

Morning Seminars

10.30am - 11.20am



Rima Tekau 1975-2025
Otautahi Christchurch

BCNZ | LAIDLAW

HOPE: STORIES IN THE MARGINS THAT REMIND US WHO GOD IS

Presenter: Miriam Jessie Fisher

Miriam Jessie will share her work 'Every Woman's Words' where she has handstitched every piece of direct speech by women from the Bible. Using poetry, humour, pathos, and her passion for the Bible, and for women's stories, she will explore the hope she derives from the wonderful, alarming and rich words and stories that occur in the margins of our Book. She would love this kōrero to include your questions about women, the role of the Bible in reminding us of God's character and creative encouragement for you to 'go and tell' in your unique ways.

JESUS AND CHURCH RESPONSES TO SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED HARM

Presenter: Daphne Marsden

Daphne Marsden will discuss church responses to sexual and gender-based harm in the context of the 2024 report from the Royal Commission on Abuse in State Care and the recommendations for churches. Her Project Esther (www.projectesther.co.nz) coal-facing perspective draws on the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

WHERE HOPE LIVES: STRENGTHS AND STRUGGLES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Presenters: Rev. Matthew and Zara Maslin

This seminar explores the state of today's young people—highlighting encouraging trends like reduced crime and violence, while confronting the rise in loneliness and anxiety. Together we'll consider where hope is already growing, where it's still desperately needed, and how the offering of Christ-like communities can grow thriving young people.

TE RONGOPAI & TE TIRITI: A PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE

Presenter: Antony Nihoniho

Our hope for a reconciled way forward for Māori and Pākehā is continually challenged. The issues are complex and the history fraught. As Christians in Aotearoa New Zealand and affiliates of Laidlaw College, we have an active role to play in God's hopes for us all. Our Christian predecessors inspired and established Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a foundation for our country. How do we apply it, as Christians, in 2025 and beyond?

Based on Antony's current doctoral research of relationships with whenua (land), he will suggest a way of articulating the relationships forged at Waitangi that include mana-enhancing identities for ALL New Zealanders. He will also rearticulate our colonial history and aspirations for a way forward collectively that seeks Gospel-inspired unity reflecting biblical and Māori values.

ESCHATOLOGICAL PATIENCE: RETHINKING EXPECTATIONS OF GOD, OURSELVES, AND THE FUTURE

Presenter: Rev. Dr Maja Whitaker

This seminar explores the tension between Christian hope and human limitation, inviting us to examine their unspoken expectations about God, ourselves, and the nature of life in a broken world. Drawing from personal stories, theological reflection, and creative contemplation, we will challenge the prosperity-tinged narratives that are too-often characteristic of Western Christianity. A reframing of hope through the lens of "eschatological patience" encourages a compassionate realism that embraces weakness, finds comfort in Christ's resurrection, and lives faithfully in anticipation of new creation.

Afternoon Seminars

1.45pm - 2.35pm



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TUMANAKO: HOPE IN EDUCATION

Presenter: Rebecca Gibson

The seminar highlights how hope in education involves bringing, giving, and being hope, inspiring teaching practices that empower students to critique and transform their realities. By fostering hope, educators can enhance student outcomes, self-esteem, self-belief, and sense of purpose. Rebecca will offer teachers practical insights for integrating a theology of hope into pedagogy, creating classrooms that reflect God's kingdom and nurturing students as hopeful, purpose-driven change agents.

LAIDLAW GRADUATES AND STAFF IMPACTING OVERSEAS

With Ps. Steve Graham, Rev. Dr Bob Robinson and Alistair Mackenzie

Steve Graham, Bob Robinson and Alistair Mackenzie will initiate a conversation about how Laidlaw staff and graduates can make a useful contribution beyond Aotearoa. They will discuss Kiwi characteristics that are helpful for this, opportunities that can open up doors, and what we can learn to be better prepared for this.

A POND OF HOPE: INTEGRATIVE COUNSELLING BRINGING HOPE TO COMMUNITIES

Presenters: Rev. Watiri Maina & Dr Lisa Spriggins

A recognised distinctive of Laidlaw's Bachelor of Counselling is the integrative project to bring together theology and counselling theory and practice. In this seminar we will examine some of the features of this integration and, using the Church as a case study, show how integration is lived out in counselling practice in ways which also shape communities.

A NEGLECTED DIMENSION OF TRAINING FOR YOUTH LEADERS

Presenter: Rev. Spanky Moore

Spanky Moore will discuss the increasing importance and role of personal spiritual formation for young people in theological education.

PROBLEMS WITH FORGIVENESS

Presenter: Dr Richard Neville

Interpersonal forgiveness is integral to the Christian faith. Its importance cannot be doubted when we consider that it is the only ethical practice Jesus included in the prayer he taught us, "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). By embedding it in the prayer-life of the church, Jesus ensured we could never forget how important it is to forgive. However, the Christian teaching on interpersonal forgiveness is not without its problems. In recent years more and more Christian writers have questioned the traditional view of forgiveness. They maintain that Jesus never intended for us to practice unconditional forgiveness. Forgiveness, they argue, is only offered when the guilty party repents. On the other hand, is it the case that our heavenly Father really withholds forgiveness from any Christian who fails to forgive (Matthew 6:14-15)? What about the deeply damaged victim of abuse or the parent of an abducted and murdered child? In this seminar we will look at some problems with forgiveness and suggest possible solutions.