**Anglican Communications and Media report**

**2022 - 2024**

Anglicans across Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia have continued to tell the inspirational stories of our Hāhi over the last two years. The main avenues for our Church’s communications are episcopal unit websites and mailouts, Anglican Taonga, Facebook and Youtube media.

During this period, Kurahautū The Archbishop’s Wayfinder Unit for wānanga, talanoa and research has taken a deep look at where our storytelling sits in a world where communications and media are undergoing exponential change.

Led by Kurahautū, we have asked where our Church stands at this point in media history as many of the old certainties fade, asking where and how do we interact with the communications world as it is today – as Christians and as Anglicans in these islands?

One of the expert communicators we surveyed this year said, “Forget social media, just ring the church bell,’ while others offered wide-ranging media strategies that they believe will help churches to go online in order to be the Church there and build up Oranga Ake - human flourishing.

We have already seen massive change in our Church’s communications. The global pandemic fastforwarded new technologies for connection and communication, and the Zoom and Youtube era has seen many churches leap 20 years ahead in a few short months, with previously unheard of parish and marae forays into social media, video livestreaming and group building online that are now commonplace for many in our Hāhi.

With these developments has come a rising awareness of bad actors who work to capitalise on the pace of technological change, to scam us, disinform us, and manipulate and commercialise every interaction we have online – leading to a growing sense of ill-ease and mistrust as many whānau question who decides what is our ‘community’ and what gets to be ‘the news’.

As new technology shifts what communication means, our Hāhi are sometimes faced with the sense of being left outside the secular mainstream news, and at the same time many join in spaces that ensure our voices are heard along with our unique whakapapa and our commitment to the values of the Kingdom.

As we look to where Anglican communications might head in the future, this report pauses to update Te Hīnota Whānui on what we have achieved since 2022, and where we have been doing the mahi to uphold and move forward our three tikanga communications in this next phase.

***Ki uta tārei ai, ki tai rewa ai.***

Prepared onshore to sail at sea.

**Kurahautū Communications Research project**

In January 2023 Kurahautū, The Archbishops’ Wayfinder Unit for Wānanga, Talanoa and Research launched a communications research project to respond to the rapidly changing media environment and scope the future of Anglican communications.

**Where do we set off from?**

**How do Anglicans communicate in these islands?**

As a first step Kurahautū established a research project to set the starting point for the future of what this Church’s communications might be, by finding out exactly what they look like today.

Rev Christina Syratt was employed for three months to compile a comprehensive database of all ‘primarily’ Mihinare and Anglican online communication spaces including inspirational individuals, online ministry spaces, kapa haka groups, youth movements, marae, church websites, newsfeeds, regular e-mailouts and a range of Anglican social media spaces across Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

Just under 1000 distinct ministries are registered in the database, which represents the first full summary of Anglican digital media ever done for this Church. The raw data from this research will be available after General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui to help episcopal units identify gaps in the data and aid the Church to support ministry units in their communication aims.

**Where might the current take us?**

**What is the media world we speak into?**

In the second research project, Kurahautū set off on a different voyage asking for wayfinder points from experts working on the cutting edge of communications in both Church and industry. The project consists of interviews and surveys of professional communicators, asking for their insights into how and where people are interacting online to find out where we as the Church might speak into the digital spaces where people go for connection, information, entertainment and inspiration.

This project is being carried out by Julanne Clarke-Morris in her (.25) role as Communications Consultant to Kurahautū and the results will be ready to view soon after General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui 2024.

**Communications for Hāpaitia -The Cyclone Gabrielle Response Unit**

During the intensive response phase following Cyclone Gabrielle, Kurahautū communications group members Peter Bargh and Julanne Clarke-Morris recorded meetings and prepared regular communique to church leaders from Hāpaitia.

Anglican Taonga ran several in-depth reports from the frontline church response which also went out in Hāpaitia e-news. Pīhopatanga Communications Director Verona Meiana Putaranui supported Hāpaitia communications on location in Tairāwhiti and Anglican Missions’ Communications and Marketing manager Kris Singh supported communications on site in Hawke’s Bay, managed Anglican Missions’ storytelling and built a website for Hāpaitia that holds stories of the Church’s response. **https://www.hapaitia.org.nz/**

**Anglican Taonga Online News**

**https://www.anglicantaonga.org.nz/**

Anglican Taonga continues as a primary news site for the General Synod Te Hīnota Whānui and for key aspects of this Church’s three tikanga news. In her (.75) role as Anglican Taonga editor Julanne Clarke-Morris writes, commissions, edits and illustrates stories, reviews and comment pieces from across the three tikanga church.

A wide range of church bodies and individuals contribute significantly to the storytelling work of Anglican Taonga.

Since 2023, the Diocese of Polynesia communications officer Trevor Whippy has worked closely with Anglican Taonga to generate stories from the diocese, the Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa has launched a new website which generates news and social media content and all Hui Amorangi and Dioceses and their social media sharing are regular sources for stories shared through Taonga.

Numerous communications and episcopal unit staff and volunteer contributors have supported the reach of Anglican Taonga over this period. In 2022 and 2023 the Anglican Taonga e-news mailout list expanded from its original core list of clergy to include all provincial contacts, Synod members, key lay leaders and continues to grow.

The Hīnota Whānui Facebook group is the primary social media platform for Anglican Taonga.

**Site migrations**

In February 2024 the General Synod office and Taonga editor were informed by our website hosting provider that the General Synod and Anglican Taonga websites were going to be archived at the end of March 2024, as the database software they were running on was no longer fit for purpose.

At this point in the Kurahautū research project it is too early to reconfigure the websites, so instead we engaged an IT company to undertake a website migration and operating system upgrade. After a tender process, Benjamin Brock-Smith and the IT development team at Berry Hill Ltd were engaged to complete the migration process in March 2024. Both the Anglican Taonga site and the General Synod site will still be reviewed as part of the wider Kurahautū communications research project.