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The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

Anglican Women's Studies Centre

Keeping It Real: *From* RECONCILIATION 2 RESTORATION



Participants gathered outside in the weak winter sunshine at the entrance to the Wesley Hall, St John's Theological College in Auckland, New Zealand for the Keeping it Real: From Reconciliation 2 Restoration hui, 5th—7th July 2016

The third Treasuring Women in Ministry Provincial Hui for lay and ordained Anglican women kicked off earlier this month at St John's Theological College. For this gathering the theme was centred around **'Keeping it Real: From Reconciliation 2 Restoration'** and we were blessed to have some very gifted guest speakers willing to share their stories with us.

For our first session we were honoured to hear from Louise Nicholas, voted NZ Herald's New Zealander of the Year in 2007 and a finalist again this year, in recognition for her work and commitment as a National Sexual Violence Survivor Advocate. Her harrowing story as a survivor of child and adult rape perpetrated against her by rogue members of the NZ Police force which was followed by an equally harrowing experience as a survivor of a justice system that saw her battle her way through seven court cases, *"I was slammed around the courtroom like a tennis ball, was told that I was nothing but an uneducated, vindictive, sex crazed, racist liar by defence lawyers. But still I held my head high, I know the truth, my truth. I knew what had happened to me and nothing*

they could say or do in that courtroom could hurt me anymore. It was my time to take back the power and control that was stripped from me, this was my justice...".

As a result of her experience and the public outcry following the publication of her book *My Story*, co-written by Phil Kitchin, a full Police investigation 'Operation Austin' was undertaken as well as a Commission of Inquiry into Police Conduct. These days, Louise works liaising with survivors, their families and communities. She is often invited to represent survivor perspectives in service development and the sexual violence and abuse services sector (networking, providing advocacy and advising).

Although Louise's story is well-known and recognized in New Zealand, hearing how at the time she sought permission from her young daughters to tell her story and how her and her husband of 28 years are now carefully and slowly letting their 9 year old son know her story was very poignant. It brought home the realisation that behind every newspaper headline, there are very real people with feelings and the fall-out is never very cut and dried. During our Q & A time following her talk, many of the questions focused around the personal cost to her and her family and the strategies she embraced which offered her courage, aided self-preservation and resilience during these

difficult times.

There are many factors to consider when thinking about Reconciliation or Restoration and there was an opportunity when we



Hui Participants from Tikanga Pasifika with Lynnore Pikaahu

Back Left: Elina Jitiko, Vei Lo'amanu, Miliana Fong, 'Ana Le'ota Liava'a, Sita Reid, Brenda Reed, Emily Chambers, Litia Prescott, Nai Cokanasiga, Ulamila Rokotakala & Taomi Tapu-Qiliho. Front Left: Caroline Chambers, Lynnore Pikaahu, Emily Grace Chambers & Amy Chambers.

broke up into small groups to discuss what inspired us about Louise and what challenged us and if there were any actions that we could implement back in our own context.

We began day two of our hui hearing from Revd Heather Flavell from the Diocese of Waiapu speak on the topic of *'Reality Hits: Loss, Grief and Bereavement—Spirituality and Healing in the Real World'*. One of the many hats that Heather wears is that of a Grief Councillor. Speaking from extensive experience both in the professional and lay capacity, Heather spoke about how grief is a part of life whether if be for someone who has passed away or as a response to a loss and how you grieve is unique to you, as individual as a fingerprint.

We have all heard about the five stages of grief, a concept made popular because it sort of fitted a medical and linear model. Unfortunately, people thought that everyone should go through these stages and that grief was somehow measurable and predictable. However, the reality for someone who is grieving is everything but linear or predictable.

Spending time with the person who has died is very important if it is possible as it offers an opportunity to spend more time with someone who was special to you. No matter what your cultural background is, the grieving, dying and burying process

brings people together and helps to maintain family links. Some Pakeha are now adopting the long-standing Maori cultural practice of "Unveiling". At the time the headstone is being erected, often around the anniversary of the loved one's passing, the whanau come together to share memories and be together again. It is a very healthy grief passage at a time when emotions are more settled.

A bereaved person is sort of relearning the world, starting from square one because this is the first time they've actually been there. Learning to be without the deceased in their life with only the memories. As you grieve for one loss, you may also grieve for others in your memory. Some people accommodate grief within their personal support network whereas

some do not have a network to support them. The most important thing to help another who is grieving is to be a good listener. Words that are meant to be helpful can become platitudes that are not helpful, e.g. the notion of 'letting go'. Instead it is better to prompt people to tell their life stories as the telling of their story is part of the journey that needs to be trod. Prayer is vital when expected or asked for but not helpful if people do not understand prayer so should not be forced on those who are grieving.

"You don't have to be strong or logical or sensible or any of the things you think you have to be. For me it turned out to be better when I didn't try to fight the pain, but let it roll over me like a giant tidal wave, and carry me along with it, until it spent its fury and dropped me gasping but alive on the shores of sanity. And like any other storm, it gradually died. The waves crashed further and further apart and somewhere, without my becoming aware of it, life became worth living again."

CS Lewis

In ending Heather shared with us this final thought, "Grief is not from reconciliation to restoration. We can never restore what or who we have lost. It's from reconciliation to reorganisation and a restored ability to love and to be loved. Or maybe,

it's from reconciliation to resurrection!"

We then welcomed Jill Blythe into our midst. Jill lost her son Tom in a tragic car crash four years ago in which he was a pas-



Photo: Numia Tomoana

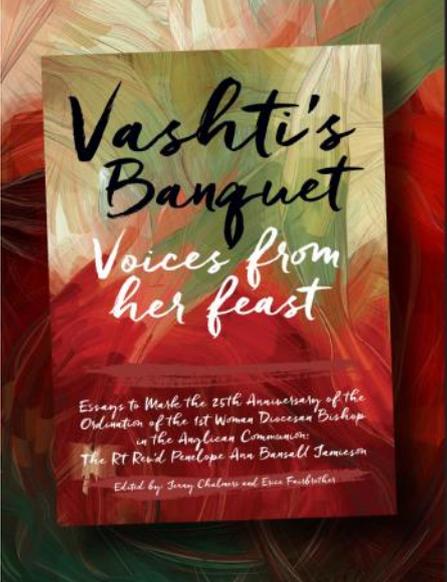
In the spirit of celebrating the diversity and gifts of our three tikanga, for this hui Tikanga Pasifika led us for Lotu (our Morning and Evening Prayer sessions)

senger and our hui was the first time that she had spoken of his death and subsequent events publically. Listening to Jill as she spoke about her grief following Tom's accident reinforced what we had heard earlier in the morning from Heather. Jill originally came from the UK in 1994 and consequently she and her daughters who no longer lived at home with Jill had no family here in New Zealand to provide a ready network of support.

The Police informed Jill that the girl who had been driving the car had been charged with dangerous driving and this gave Jill someone to blame for Tom's death. The following months a dark period followed as Jill was unprepared for the pain in her body and her memory loss that her grief brought. Suffering from nocturnal panic attacks, Jill would sleep during the day. Eventually she attended a healing course based on meditation and prayer led by a clinical psychologist that was advertised in some books provided by St John's.

Immediately following this she was confronted with the prospect of participating in the Restorative Justice dialogue which she had earlier rejected. The driver Nicole, wanted to participate in Restorative Justice but Jill being angry, bitter and resentful had not been ready until now, when she asked God for guidance as to whether she should and heard the prophetic words 'there are no accidents'.

Jill and her two daughters went along and even though there were support people present for both sides, they were very concerned that they had to sit in the same room with the per-



Vashti's Banquet

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son who was responsible for the death of her son and their brother.

Nicole read her statement, the girl was broken and everyone cried. Jill could recognise Nicole's pain which took away her fear and transformed her thoughts into wanting to care for her. It wasn't until this meeting that Jill found out that there was another car involved and that this driver who was chasing them got away with only a speeding ticket.

Jill continued her support while Nicole was in prison and attended Nicole's first parole meeting as Nicole's support person. The Judge informed Jill that this was the first time in New Zealand that a victim also stood in support of a parolee and he sent Nicole home.

When Jill forgave Nicole, it was the first time that she slept through the night. Love, forgiveness, gratitude, appreciation—words are inadequate when it comes to feelings. Love doesn't alter, physically the dead are no longer there but spiritually the dead stay with you. For Jill, she learnt to work through emotions, to ask for help. It was a huge journey but not all negative and sometimes the most terrible experiences can lead to the most amazing connections.

We ended the day celebrating the Auckland launch of **Vashti's Banquet: Voices from her Feast**. This is the latest AWSC publication which honours the former Bishop of Dunedin, The Right Revd Dr Penny Jamieson and the 25th Anniversary of her ordination as the first woman Diocesan Bishop in the Anglican Communion. There were 16 contributors from around the Communion and here at home. It was written in honour of her, not about her, to celebrate what Penny brought to her bishopric as her academic and pastoral ministry has been a great encouragement to others.



Our final guest speaker, Khylee Quince, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law, The University of Auckland with her understandably proud mother, Revd Jenny Quince, Tai Tokerau AWSC Link Representative.

Jill ended up respecting the young girl and they became friends and she changed her Victim Impact evidence accordingly and supported Nicole during her courtroom appearance for her Dangerous Driving causing Death charge. Regardless of this support, Nicole was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

Our last morning together we welcomed our final guest speaker Khylee Quince, a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law at The University of Auckland who teaches advanced criminal law and youth justice. Khylee also happens to be the daughter of AWSC Link Representative for Tai Tokerau, Revd Jenny Quince and you could feel the collective swell of maternal pride from all the Kuia in the room as Khylee's many accomplishments were read out in the introduction.

From Restorative to Transformative Justice: Addressing Inequal-

ity and Providing for Self-Determination may have felt like a very 'heavy' topic for the uninitiated but Khylee's korero was very accessible. New Zealand has been at the forefront of reforms that have implemented restorative justice initiatives, particularly in youth justice for the past 20-30 years. Restorative Justice was a new approach to conflict resolution, providing an opportunity for victims and offenders to face one another to discuss the wrongdoing and to allow for rehabilitation and reintegration of wrongdoers following an encounter between the parties directly affected. Therefore, Restoration Justice is a more relational approach to achieving justice than criminal law. It is not only backwards looking but also forward looking—it is

all about the offender. Why, how, when and where questions are asked. All people affected come to the table so the wrongdoer may experience guilt emotions regarding the behaviours that happened as well as shame emotions feeling bad about themselves. For many youth offenders, Restorative Justice can be a frightening place as it is very hard to face up to those you have harmed



Photo: Caroline Chambers

At the end of the Hui, Revd Erice Fairbrother, tikanga Pakeha and Revd Amy Chambers, tikanga Pasifika, two of the founding AWSC Council members who are now stepping down from their representative roles on the Council presented each hui participant with a gift made by the Gospel Weavers, Waipatu

and very tough to hear how you have hurt another. Restorative Justice is about repairing, rebounding, restoring and relationships.

However, the Restorative Justice process has some significant flaws and potential limits. There is the assumption that this terrible thing that has happened is a once off, which is not the case for many people. Another assumptions is that the wrongdoer has a supportive and able network of people who care about them and who are free to support the offender to make amends. There is also the assumption that all parties have the ability to easily communicate with shared values and fundamental understandings and it places a lot of responsibility on communities to see this process through and support it. For Restorative Justice to be considered successful, the following factors need to be in place:

- ⇒ A whanau with social, cultural and economic capital.
- ⇒ Trained and resourced facilitators.
- ⇒ A community of care.
- ⇒ Victim involvement.
- ⇒ Expectation of participation.
- ⇒ Facilitated programmes to send offenders to.
- ⇒ Effective monitoring of plans—every 2 weeks.

But one of the most undermining aspects of Restorative Justice is the assumption that all parties come from a basis of equality and this unfortunately is not the case. Despite the directive of Article 3 in the Treaty of Waitangi, many Maori still experience

poverty. Poverty creates a scenario where values are undermined and people get out of step in our communities. Khylee presented some of the criticisms and perceived limits of restorative justice—including its focus on individual harm, which can lead to the hiding of systemic injuries of race and class, e.g. In Auckland alone, 800 Maori are convicted every day!

However, there is a shift in New Zealand youth justice to a Therapeutic / Transformative Justice model, particularly

in the Rangatahi Courts. Therapeutic Justice recognises that some people and groups appear before justice forums having come from a space of dysfunction—meaning there is nothing for them to be 'restored' or 'reconciled' to. This model is worthwhile when there is nothing to 'restore' in the offender and there is a need to transform the person or circumstances. It is a more holistic approach and involves support and help.

After Khylee's session we gathered for our Hui Eucharist, led by the dynamic pairing of Reverends Jacynthia Murphy and Jenny Quince. Reverends Erice Fairbrother and Amy Chambers final act as AWSC Councillors was to present each participant with a parting gift from the Council, hand woven kete made the Gospel Weavers of Waipatu.

The last session after lunch *The A.R.T. of Leaving* was an opportunity for those gathered to voice what they **A**ppreciated in the

hui, what they will **R**egret and what they will **T**ake away with them and it was a fitting end to another excellent opportunity to be together again as three tikanga Anglican women celebrating and honouring our diversity while rejoicing in our commonality.

This hui was the last time that Revd Amy Chambers and Revd Erice Fairbrother from tikanga Pasifika and tikanga Pakeha re-

spectively, represented their tikanga as AWSC Councillors. Both had served on the Council since its inception and our sincere thanks and gratitude for all that they have done to establish AWSC as a credible three tikanga body has been sincerely appreciated.

By Karena de Pont—AWSC Administrator

*From notes provided by Revd Rosemary Carey,
Waiapu Diocese AWSC Link Representative*

The Hui this year was doubly special for me as I had my friend Jean to come with. Every other time I have come on my own... wondering, will I know anyone? This Hui so many people came up and said "Hello, good to see you again", and I was able to say, "meet my friend Jean".

This Hui was so friendly. As our small church has just closed, we were tired, grieving and feeling sad. We were wrapped in love from you all from start to finish. It felt so good, so thank you everyone.

It was really good too to be tikanga Pakeha and be in the minority! This enabled us to discover other points of view that were not necessarily our own. It was so much more comfort-

able to be asked for a group question and to be able to bounce ideas off others and then to discuss what the speakers had told us.

I remember hearing about Louise Nicholas from the newspaper but I found these accounts had been very one-sided and I never really got the true picture. I admired her perspicacity and persistence—glad that I was me and not her as she kept trying to get justice for herself and others in her predicament. So brave to get up and talk about rape in front of us all; a subject in my generation most of us would shut up about.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

By Wynne Bowers-Mason

*With trepidation I set out to join the women's hui,
Not knowing who it was I'd meet, nor what we would be doing.*

*Imagine then, my great relief at registration time
When faces in the bustle showed a recognizing smile
And even those I didn't know reached out in welcome warm,
So soon I felt enveloped in acceptance sure and calm.*

*The teaching and the fellowship were deep and challenging.
It touched on such important stuff, at times quite harrowing,
But every story shared in trust brought healing in its wings
And all felt safe, because our Lord of Love held everything.
So thank you for the music and the blessings we had there;*

It's with anticipation I look forward to next year!

*(Please excuse the doggerel and the not-quite-perfect rhyme;
I'll have to leave the serious stuff to others,
with more time!)*

The other speakers, Heather Flavell and Jill Blythe were also thought provoking and generated much interest and discussion; those group discussions after each session were better to listen to than to offer my own ideas, especially as I have had little knowledge of prison life or the tragedy of death by car accident. The worst I have experienced is being burgled twice and the lad refused to meet with us; they had been neighbours and the Aunty visited me and we'd had a cry together about his awful upbringing.

I remembered Khylee Quince as she was in our son's class at

school and she played soccer with him. Her session about Restorative and Transformative Justice was something I had no knowledge of. I had never previously thought about the problems of attempting to restore justice with someone who never had it to begin with and wouldn't know what it was. So I came away feeling amazed that a 74 year old could be so ignorant of life but so lucky to have all the good talk with you all. Thanks everyone.

Eleanor Lane



Photo: Karena de Pont

The three days we spent together *After our Guest Speaker sessions there was an opportunity to have small group discussions* was such a gift for all of us as we

shared, listened, worshipped, prayed, cried and laughed together around the sensitive theme of "Keeping it Real: From Reconciliation 2 Restoration". We were warned that we would be on a journey looking at grief and violation and how it could be difficult to hear some of the reflections.

Our key speakers were powerful in their raw honesty accounts of how it was at the coal face for them in their different circumstances and contexts.

We took their stories into small groups and blended and wove

our experiences as we shared. Deep sharing and empathy enabled us to quickly bond and draw close together.

Over the meal times and during worship, the Holy Spirit of God played in and around us helping to rekindle, refresh and make new contacts with one another.

We came with empty kete bags and left with them overflowing.

It was fitting that our speakers were gifted with individually woven kete bags symbolising the gifts their courage and wisdom weave into the lives of so many others.

There were many present who had journeyed with Bishop Penny during the past 25 years since she had become a Bishop, and it was a joy to be able to celebrate the launching of the book 'Vashti's Banquet' to honour her.

My sincere thanks go to the Councillors who organised the Hui with such care and diligence. It truly was a very special three days which enriched all of us who were privileged to attend.

Revd Rosemary Carey



Photo: Karena de Pont

Some of gifts shared and exchanged at the hui—orange cloth gifted by Sita Reid and Tai Tuatagaloa (Samoa), red cloth gifted by Miliana Fong (Fiji), individual kete made by Gospel Weavers (Waipatu), shell necklaces & flower broaches (Fiji), conference bag.

The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies (AWSC)

Karena de Pont, Administrator

Email: anglicanwomenstudies@gmail.com or anglican.wsc@clear.net.nz

Home Office Phone: + 64 9 422-0102 Cell Phone: 027 631-3083

General Synod Office Phone: + 64 9 521-4439 www.anglican.org.nz

Postal: General Synod Office, P O Box 87-188, Meadowbank, Auckland 1742, New Zealand



The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the **Anglican Women's Studies Centre** was set up to serve and to advance the interests and needs of the women of this Church particularly those undertaking Theological training.

The Link Representatives from each Diocese and Hui Amorangi have been chosen for their leadership ability to identify, gather, facilitate, resource and encourage women in their educational preparation for ministry whether lay or ordained. It is hoped that the Anglican Women's Studies Centre can continue to enjoy the support of each Diocese and Hui Amorangi in this endeavour.

The issue of increasing numbers of women in representative positions across the councils and committees of the Church is seen as a high priority and the practice of intentional mentoring by those already in national and international representative roles is seen as a good way to expose women of this church to fulfill their potential as leaders.

Ensuring that women's voices and stories are heard now and in the future is also one of our continued aims whether it be by traditional methods of publication or using more contemporary technologies like website publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.



Council for Anglican Women's Studies — 2016

TIKANGA MAORI -

- The Ven Mere Wallace
mere.wallace@westcoastdhd.org.nz
- Revd Numia Tomoana
numia_5@hotmail.com

TIKANGA POLYNESIA -

- Kelera (Nai) Cokanasiga
keleranai@yahoo.com
- Revd Evelini Langi
evelini_langi@yahoo.com

TIKANGA PAKEHA

- Revd Ellen Bernstein
ellen.m.bernstein@gmail.com
- The Ven Carole Hughes (Convenor)
carolesunrise@xtra.co.nz

Anglican Women's Studies Centre Diocesan & Hui Amorangi Link Representatives

Diocese of Auckland

- Revd Nyasha Gumbeze
tamarisk1999@yahoo.co.nz

Diocese of Christchurch

- Revd Jenni Carter
jenni.carter@xtra.co.nz

Diocese of Dunedin

- Jenny Campbell
jennycam@xtra.co.nz

Diocese of Nelson

- Kaye Dyer
kaye@mightymessage.com

Diocese of Waiapu

- Revd Rosemary Carey
rbcarey.carey@gmail.com

Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki

- The Ven Val Riches
vjrishes@outlook.com

Diocese of Wellington

- Revd Jenny Chalmers
jenny@clear.net.nz

Diocese of Polynesia

- Refer to Tikanga Polynesia Councilors
(see above)

Hui Amorangi o te Tairawhiti

- Ruihana Paenga
ruihanaapaenga@gmail.com

Hui Amorangi o te Tai Tokerau

- Revd Jenny Quince
quincemail@xtra.co.nz

Hui Amorangi o te Manawa o te Wheke

- Revd Bettina Maxwell
taumau@xtra.co.nz

Hui Amorangi o te Upoko o te Ika

- Revd Leonie Joseph
raulee04@xtra.co.nz

Hui Amorangi o te Waipounamu

- The Ven Mabel Grennell
mabel.tekorowai@xtra.co.nz

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER: The Anglican Women's Studies Centre is committed to encouraging and enabling women's voices and perspectives from across the diversity of the Church to be shared more widely. We acknowledge that women's experiences of church differ considerably and that resultant theological perspectives also differ considerably. In general the AWSC does not exercise editorial control, rather we welcome as many voices as are willing to contribute.