

# Alpine Presbytery

*resourcing the braided river*

## Newsletter 28th May 2025

*Cut off for items for next Newsletter is lunchtime on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June*

### Notes from the Alpine Presbytery Autumn Gathering

Around 60 people attended the Gathering held at John Knox Church in Rangiora. It was great to see the new facilities and hear something of the story of the church from Rev Jason King. Members of the church also provided front of house and catered for the meals – it was wonderful!

Our guests included:

- The keynote speakers, Rev Dr Andrew Root with Rev Kara Root. They live and work in Minnesota. Andrew teaches at the Lutheran Theological College and Kara is a Presbyterian minister
- National Moderator Rt Rev Rose Luxford and Rev Wayne Matheson, the Assembly Executive Secretary
- Rev Jay Robinson from the Presbyterian Research Centre (library and archives) & Matt Chamberlin (Presbyterian Youth Ministries)
- Rev Nardia Sandison and Rev Richardson Lau were observers.

Rev Anne Stewart, stood in for the Moderator Rev Phyll Harris. Zenn Rarere led a karakia and waiata with a team of musicians (one of them, Dan Spragg was mistaken for Ringo Starr!) Rev Martin Stewart led a reflection on a resurrection theme based on the artwork of Sieger Koder. The Sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated.

The death that week of Rev Sheena Dickson was noted. Sheena served at St Georges Iona in Christchurch from 2007-2022.

### Highlights

- Engagement with the draft **Presbytery Culture & Strategic Framework**. The responses are to be collated in order to inform the report as it is prepared for adoption in August-September.
- **Recognition of Elders in long service**. Chris Gee finished as Parish Clerk at the now closed St Kentigerns Burwood Church; Lois Shipley serves as Pastoral elder and lay preacher as part of Timaru Presbyterian Church and provides oversight of the former Pleasant Point congregation, and Jean Faithful (who was unable to be present) serves as Parish Clerk at Picton Union Church.
- The report and recommendations of the **Enterprise Fund Establishment Team** was received and agreed to. This gives the green light for the Fund to operate in the life of the Presbytery. A Presbytery Mission Team will also be established within the Presbytery Council.
- **Rev Lynmaree Sopoaga** (Auntie Lyn) was presented to the Presbytery to be the next Moderator. Guests from Malvern and St Paul's Trinity Pacific supported her. Rev Anne Stewart prayed an induction prayer and handed things over.
- Kevin Hapi and Zenn Rarere shared stories of the ongoing life of the mission in **Pa Whakāoranga** (the former Iona



Kara Root, Auntie Lyn & Andrew Root



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#### **Newsletter Items:**

Please share this Newsletter around your Parish, especially with members of Session/Parish Council and all office bearers.

Details of events, or requests to be added to the distribution list should be sent to Gail Weaver.

*The Alpine Newsletter is a weekly email update of activities in and around the Presbytery. It is intended to inform, connect, and encourage, and its content does not necessarily represent the views of Presbytery Council or staff, and the inclusion of articles, advertisements, and other content does not imply endorsement or agreement.*

#### **Resources**

A selection of resources and links to resources to assist you with your work and outreach,—including Online Worship Options— can be found on our website here:  
[alpinepresbytery.org/resources/](http://alpinepresbytery.org/resources/)

Church in Aranui) including news of the redevelopment of the property and the various community-facing ministries that are being offered.

- Recognition of **Rev Phyll Harris' moderatorship**. Phyll and Trevor Harris were able to attend part of the meeting. Phyll shared reflections on the 3 years serving as Moderator and there were various expressions of thanks.
- Ann McMillan shared the **Property & Finance Team** Report and the 2025-26 **Budget & levy** rate were approved under the guidance of Keith Christie, the treasurer.
- **Hanmer Springs Discernment**: Rev Dan Spragg spoke to the preference to pursue the option that includes exploring but not yet committing to (a) the possibility of subdividing the site into four sections, (b) selling the old church building and at least two further residential sites, (c) retaining the Manse and reinvesting into a second property in Hanmer. Noting that the preferred scenario effectively closes the mission opportunity that has been explored over the years. Presbytery Council to work on best options. Dan thanked the various people who have been part of the mission project.
- Rev Dr Andrew Callander (Motueka), John Jensen (Geraldine) & Liz Depree (Rakaia) were elected to the **Presbytery Council**.
- **Andrew Root** shared reflections on the concept of the secular and how it has come to be that we are all caught up in an 'immanent framework' (rather than the transcendent frame of just 500 years ago) a frame that even questions the existence of God. How does the church share the message of Jesus Christ and God at work in the world in this context? Maybe our shared stories of experiences of the eternal one are important conversation places rather than the way we have often privatised faith. His talks are available to download.

The ordination and induction of **Rev Pauline Hampshire** as well as the formal recognition of the new Community Church will be held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Akaroa at 3.30pm on Sunday 29 June followed by a light tea.

### **Vacancy: Presbytery Administrator - Alpine Presbytery**

**Location:** Christchurch (with occasional travel within Alpine Presbytery), approximately 15 hours per week.

This is an opportunity to join us as we work to support the various congregations and ministries of Alpine Presbytery.

We are seeking a competent and organised Administrator to provide essential support to our Presbytery, Executive Officer, and staff. This is a diverse role in a high-trust, interdependent environment, ideal for a self-motivated team player.

Your key responsibilities will include:

- Managing the Presbytery database and minister records.
- Producing and distributing our weekly newsletter.
- Tracking minister supervision and parish reporting.
- Managing website content and official communications.
- Providing administrative support for meetings and other events within the Presbytery.
- Assisting with compliance in Health & Safety and Child Protection.

The ideal candidate will:

- Possess strong administrative and organisational skills.
- Demonstrate competence with computer-based work; proficiency with Google Workspace and Infodile database management is an advantage.
- Have experience in website content management.
- Have excellent communication and interpersonal abilities.
- Be able to work independently and as part of a collaborative team.



### From the last Newsletter

- Snap-shot of Our Legendary Ministers—Laurence Ennor
- Rev Sheena Dickson
- Vacancy: St Mark's Church Office Administrator
- Catalysing Christian Communities: Conference in Dunedin
- Hope Rolleston Award
- A Rocha Eco Church Gatherings (Christchurch & Nelson)
- Study Theology at the University of Otago

### Coming Up

Ordination & Induction of Pauline Hampshire: 29 June

Presbytery Retreat: 17—19 July

Catalysing Christian Communities Conference: 21-22 August

Coracle: 12—14 September

Plant Sale, St Stephen's, Timaru: 13 September

General Assembly: 20—23 October

### Presbytery Directory:

All Parish Offices have been given a log-on to Infodile, so please contact them initially if you need any contact details.

Due to our obligations under the Privacy Act, logon access is not openly available; anyone wanting this should send a request to Gail Weaver, Office Support, advising of their position in their Parish or the Presbytery.

### Alpine Presbytery

#### Culture & Strategic Framework

To download this document, updated September 2020, go to: [alpinepresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/culture-and-strategic-framework-september-2020.pdf](http://alpinepresbytery.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/culture-and-strategic-framework-september-2020.pdf)

- Maintain confidentiality and operate with integrity.
- Align with the cultural and strategic framework of Alpine Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand's Code of Ethics.
- Demonstrate an understanding of and comfort with working within a Christian faith-based context.

If you, or someone you know, is looking for a rewarding role where you can contribute to a meaningful purpose, we encourage you to apply.

The possibility of combining the advertised administration role with St Mark's, Avonhead, can be considered if the total hours of the two roles is beneficial and a suitable candidate is identified.

To learn more and apply, please supply your CV to Dan Spragg at [minco@alpinepresbytery.org](mailto:minco@alpinepresbytery.org). Applications close Friday 6 June 2025.

## Moderator's Pentecost Message 2025

Tēnā koutou katoa

### A reading set down for Pentecost

*"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."* [John 14: 25-27]

On Pentecost Sunday we read the Scriptures and reflect on the continuing story of our journey of faith with the Risen Christ and the Holy Spirit. We have the promise from Jesus that the Holy Spirit will teach us, lead us deeper into the truth of God, and remind us of the teachings that Jesus has already given us. We will experience the nudgings and the insights of the Holy Spirit in our living, and know the peace that Jesus offers us – a peace that gives wholeness and freedom from fear. There is much to celebrate!

At the time I was preparing to write this message, I spent three days at a women in ministry gathering at Te Maungarongo Marae – our Church's national marae in Ōhope. During our time together there was a workshop on marae tikanga and it was interesting to learn that every marae has its own mauri (life force, essence), and at Te Maungarongo the mauri is the Holy Spirit.

So many people who come to this marae talk of how special it is, of how they feel close to God in this space, how they feel a home-coming, a welcome, an integration, a deep connection. The Holy Spirit is at work and is known. It is also known there through the people of Te Aka Puahou who give such manaakitanga (hospitality), which builds whanaungatanga (relationship). In step with this we think of the relational nature of the Holy Spirit as guide, teacher, advocate, counsellor, comforter. All things come together to provide a holy space.

It feels like Te Maungarongo is similar to what the Celtic Christians call 'a thin place' where the boundary between the material world and the spiritual or divine is perceived to be particularly thin. Where it is more permeable. A sacred place. What a gift.

In this season of Pentecost, where we reflect more deeply about the work of the Holy Spirit in our individual and corporate life, can we attend to that phrase from the Anglican prayer book which is used after Scripture is read: "Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church". What do we feel the Spirit is saying to us, the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, at this time? Can we be attentive to the nudgings of the Holy Spirit, within and around us?

As we prepare for General Assembly in October, let us adopt a posture of

listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us so that we can be all that God desires for us, individually and as a national Church. Discerning. Integrated. Energised. Engaged. Hopeful.

May the warmth and the promptings of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

**Right Rev Rose Luxford**

Moderator Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

## The Judith McKinlay and Peter Matheson Memorial Lectures



The University of Otago Theology Programme is seeking to establish **The Judith McKinlay and Peter Matheson Memorial Lectures.**

This endowed lecture series would honour two towering figures in Aotearoa New Zealand's intellectual and theological life.



Judith McKinlay, a pioneering biblical scholar, was known for her incisive feminist readings of the Hebrew Bible and her commitment to reading Scripture in dialogue with the land, people, and post-colonial realities of the South Pacific.

Peter Matheson, a distinguished historian and theologian, brought a deep sensitivity to the struggles of the marginalised, weaving together scholarship, activism, and a rich understanding of Reformation history and contemporary justice movements.

Together, their legacies invite fresh, courageous thinking at the intersections of faith, scholarship, and social transformation. The McKinlay Matheson Memorial Lectures continue their spirit, creating a space for prophetic voices to address the urgent theological and ethical challenges of our time.

We are seeking to raise \$56,000 to see The McKinlay Matheson Memorial Lectures endowed and existing in perpetuity. The fund would be managed by the University of Otago Foundation Trust, and the Theology Programme would administer the distributed funds to enable local and international scholars to present lectures that contribute to the fields that Judith McKinlay and Peter Matheson's engaged in, as a way of honouring their legacies and memory.

If you would like to donate to The McKinlay Matheson Memorial Lectures fund, please email Becs Wilson, [becs.wilson@otago.ac.nz](mailto:becs.wilson@otago.ac.nz) or Ph: 021 103 2757.

### Notes from the meetings of Presbytery Council held on Thursday 22 May 2025 via Zoom

Present at the meeting were: Rev Lynmaree Sopoaga (Moderator), Rev Jonathan Barb, Rev Andrew Callander, Keith Christie, Liz Depree, John Jensen, Ann McMillan, Rev Brent Richardson and Rev Martin Stewart (Executive Officer).

Martin introduced the new members, Andrew, Liz and John. Andrew is the minister at St Andrew's Uniting Motueka, Liz is on the team of the Three Peaks Mission and is based in Rakaia, and John is the senior elder at St Andrew's Geraldine.

Lynmaree welcomed them and shared a reflection telling the story of the Presbytery stole with the Braided River and Burning Bush symbols and God's call to Moses from Exodus 4 – the call to lead. 'You lead, I will follow.' Lynmaree led the meeting in prayer.

An apology was received from Lyn Heine.

#### Minutes

Council approved:

- the Minutes of the Presbytery Council meeting held on 24 April 2025
- the Minutes of an Extra Presbytery Council meeting to attend to Financial Reports on 29 April including the following key decisions:
  - a. Accepting the Executive Officer budget for the 2025/2026 year.
  - b. Accepting the North East Christchurch NMS budget for the 2025/2026 year.
  - c. Accepting the Pa Whakāoranga budget for the 2025/2026 year.
  - d. Accepting the Resourcing budget for the 2025/2026 year of \$130,000 in total and approve an amount of \$76,000 be allocated from the Discretionary Fund in order for this to be fully funded.
  - e. Increasing Abi Trevathan's hourly rate by 4.1% from 1 July 2024.
  - f. Extending Abi Trevathan's appointment to 30 September 2025 to enable a review.
  - g. Approving the 2025/2026 draft budget including the levy rate for 2025-26 at 1.2% of assessable income and

referring it to the Presbytery for approval.

- Approving the Minutes of the Presbytery Gathering held at John Knox Church, Rangiora, on 9-10 May 2025.
- Approving the email decision on 21 May, 2025 re Rangi Ruru School constitutional changes.

### **Risk Management**

As usual, a discussion was held in private on matters of risk.

### **Moderator's Report**

Lynmaree shared reflections on the May Gathering and expressed thanks to the team who helped make it happen. She has followed up with emails to the attendees.

Her written report also included a pēpēhā. She wondered 'how does she as a humble moderator connect with ALL the Teams under our watch? How do we hear their unique story?' She has an idea of including church stories in the Presbytery Newsletter.

Jonathan commented on how pleased Andrew & Kara Root were to have Lynmaree recite the James K Baxter poem 'Song to the Holy Spirit' which Lynmaree had committed to memory.

### **The Executive Officer Report**

Martin reported on several aspects of his work including contributions from Abi (Kairuruku Whanake), and Dan (Kaihautū Whakatipu)

- Abi's decision to withdraw from the Local Ordained Ministry track for now
- positive feedback from the Gathering – especially from observers and new people.
- Akaroa service and minister at the Anzac Parade
- full staff lunch
- Conducting worship at Methven
- meeting with Bishop Peter Carrell and Methodist Superintendent Dale Peach
- the Gathering & other connections with Andrew & Kara Root

From Abi

- reflections on the May Gathering programme
- the Sexuality Kōrero was well attended, the spirit of togetherness was appreciated.
- meeting online with the mission catalysts around the country
- time with Andrew and Kara Root
- attending the Forge Hui in Auckland - 38 people. Andrew and Kara were the speakers.
- Three Peaks - leading Cafe church in Methven and a contemplative/discussion space in Rakaia.

From Dan

- thinking about the process to be worked on for Hanmer Springs after the Gathering decisions. This will go onto the June agenda to be discussed in person.

### Key decisions:

- Approving a Proposal re Quorum calculations for Presbytery Gatherings being transmitted to General Assembly.
- Approving a request from Rangi Ruru School Board to have a change of an honorary member.

### **Property & Finance**

Ann McMillan reported on several matters including the sale of the Staveley Church.

### Key decisions:

- Approval of the reviews of the timetable for the EO and Prestons NMS roles
- Approval of final steps from the closure of St Andrew's at Rangi Ruru Presbyterian Parish in 2019.
- Approval of renewing the MOU with St Margaret's parish to manage the bookings process for the rental of the Hanmer house
- Approval of the distribution of funds from the closure of the Albury Pleasant Point Parish including a deduction to the national Mission Enterprise Fund.
- Approve of the Fit for Purpose Report to GA25.

### **Human Resources**

Lyn Heine shared key aspects of her report, and Rev Jonathan Barb's study leave proposal was approved.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 26 June in Christchurch.