa New Zealand. Using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, I have analysed data from two of New Zealand's most outspoken Christian leaders: Brian Tamaki of Destiny Church, and Peter Mortlock of City Impact Church, during the time of the 2022 Parliament Grounds

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occupation. Themes identified from these sermons and talks include 'blame of the other', 'a call to bold action', 'unexamined hubris', the 'conflation of truth and opinion' and the 'overriding importance of personal freedom.' Such rhetoric, if ingested and interpreted by susceptible individuals, could draw these people towards unhealthy activity.

Drawing on the conference theme of Hope, the paper will consider potentially fruitful countermeasures, such as: intellectual humility, appropriate interpretation of Scripture, interaction with the wider church and people of other religious beliefs, spiritual practices, and a reframing of the Church's place in society. These measures can empower church leaders to create communities of hope rather than hate, helping guard against potential radicalisation.

David Whitaker is a Theology Masters student through Otago University where Dr Lynne Taylor is his supervisor. He also practices as a Paediatric Physiotherapist at the Champion Centre, and is married to Maja with four daughters.

C3: Communities of discernment: Bastions of hope?

Graeme Flett

Recently AUT Research Centre reported that public confidence in New Zealand's mainstream media had dropped significantly over the last three years. This coincides with concerns about misinformation and the proliferation of conspiracy theories. Is this symptomatic of the digital age where new media creates a new ontology; an infosphere in which the 'meaning' and 'purpose' of what it means to be human are questioned? While congregants are not immune to the technological impositions of modern communication and its subtleties, critical reflection is imperative. This is significant because the communicative space of our interactions is often not heard amidst the noise of being immersed in a culture where computation frames much of our making.

How then do congregations remain faithful to the gospel when public sensibilities increasingly take their cue from new media? How do the faithful discern the good, the true and the beautiful when that which is beautiful, good and true pivots on the power of an opinion? How do congregations become communities of hope? Are there lessons to be had from the dark ages when Christian communities of learning became the bastions of hope?

In this paper, I explore the practice of Christian discernment and re-imagine ways of being the church in the 21st century. I argue that the ecology of a congregation's spatial world matters to its making. This extends to practices of attentive listening, heightened levels of participation that enhance robust reflection, and an 'embodied-making' that exemplifies the incarnation of Christ; i.e., collaborative, imaginative and fully human.

Graeme Flett is a faculty member of the School of Theology at Laidlaw and specialises in pastoral and practical theology. His pastoral leadership experience of 17 years serves him well in his other role as a Senior Coach working with the

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Laidlaw Centre for Church Leadership. Graeme is an ordained pastor with Elim Churches of New Zealand. His area of research is focused on media ecology and the influence of new media on congregational life, looking at Christian identity and embodied practices. He is married to Linda (a hospital chaplain) and has three married daughters and 5 grandchildren. He is also a keen woodworker and enjoys designing and making bespoke furniture.

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Session D: Hope in our Gathering

D1: Church for Humans - How creating space for life-giving conversations in church is mission

Howard & Lynette Webb

The big idea: Drawing on current research, our experience pastoring a 'talking' church and what we have learned facilitating churchwide conversations for other churches, we will highlight the critical importance post-Christendom of structuring in time for 'redemptive conversations' on Sunday and the implications of this for church leaders.

We have been doing Sunday church the same programmatic and monologic way for centuries, but in a post-Christendom world there is growing recognition that relationship-building lies at the heart of church and mission, and adaptations are needed in how we conduct our central event. New breakaway models of church seem to have in common an emphasis on the importance of relationship and community in the Sunday event and in disciple-making.

The need is urgent because for most church-attenders in the West, the Sunday event has become their only point of contact with the church. Our community-building and disciple-making process must become integral to the Sunday event or it will not touch the majority of our people.

Given the primacy of making disciples, we need to consider what is needed for their nurture.

- Disciple-making requires relationship and trust. To be discipled we need to be deeply known. This can't happen without time for conversation.
- Disciple-making requires applied learning. Passively hearing information is a poor way to learn. Jesus himself artfully asked good questions to help his listeners uncover their own underlying values, beliefs and attitudes.
- Disciple-making requires immersion in the body life of the church. God has gifted every person in the room with something that someone else in the room needs. We should be ministering to each other when we gather. This is biblical – and body life grows disciples.
- Disciples are grown through engagement in mission. What is 'mission' if not nurturing relationships so that we can have redemptive conversations that woo people to Jesus? These conversations should be modelled in church. If we are making time for conversation in church, we can also invite outsiders to join us. Jesus imagined outsiders being present, marvelling at the love and unity they saw acted out in the church. We can be modelling mission on Sunday!

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Our future hope lies in being an authentic community of faith. We cannot abandon the non-negotiable practices of gathered church, but equally non-negotiable should be the time we set aside for body life and equipping the saints. We know what we value from how we spend our time.

Trained church leaders are as essential as ever, but must also be trained to facilitate conversations. They will need to:

- Create safe spaces conducive to conversation
- Set good cultural norms around conversation
- Understand that good questions are more powerful than answers
- Model listening well
- Draw out points of application – our conversations need to be redemptive and purposeful.

Howard & Lynette Webb have 28 years of experience with Love Your Neighbour, helping churches be more effective in outreach. Eight years ago, they planted a conversational table church called church@onetwosix in Pt Chevalier. Their book, *Redemptive Family* is about bringing mission into church by creating hospitable gospel space with plenty of time for conversation!

D2: Hope is already here, let's face it: Reinterpreting Sunday services

Bridie Boyd, Jess Hall, Tepene Marsden

Many people are looking for hope for the church in current expressions of worship and traditional outcomes, but what if hope lies in doing something different? According to the 2023 Faith and Belief Study, commissioned by the Wilberforce Foundation, though affiliation with religious institutions is on the decline, interest in spirituality is increasing in Aotearoa. As young adults in the church, it is striking to us just how few of our generation there are attending Sunday services. Many have been wondering: in a climate where people are longing for genuine connection and explorations in faith, are our services effectively meeting this need? Thinning numbers may indicate not, and some feel increasingly stuck about how to proceed. Could it be time to try something different?

In this paper we explore how we found hope for our community through reinterpreting Sunday service success metrics and outcomes. This has enabled us to develop thinking and tools which our community has trialled over the last year, in the form of an intergenerational discussion-based service, at the Anglican parish of All Souls, Christchurch. Through the 11.30 'Faith Discussions with Brunch' service, we have witnessed deepening faith engagement, seeing people grow in wisdom and in relationship with God.

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Our presentation will include a description of how our service is run, reflections on the current cultural backdrop of Christianity in Aotearoa, and practical tools which other leaders and layfolk might engage in their own contexts. Through our korero, we will demonstrate that there is hope for the church when we trust God and are bold and creative. We are built for this, because we serve a creative God, and we as God's agents can exercise that creativity. It is our firm belief that the church can meaningfully engage people on their spiritual journey if we are prepared to respond to the invitation of different pathways.

Bridie is passionate about connecting people to God in a deep and sustainable way. She has studied Philosophy and Theology for over a decade, with her favourite areas being pastoral theology, embodied theology and ethics. Day to day Bridie works as a chaplain and loves journeying alongside people when they are feeling lost and low. She also volunteers for the Anglican Women's Studies Council and champions equity for women in church. Bridie calls Ōtautahi home, where she lives with her husband Tep, children, and a very naughty pup called Theodore.

Jess is a theologian and artist, who is passionate about bodies and spirituality and the intersection between the two. She was born and raised in Ōtautahi, and has studied Theology since 2017. Jess is a current student at Otago University, working towards her MTheol with a focus on the many faces of purity culture. Her postgraduate dissertation explored positive revisions of menstruation as a site of theological reflection. When she is not studying, Jess coordinates young adults ministry at her home parish, and mucks around in her craft room.

Tepene is based in Ōtautahi, Christchurch. He currently works for 24-7 YouthWork as national communications coordinator. He is married to Bridie, with their son, Mikaere. Tepene is an avid creator, making a wide range of projects and exploring new ideas. His background is in digital media, marketing, animation and illustration. Alongside working on various creative projects, he is passionate about people finding and maintaining connection to God and exploring what church means in our current context. His experience in church ranges from children's ministries to the tech team, he's done a bit of everything!

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D3: Intelligent worship in the church's creative spirit

Hazel Tattersall

At different points in church history, art has been villainised and idolized but, with a growing interest in the intersection of theology and art today, its important to consider what art is and how the church ought to engage with it. This paper considers art ecclesologically, arguing that the flourishing church participates in the creative Spirit of Christ, worshipfully bodying-forth the hope of the new creation through the creation and interpretation of art. Art is seen to be a language through which the Spirit interprets transpositions of Christ to the Church, as demonstrated in the writing of C. S. Lewis. Art is also seen as a human language through which the church can share in Christ's worshipful response to the Father, participating in Christ's perfect worship. This is a language which moves beyond reductive code models of communication and can cross cultural and language barriers to give form to the new creation hope present in Christ's body. Art is therefore a gift of the Spirit to the church.

However, as with any language, the comprehension of art's meaning is not universal and requires interpretation. 1 Corinthians 14 is discussed as Scriptural instruction for wise congregational worship regarding glossolalia, and the theological principles in this passage are applied to art as a Spiritual gift of language for the church. This passage encourages the church to desire and foster their creative gifts for the creation of art which both brings apprehended knowledge of God through transpositions and participates in Christ's worshipful response to the Father. Creative practise is particularly seen as encouraging for individual spirituality. The 1 Corinthians 14 passage also gives sober instruction on the importance of the interpretation of tongues in public worship, thus encouraging the church to moderate the expression of art in churches with theological interpretation. The church can be encouraged to grow her missional activity as theological interpreters of all art (Christian art or otherwise). It is not claimed that Christians are perfect artists or art interpreters, rather, like other forms of discipleship, we can perfect this craft in the Spirit as the communal body of Christ. The cost of Christian artistry involves a lifelong and communal journey of creation and interpretation of art for the glory of God, giving language to the hope of new creation through artistic transpositions until those transpositions pass away and we see Christ face to face.

Hazel Tattersall is a PhD student researching Trinitarian Theology of Art. She has degrees in English Literature and Theology from the University of Waikato and Laidlaw College. Her research explores theological perspectives on imagination and art, drawing interdisciplinary connections between Trinitarian theology and creative writing. She grew up on the mission field in Tanzania and Kenya, and now lives in Auckland. She is married to Jeremy and works at Laidlaw College.

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FRIDAY 28 MARCH AT 9.30AM

Session E: Hope and spiritual practices

E1: From everyday chat to sacred curiosity: Re-visioning and democratising spiritual direction for connection and transformation

Richard Cook

So much talk! So many conversations. Each has a purpose – some to catch up and others to connect. So much potential for kindness and care – the fabric of flourishing. Interactions that start out perfunctory, with a purpose to achieve, can, with a question and perhaps a cup of tea, move into conversations that connect, and, occasionally, ones that touch, open new perspectives, consider creative options for navigating life's challenges, or even share experiences of sacred Presence. The writer to the Hebrews said, "...let us consider [thoughtfully] how we may encourage / provoke / stimulate / rouse one another to love and good deeds... (Heb 10:24). But how is this possible when conversations have such strong social norms and patterns constraining them?

This presentation will re-vision the possibilities of these common-or-garden conversations. What if everyday followers of Jesus learned how to shift from the perfunctory to the personal, from declaration to wonder, from the story of problems to the story of the soul, from talk-about-self to curiosity about the life of God bubbling up in the gift of the everyday? Might we join the relational dance of the Three-in-One? Could we release the flow of God's own compassion, care, empathy, kindness and comfort?

Sounds rather like spiritual direction. But as Gordon Jeff puts it, "I see spiritual direction as an enduring front-line weapon, so effective that it can become one of the most important strategies of parochial ministry" (p. 99). So, what if spiritual direction was democratised? What if everyday believers learned the art of sacred curiosity to journey with others in a shared transformative process? Spiritual journeying conversations will be proposed, not as a demarcated domain, but, as Tilden Edwards put it: "Given the priesthood of all believers, every Christian has the right and responsibility to be a spiritual friend for someone in need". Or as Rasmussen said it, "Believers who learn to listen to the Spirit at rich and deep levels can be primary agents of help and healing."

A case study will tell the story of one church in Canada who re-visioned their life together in exactly in this way. A faith community equipped for spiritual journeying conversations as everyday possibilities of sacred connection and transformation. Finally, a three-phase plan will show how everyday Jesus followers can be equipped for these kinds of "conversations that matter". Like Benedict, this is not a spirituality separate from everyday life, but one fully engaged in the ordinary moments of relating as the actual sites of holiness, dancing with the Trinity into the relational moments of the day.

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A counsellor of 30 years and educator for 28 of them, Richard loves journeying with people as they seek life-giving connection with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He led the development of counselling and social work degrees and now postgraduate diplomas in responding to trauma and addiction at Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (BTI) in Tauranga where he is Co-Head of the School of Social Practice. Richard is also on the international Spiritual Direction team with Larger Story. He co-edited and co-authored *Interweavings: Conversations between Narrative Therapy and Christian Faith* (2008) and has just finished a new book *Spiritual Journeying Conversations: Re-Visioning Spiritual Direction from the Teaching of Dr Larry Crabb* (2024). Married to Caroline, they work remotely from Rotorua, walk the Redwoods with their labrador and grow bonsais in the backyard.

E2: Countering visions of control: Forming a hope-filled community through prayer *Sebastian Murrihy*

Sociologist Hartmut Rosa argues that, as late modern human beings, we seek to make the world controllable at every level. Thus, we encounter the world as a series of points of aggression—something to control or conquer or instrumentalise. Rosa suggests that this aggressive relationship with the world is the result of a social formation over the past few hundred years that is based on the structural principle of dynamic stabilisation and on the cultural principle of relentlessly expanding humanity's reach. Thus, we are structurally compelled and culturally driven to turn the world into a point of aggression. Such a relationship with the world, Rosa suggests, leaves us feeling alienated—unable to be 'reached' or 'called'. If this forms the social imaginary of late modern subjects in the so-called West, then this way of relating affects churches and Christians in Aotearoa today. Some examples of this will be given. James K.A. Smith suggests that as we live, we encounter formative visions of the world that capture our imaginations and mis-form us—misdirecting our desire and being in the world. He argues that Christian worship needs to intentionally counter the mis-formation experienced by the church and Christians. I suggest that prayer, in conversation with Karl Barth's treatment of prayer in his work *Evangelical Theology*, may help counter-form Christians and churches away from encountering God, the world, or each other as something to be controlled, instrumentalised, or conquered. Rather, prayer may help form churches and Christians in dispositions of grace and dependence on God, cultivating a radically different kind of relationship with the world. The hope for the future of the church arises not from its ability to control the world. Rather, it comes from its dependence on the God who loves to reveal Godself to the world: 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10).

Sebastian Murrihy is a half-time minister at Knox Presbyterian Church Waitara and Lecturer/Ministry Formation Coordinator at the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership.

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Session F: Thinking About Hope

Facilitator: Christa McKirland

F1: Liberating hope: Resources for reclaiming a misused virtue

Kirsten Guidero

This conference rightly asks, in the midst of ongoing revelations of abuse and toxicity, how can contemporary churches become “places of hope and restoration”? This paper suggests that to begin answering that question, those who lead the church must redefine hope. Christian understandings of hope determine the character of the healing and transformation we can provide.

As American bioethicist Arthur Caplan recently charted, hope in the West continues to shapeshift. From its humble beginnings in Greek mythology as an improper yearning to its flourishing as one of the classical Christian virtues, hope currently most often names emotional mindsets locked into optimism. Caplan identifies this trend in healthcare settings, but he is joined by liberation theologian Miguel de la Torre, whose 2015 blog post and later book trace the ways Christian conceptions of hope have been co-opted by economic constructs promoting perpetual progress. Defining hope by deceptive promises to avoid death or continually advance wealth devolves the virtue into spiritual bypassing. It is all too easy to identify how such spiritual bypassing, under the name of hope, continues to shape the churches’ reactions to many issues, including but not limited to ecclesial abuse and corruption. Therefore, in this paper I suggest that a better understanding of hope, though it requires integrating uncomfortable and difficult points, restores churchly integrity. In other words, expecting failure is the only way the church can learn patterns of transformation and healing.

To reformulate hope, we must first examine how our notions of it have gone so far astray. I begin, then, by briefly discussing hope’s historical development from liability to virtue to mindset. Then I trace how the market and technology dynamics identified by Caplan and de laTorre render hope, in the framework supplied by philosopher Lisa Tessman, a burdened virtue. I argue that the qualities of a burdened virtue match the contours of the hope taught by many Christian contexts. Especially when applied to allegations of abuse and corruption, burdened hope devolves into the spiritual bypassing of toxic positivity, pernicious epistemic ignorance, and testimonial quieting. This distortion of hope surfaces critical lapses in the churches’ theological formation. Mine is no fideistic analysis, however. While the churches have substituted sinful frameworks for the logic of the Gospel, it is precisely an assumption of ecclesial self-sufficiency and superiority that has led them to chase after false models of success. By contrast, outlining a Gospel frame for hope brings the churches to practice a theology that humbly learns from the insights of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and medical ethics. I conclude by uplifting some of the resources these other disciplines provide for a theological liberation of hope.

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Kirsten Guidero is a theologian and Episcopal priest who lives and works in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her primary research agenda advances an ecumenical iteration of the doctrine of deification, although she also pursues several related inquiries all having to do with what it means to be a fulfilled human being. She most loves conducting interdisciplinary research so that religious claims take better stock of current philosophical and scientific findings. A recent fellow of the Indiana University Fairbanks Center for Medical Ethics, she is Associate Professor at Marian University-Indianapolis. She also serves on the contact group facilitating The Episcopal Church-Church of Sweden full communion agreement and recently joined the clergy team at Trinity Episcopal Church-Indianapolis. Most importantly, she provides for the world's best dog Lucy, and in her spare time can usually be found watching British TV, reading detective novels, or avoiding household chores.

F2: A Hopeful Hamartiology: How Honest Sin-Talk Paves a Way for Hope

Joshua Taylor

At first glance the word sin doesn't conjure hopeful thoughts. In contemporary life in Aotearoa the doctrine of sin is likely to be perceived negatively, evoking images of judgemental Christians and a pessimistic anthropology. But what if hamartiology (the study of the doctrine of sin) is more hopeful than we thought? This paper will argue that the doctrine of sin is necessary in articulating Christian hope. A robust hamartiology will lead to a rich picture of the transformation and healing of humanity in Christ.

Contrary to a naive optimism about human goodness, Christian reflection on sin takes seriously the uncanny ability of humans to harm one another and this world. It recognizes our capacity for evil individually and collectively. Contrary to cynicism and resignation, Christian reflection on sin allows people to take responsibility for this harm and holds out hope for forgiveness, reconciliation, and justice. In particular, in a divided society in which blame and scapegoating are commonplace, the notion of sin as universal provides a way of speaking about our collective wrongdoing and shared predicament. Framing Sin as something in which all of humanity participates creates a focus on a shared problem (sin) rather than exacerbating the impulse to turn on one another.

The doctrine of sin is susceptible to being used in ways that are sinful. If the doctrine of sin has been perceived as the opposite of hopeful this is something the church must take responsibility for. A healthy and flourishing church in Aotearoa will be one which can have honest conversations about our own complicity in sin.

Finally, the doctrine of sin is always rightly understood in light of salvation in Christ. Sin diagnoses the problem for which salvation is the cure. The doctrine of sin propels humanity toward a God who offers forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing.

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Joshua Taylor is an Anglican Priest from the Diocese of Christchurch in Aotearoa, New Zealand. He is passionate about theology grounded in the context of the church and is particularly interested in the areas of systematic theology, practical theology, and spiritual formation. He is currently working on a PhD through Otago University, working on a thesis titled: "Speaking of Sin in 21st Century Aotearoa."

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Session G: Hope and Action

G1: Bounded choice to empowered freedom: Cultivating agency and autonomy in the church

Katherine Hurrell

Bounded choice theory, which examines how individuals' choices are constrained by the structures and ideologies within certain groups, can be applied to understanding restrictive dynamics that can exist within some church settings. These dynamics can potentially become 'culty', imposing undue control over members' lives. This paper aims to explore the nature of bounded choice and its impact on individual wellbeing while discussing how churches can foster environments that promote empowered freedom and genuine agency among their 1members. Findings from a recent Australian mixed-methods study will be presented. Results will highlight the connection between constrained agency and adverse psychological and wellbeing outcomes, including trauma symptoms and spiritual struggles. Importantly, this paper discusses how churches can shift from restrictive practices to those that encourage autonomy, open dialogue and a culture that fosters spiritual growth and wellbeing. This paper hopes to identify frameworks that will enable churches to become communities where individuals feel free to explore their faith journeys authentically and without coercion, fully embracing the liberating message of the Gospel.

Katherine Hurrell is Centre Director at Sydney College of Divinity (SCD University College) and works within their Graduate Research School. She received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from Macquarie University. Katherine's recent work titled, *The Dynamics of Bounded Choice and Trauma within High-Control Faith Settings* was presented at the 35th Annual Boston International Trauma Conference in May 2024. Her interdisciplinary research interests encompass positive psychology, trauma-informed practice, cult systems, narcissism, and general wellbeing. Katherine particularly enjoys the intersection of ministry and psychology, focusing on how these fields can be practically outworked for the enhancement of individual and community wellbeing.

G2: Is hope a distraction from meaningful action? Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Hannah Arendt on hope in times of crisis

Andrew Clark-Howard

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Hannah Arendt are two influential figures for the fields of theological ethics and political theory respectively who offer significant analyses of the crises which faced early twentieth century Europe, particularly related to the cultural and political disintegration of their home nation of Germany and its failure to prevent the rise of National Socialism. Bonhoeffer and Arendt are therefore two thinkers who provide important insights into times of crises and the ways ordinary citizens

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might respond. They further provide rich reflections on the tension between hope and action, both identifying the ways otherworldly forms of hope created conditions in which fascism and widespread violence was increasingly tolerated and supported. While Arendt is more pessimistic about the ways hope can foster apathy for concrete action, Bonhoeffer offers a christologically motivated response to crisis in which God's own entering into creation and sharing in creaturely suffering through Jesus Christ provides meaningful ways for followers of Jesus to resist the twin temptations of otherworldliness or secular immanentism. This proposed paper therefore reflects on the tensions between hope and action amidst the various crises which face the Western Church in order to advocate for a more 'worldly' form of engagement that takes after Bonhoeffer's christological response to crisis. Rather than distract people from action and solidarity with the world, or imagine that such action remains all that there is, the Christian hope is instead expressed most fully in Christ's own being there for others.

Andrew Clark-Howard is a Pākehā scholar who works at the College of St John the Evangelist - Hoani Tapu te Kaikauwhau i te Rongopai and the University of Auckland - Waipapa Taumata Rau. His work has appeared in publications such as Scottish Journal of Theology, Practical Theology, and Studies in Christian Ethics. He holds a PhD in theology from Charles Sturt University and lives with his partner Steph in Tāmaki Makaurau.

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Session H: Hope and Embodiment

H1: From sacrifice to hope: Rethinking theologies of human dignity for restoration

Jenny Richards, Lorna Hallahan, and Tanya Riches

Sacrifice zones are increasingly described in the contextualisation of theologies that may abandon marginalised individuals and groups, such as women experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV), and people with disability. Taylor's recent historical account (2018) moves from sites such as nuclear waste dumps to examining human lives stripped of dignity and moral status, particularly in light of William's work on the ontology of the body. Riches' work has identified theologies casting women experiencing DFV into a sacrifice zone.

This group presentation explores the theological forces in the making and now the unmaking of sacrifice zones. Richards' doctorate (2024) explores the dualistic ontological and epistemological roots that perpetuate divisive doctrinal positions related to forgiveness, justice and restoration, which entrench the effects of violence and its subjugation of their bodies, and further alienates Christian women experiencing DFV from vindication and safety in their faith communities.

We embrace Riches' call for specialised theological development by women to be mainstreamed throughout churches and explore the potential for collaborative work towards wholeness and healing. Richards contributes unlocking insights from TF and JB Torrance whose connected work on forgiveness and justice provides a bridge to overcome potentially destructive dualisms (complementary roles, public/private; sacred/secular). This offers doctrinal coherence which locates human dignity within the Incarnation of Jesus, and makes space for restoration to occur through an intentional embrace of the hope implicit within the Priesthood and Mediation of Christ, and adopting holistic, covenantal understandings of relevant faith teachings. A consequential refusal to subjugate either women's or disabled bodies informs the work of the church as we seek to ground and outwork sophisticated theologies to address compelling issues for the people of God.

Dr Jenny Richards is a Senior Lecturer in Law in the College of Business Government and Law at Flinders University, and former criminal lawyer. She is a Senior Associate at the St Barnabas Research Centre, (St Barnabas College/ University of Divinity) and a member of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide Domestic and Family Violence Working Group. Her research centres on religious domestic and family violence, criminal law reform, disability and social work law. She is co-author of *Integrating Human Service Law, Ethics and Practice* (Oxford, 4th ed 2016), which has been a key text in social work and human service law nationally and internationally since it was first published in 2004. Her PhD, 'Embodied Justice: An Integrated Faith-Law Response for Christian Women Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence in Australia' (Flinders University, Jan 2024) considers ways in which church leaders can hold law and faith considerations together when addressing

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domestic and family violence. Jenny has been previously involved in refugee advocacy, and is a Board member of the Disability Rights Advocacy Service of South Australia..

Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan has been a social work academic since 2006, building on a professional career in disability advocacy and policy analysis and development. She is currently the South Australian Discipline Lead in Social Work at ACAP University College in Adelaide. Fascinated with theology from her childhood in the Anglican Church and school, Lorna completed her PhD in disability theory and the doctrine of incarnation. This took her into the 'cripping' done by disabled people, and their close allies as they reclaim ancient spiritual traditions to simultaneously expose injurious power and everlasting truths of love and acceptance. In this work, no one denies the fragility of life and the ubiquity of human suffering but all open paths to dignity and delight for all.

Dr Tanya Riches is Director of the Masters of Transformational Development at Eastern College Australia, which runs in Melbourne, KL, Egypt, Uganda, and Zambia. Her work sits at the intersection of development studies, theology, and anthropology. Her previous research into Australian Pentecostal megachurch Hillsong spans over a decade, from her MPhil (2010) to more recent work on women's complaint raising. Her co-edited *The Hillsong Movement Examined* (2017) draws insider and outsider views on the church into dialogue. Her PhD at Fuller Theological Seminary was with urban Pentecostal Aboriginal communities in three cities of Australia. She has authored over 16 articles and 25 chapters in scholarly volumes, four special edition journals. She is currently working on an urban Christianity project for Bloomsbury.

H2: Reclaiming hope with holistic wellness: A Christian response to diet culture

Jennifer Bowden

"Wow! Everybody's FAT!" Pastor Rick Warren exclaimed in the opening of his diet book, *The Daniel Plan*. Like many authors of faith-based diet books, Warren has adopted diet culture beliefs that equate body weight with health and promote calorie reduction and exercise to address obesity. Indeed, fat activists have singled out the Christian church as a "happy bedfellow with diet culture." The need for a robust Christian response to contemporary diet culture is revealed when diet culture is viewed through a theologically-grounded understanding of a human being as an embodied unitary being.

Diet culture is a pervasive Western belief system that equates thinness to health, gives social status to weight loss, prioritises control and restriction of foods and exercise behaviours, moralises food choices, and contributes significantly to body dissatisfaction. This results in weight stigma, individual and systemic weight discrimination, and widespread body dissatisfaction among women, who

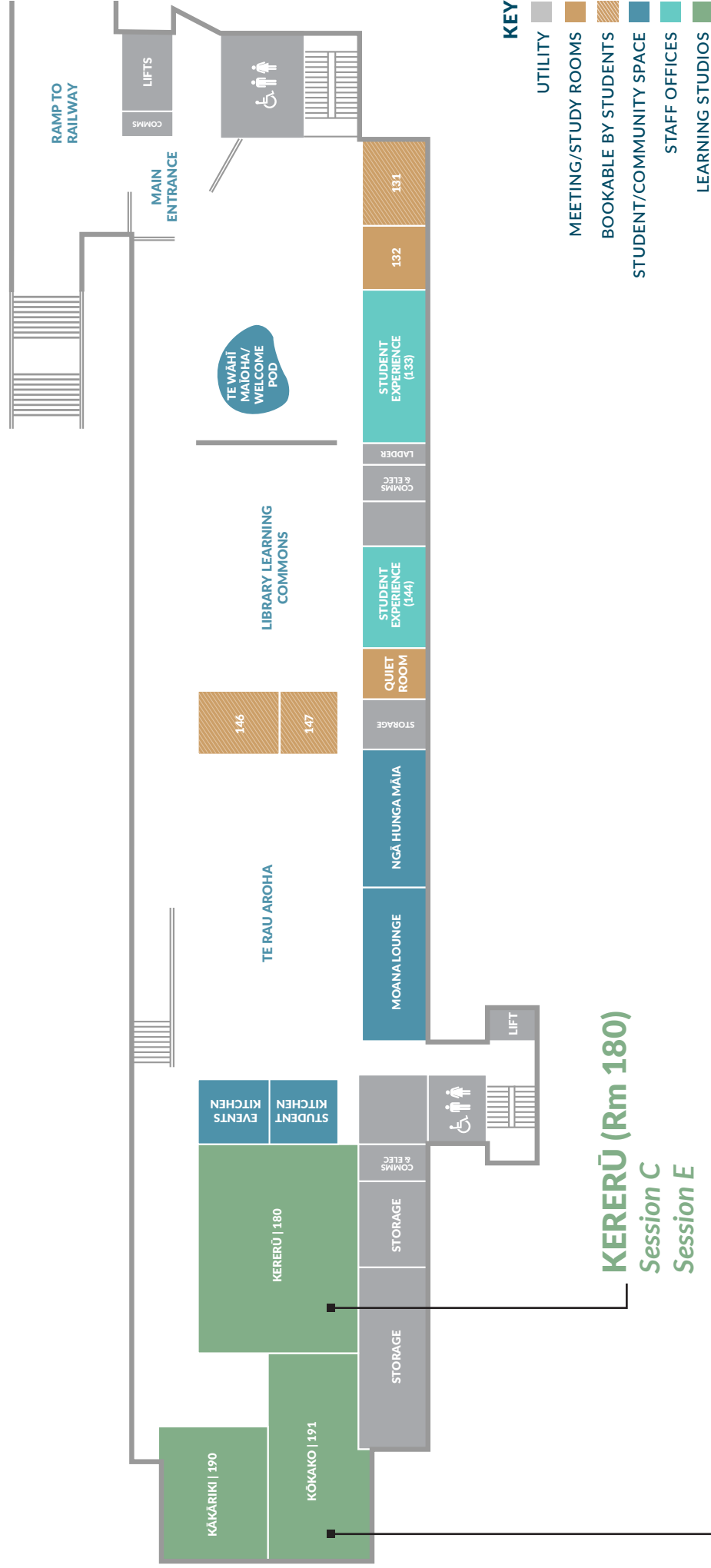
ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

are disproportionately impacted by diet culture, leading to poor body image, low self-esteem, and unhealthy lifestyles. Sadly, the Protestant Christian church has unconsciously and uncritically adopted the diet culture paradigm and reproduced its harmful messages, with many popular Christian pastors, authors and academics adopting diet culture ideals and seeking to align them with a Christian worldview. Diet culture is founded on a disembodied anthropology that presumes one can separate the body from the soul and deal with our physical condition independently from our psychological and spiritual condition. Yet both Scripture and science point us towards an understanding of the human person as an embodied unitary being, not a duality with a separate body that we can subjugate, starve and command to lose weight as though it exists in a vacuum.

This paper will explore how the Church can become a place of transformation and healing by adopting a holistic approach to health and wellbeing that honours humans as embodied unitary beings. I will offer specific practices that challenge cultural narratives around health and food, from rethinking our language about bodies, health and bodily functions, to challenging food moralism and promoting body acceptance, along with practical guidelines on how to eat intuitively rather than dieting. In doing so, we can better honour the psychological, spiritual, and physical aspects of health and wellbeing and, thus, honour the embodied unitary nature of humans and promote their flourishing in right relationship with God, self, other, and creation.

Jennifer Bowden is a registered nutritionist (MSc Dist) with a Graduate Diploma in Theology. She is completing a PhD investigating the intersection between diet culture and theology. Her research critically examines how religious and cultural narratives currently shape women's perceptions of their bodies and influence their dietary practices within the Protestant church community. It offers an alternative, theologically faithful response to diet culture, which encompasses a more holistic understanding of health and wellbeing.

LOCATION MAP (LEVEL 1)



KERERŪ (Rm 180)

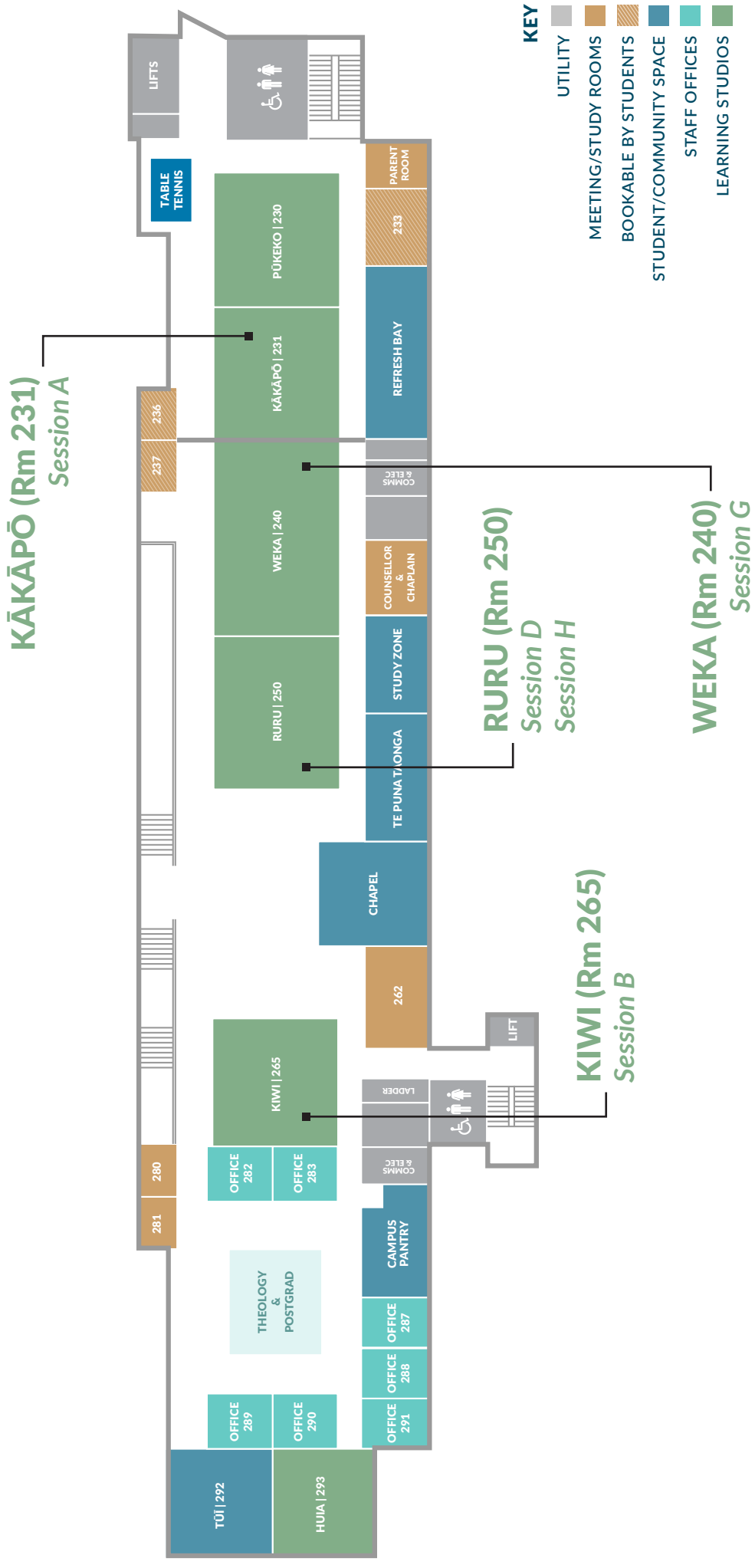
Session C

Session E

KŌKAKO (Rm 191)

Session F

LOCATION MAP (LEVEL 2)



VICINITY MAP



EATING PLACES

In Laidlaw Precinct:

A Tiger Sushi

Ebenezer Café

Town Centre

B WestCity Mall Foodcourt

C Kebabs, Chinese, Indian,

Japanese, Thai, Brazilian,

Pizza, Burgers along

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Professor Bender holds the Foy Valentine Chair in Christian Theology and Ethics at Baylor University. A prolific author and one of the world's foremost ecclesiologists, he recently edited The T & T Clark Companion to Ecclesiology.

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