

# **“Five years on.... Timaru Presbyterian Parish”**



A brief chronology and commentary  
on the first five years of the Timaru Presbyterian Parish,  
(inaugurated November 29 2009).

Study Leave Report  
Rev Dr Susan M Jones  
March 2015



## **Acknowledgements**

**I would like to thank groups, individuals and institutions who helped make this venture, my ministry in it, and this report, possible:**

The former Chalmers parish who voted for me so that this experience happened.

Members of the other three former parishes, who accepted me as their minister though they had not had the opportunity to vote on the matter.

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Those who worked on various visioning and workgroups, responding to the situation in which the Timaru churches found themselves, in the best way they knew how, with prayer and discernment.

All prophetic and innovative 'early adopters' who are still 'hanging in' through the amalgamation process this far with their creativity and imagination

Those who grasped opportunities presented in the new parish for alternative worship and outreach and ran with them, creating spaces for fresh spiritual growth.

Those who, with grace and courage, have given up much they loved and prized for the good of the whole Timaru Presbyterian parish.

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Thank you all.

Susan Jones

## **Table of Contents**

	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Prologue</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>2009 – Inauguration</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Commentary – Fisher’s Personal Transition Curve</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>2010 – Earthquake alters Worship plans.</b>	<b>27</b>
	<b>Commentary- Processing Grief</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>2011 – ‘Locating the Future’; fourth Minister joins the Team</b>	<b>39</b>
	<b>Commentary – Roxburgh’s 3 zone missional leadership</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>2012 – Mission Action Plan approved; organisation tested.</b>	<b>45</b>
	<b>Commentary - Kotter’s Change Model</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>2013 – Building Sales &amp; Building Concept development</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>Commentary – Roger’s Adoption Curve</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>2014 – Farewell to buildings; ministers leave; new building</b>	<b>67</b>
	<b>Commentary - Dudley’s Dynamics of Church Size</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>2015 - Postscript</b>	<b>83</b>
	<b>Commentary - CGO Transitions’ Model</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Epilogue</b>	<b>87</b>
	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>90</b>
	1. Mission Action Plan 2012	91
	2. Decommissioning Sermon – St Paul’s Jan 2014	115
	3. Decommissioning Sermon – Chalmers May 2014	121
	4. God and the Miry pit – a paper September 2014	123
	5. Narrative on the roll numbers in Timaru Presbyterian Parish	135



## Prologue

This prologue is for readers who do not know the Timaru scene and need some background. It is a functional rather than poetic or missional description of the parish and so other readers may well wish to skip the prologue and begin with the introduction.

## History of Timaru Presbyterianism

Presbyterianism has been active in Timaru since 1864. This sequence of Presbyterian churches in Timaru was originally prepared for a 2014 eldership training programme within TPP. It is offered here as background for readers of this report.

### Timaru Presbyterian Timeline

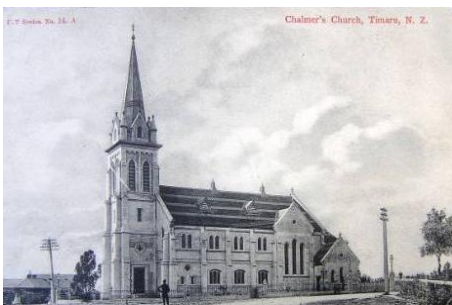
**1864. Presbyterian services were first held at the Mechanics Institute.** A minister, the Rev George Barclay, arrived in 1865.

#### 1866 Barnard St- Trinity Presbyterian Parish



Three churches were to stand on this site, a wooden one, then a bluestone one, then this imposing edifice opened in 1876.

#### 1903 Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Elizabeth Street (later Elizabeth Place).



The Chalmers congregation broke away from Trinity Church over calling a minister with broad views on temperance issues. Chalmers is on the corner of Sophia St and Elizabeth Place. The complex was damaged in the September 2010 Christchurch earthquake and after its sale, was decommissioned in May 2014. Earthquake strengthening will be required. Chalmers has been sold to an engineer who plans to have his offices in the buildings behind the church. The church itself is presently leased by the Coptic church (20 members). A lunch group loosely associated with Chalmers still meets monthly.

#### 1926 St Pauls Presbyterian Church, Highfield



was planted by the Chalmers congregation. This parish ended up with considerable land with several buildings on it at the time it was sold in 2013 – an office block, a bowling pavilion, a croquet lawn, tennis court (in disrepair) and a church hall with meeting rooms as well as the church. The complex has been bought by a developer who is planning to put 13 houses on site. St Paul's was damaged in the September 2010 Christchurch earthquake, decommissioned in January 2014 and the church and office block demolished later in the year. A St Paul's lunch group continues.

### 1951 St David's Union Church in Marchwiell



"St David's is a Methodist and Presbyterian union parish. The church was established in 1951 as a union parish for Presbyterian and Methodists at 48 Andrew Street, Timaru. It was a result of a suburban boom in Marchwiell. In those days the houses were full of children and every family went to church. Today (2010) it is a childcare centre with paintings on the walls and fences around. St David's Union Church in Marchwiell was sold and in July 2007 the church building was decommissioned. "We still had four members who had worshipped at St David's for all 55 years of its life. They remember raising money to build it. You choose a church not because of the

building but because of the love and support of the congregation. When the church moves, the love in the hearts of the people moves with it. A plaque that expresses people's memories of St David's hangs in the childcare centre."<sup>1</sup> St David's as a parish was invited to join in the TPP amalgamation but declined to join.

### 1953 Trinity parish moved to College Rd and worshipped initially in this Hall.



### 1965 Trinity Presbyterian Church, College Rd



First the congregational moved to and worshipped in the Hall, then built the church. Fundraising to complete both buildings is still fresh in living memory.

This is the site of the TPP traditional worship service which is presently held at 9.30am each Sunday morning. Also the Trinity chapel in the church building is the scene of a monthly afternoon communion service (max 27 people) and monthly evening services of Celtic and Taize worship.

Former Trinity based study groups continue. A Spring Flower Show also still occurs annually.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlscant/churches-past.htm>

## 1968 St Stephen's



was planted by St Paul's congregation. Anecdotes tell that deciding who would attend St Paul's and who would attend St Stephen's was done rather arbitrarily and caused hurt which is still remembered. This complex is now heavily rented by the community during the week. It is the site for contemporary worship beginning 10am for coffee in the foyer with the service starting 10.30am Sunday morning. A longstanding Market Day (March) and Plant Sale (Sept) continue. Former St Stephen's study groups continue with

other TPP members having joined.

## 1965 Washdyke

The original St Stephen's parish in latter times had included a church at Washdyke. Presbyterians had met 'for years' in the Washdyke Hall, but a church was built whose foundation stone is dated 1965. This building was sold about 2012. Washdyke people are still an identifiable group within the congregation of TPP. Each spring they continue (with other TPP members) to pick daffodils for sale for fund raising. They also meet for lunch periodically.



## 1970 Trinity West



Trinity parish also included a small congregation called Trinity West in Church St, Trinity West had been formed through the amalgamation of the Congregational Church and Trinity Presbyterian Parish on 1st Feb. 1970. The Trinity West building was sold in 2011 and now belongs to the Church St Bible Chapel. (see Chapter Five)

## 2009 Timaru Presbyterian Parish



At the end of November 2009 Timaru Presbyterian Parish formed, inheriting Revs Mary Jane and Chris Konings who had been recently appointed at Trinity & St Stephen's to a combined 1.5 position. Soon after, TPP also inherited a minister due to a call extended by Chalmers congregation after they had voted to join the new parish. In Feb 2010 TPP inducted Rev Susan Jones. Rev Rory Grant arrived at the end of 2010 and is the only minister of the team who was voted for by the entire new parish. This was not the method of team formation planned in the vision document.

## Governance and Organisation of Timaru Presbyterian Parish

In the former four parishes – St Paul's, Chalmers, Trinity and St Stephen's – mostly all elders attended Session (the ruling body) monthly. There was usually another body either a deacon's court (members of which needed to be church members) or a Board of Managers (members of which did not need to all be church members). These two bodies ran the 'temporal' side of church – looking after money and property affairs. The Session however was the final sign off group and could disagree with the deacons or managers.

Session is the governance and spiritual oversight group and only elders could be on Session. Usually all elders in a parish attended a monthly Session meeting.

When TPP was formed, the governance model decided on was a Parish Council which combined the roles of Session and Managers/Deacon's. The decision was made, however, that all Parish council members needed to be elders. This has been challenged by one elder in particular. At the 2012 General Assembly it was approved that a certain percentage of Council can be non-elders, but TPP has not yet adopted this. This would require Parish Council to bring the concept to the congregation and would need congregational approval.

When the parishes combined to form TPP it was envisaged that there would be 12 Parish Councillors and a Parish Clerk. The 12 Councillors were representational, 3 from each of the four former parishes. This Council would be surrounded by 6 ministry groups which the other elders would join.<sup>2</sup> This left about 50 elders with no official role on Council like the one they had been used to as members of Session.

In fact, take up into the ministry groups was poorer than expected. While some elders signed up initially onto ministry group lists, they were disproportionately distributed – many signing up for worship and pastoral and admin, but very few for 'newer' group concepts such as outreach, discipleship and service. This disconnect was exacerbated by, for instance, the worship ministry group deciding to have only one or two representatives from each of the former four parishes. Thus an area in which many people have a lot of interest was restricted to a few. Quite a few elders at this point took the opportunity to 'retire' from active service, though they still participated in rosters for door duty etc.

None of the ministry groups have official job descriptions or frames of reference, though recently some discussions have been held between the ministry group coordinators about how they see the purpose structure and people in their groups.

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<sup>2</sup> Since then, the degree of trust has increased, so Parish Council now consists of 9 Councillors and there is no overt effort made to have equal representation from the former four parishes. This change was voted in by the congregation and the Memorandum of Understanding altered accordingly. Also, TPP began with four sub company accounts being run to reflect the four congregational areas, but once the worship services were amalgamated into a traditional service and a contemporary service this became a nonsense and it was easily passed by the congregation that all the money would be pooled and run as one set of accounts.

There have been some changes in the ministry groups from the original six which were set up at the beginning, though at February 2015 there are still six groups. Of the original groups, Discipleship and Outreach were combined into **DO-ing**. **Family Mission Team** was created to cover youth and children's work. The present six ministry groups are:

Ministry Group	Approximate description of Tasks	Approximate number of elders in the group
Administration	Deals reasonably well with the traditional areas of money and property but the area of HR is new.	4 out of 6?
Pastoral	Has managed under the guidance of one of the younger ministers to graduate to a data base system for the roll, has reorganised visiting and newsletter delivery but some confusion reigns here. More than only elders are parish visitors with a small group of people to visit, but more visitors are needed. Most of the group member are skilled pastoral visitors and value that style of care.	7 out of 9
DO-ing	Organises 'outreach' events such as the Christmas Parade float, women's dinner, training in evangelism methods, running Alpha, providing and promoting bible study material, encouraging study group leaders.	2 elders. This group has recently lost its coordinator and another key elder who disagrees with the concept of building a new church and so has withdrawn from active eldership
Worship	Began by rationalising four church services into two: traditional and contemporary. Tends now to concentrate on creating and maintaining rosters for these services. Another group spontaneously created itself called the Wai iti Rd Worship Leadership Group led by one of the ministers' wives. Coordinator of the official worship ministry group is employed one day a week as pastoral assistant until the end of March 2015.	4 out of 4.  Wai-iti Rd worship leadership group has 4 elders out of 7
Service	Presently in recess. Group keen to do charity model type service projects but not to do advocacy/lobbying work. Coordinator resigned. No replacement has come forward, though there's interest in continuing the charity model. A small mission group begun by the same ministers' wife above has successfully completed a gifts-for-women's-refuge project at the time of writing.	0
Family Mission Team	Formed to support employment of a youth intern and later youth leader. Has hoped for a family worker but upheaval in employment of youth worker and the budget precluded this. Has had difficulties with employment issues, not all due to TPP leadership but exacerbated by poor structural organisation.	4 out of 6.



## **Parish Council**

At present, Parish Council changes by three members each year. Councillors serve for three years and then are rostered off. After at least one year's break they can be re-nominated. People who are not ordained as elders can be elected by the congregation to Council if they are prepared to become an elder. One elder was ordained on TPP's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday on 30 November 2014 after being elected in the AGM (July/August). It has been a struggle to get enough Parish Council nominations for the past two years.

The author believes this system has weakened the Council. Institutional memory has decreased as councillors do not return after only one year's break. The first returning Councillor took two years between terms and her knowledge of the system gained in her first term is very valuable.

A habit began at the beginning where the ministry groups sent Council their minutes, not reports. So, anything requests for policy decisions or changes are not argued well and sufficient information sometimes does not accompany recommendations. This wastes time in meetings while Councillors ask questions or make inaccurate assumptions about requests. It is probably unclear to ministry groups that Council expects them to help create policy. As mentioned above, these groups do not have job descriptions.

Consequently a lot of the PC meetings are dealing with urgent matters and minutiae when more time needs to be spent on broad based visioning and strategising. An organisational seminar held February 2015 should help with this. (See Chapter Nine Commentary)

## **Distribution of elders**

The total number of 'active' elders is 60. 21 are in ministry groups. 4 are in the new 'Wai iti Rd Worship Leadership Group', this gives a total of 25 involved. 10 are on Parish Council but 4 of these are also on ministry groups, this gives 6 more. This means that of 60 active elders, 31 are involved in groups which generate action/events/ideas.

The remaining group includes individuals who often state they feel they do not know what is going on, that the system is not transparent, or that they do not know other elders well enough. Also, it appears some in the ministry groups still miss being at Parish Council/Session where the decisions are generated.

An elders' gathering has been being held 2-3 times a year, maybe once a term. They have tended to be information sharing meetings connected with visioning, planning and building decisions which have not always given time for elders to say what they are thinking. The balance has shifted more recently to more open discussion and sharing of feelings and ideas. These meetings have been led by the ministry team.

Prior to Christmas 2014 an elder suggested a monthly gathering of "Elders and Others" with themes that could gather people and improve relationships, letting people into the heart of what is being thought and planned. This would be in the evening with supper included and time to simply socialise.

Active elders vary in age from 47 to 88 (approx) years of age. The Church Life Survey told TPP that in its worshipping congregation 75% of their attenders were over 65 years of age. This would be a higher percentage among the elders.

## **Presbytery.**

When TPP began South Canterbury Presbytery extended from the Waitaki to the Rangitata and into the main divide and therefore included Waimate, Pleasant Point, Geraldine, Temuka, Timaru, Fairlie, Tekapo and Twizel.<sup>3</sup> There was a high proportion of cooperating parishes which are a combination of Anglican and Presbyterian parishes. Their oversight would change on a regular basis (about 5 years time frame) between each denomination. Thus the Presbytery was also small and weak.

After TPP was formed (Nov 2009) a majority of the office holders in presbytery were members of TPP. This proved difficult when problems with the Ministry team might have been referred to Presbytery's Ministry committee, but it was convened by one of the TPP Ministry Team members.

Since July 2014, South Canterbury, Nelson-Marlborough, the West Coast, Mid-Canterbury and Christchurch presbyteries have joined to form the Alpine Presbytery which extends from the Waitaki River to Cook Strait. This is already proving beneficial. A parish review run by the larger Presbytery happened in February 2015.

## **Ministers and other staffing**

The original Ministry Team Leader (a job never defined) left the parish at the end of February 2015. The ministers leading the parish from March 2015 will be Rev Chris Konings (in his 6<sup>th</sup> year at TPP with a previous year of ministry at a previous parish with a senior minister. He has a background in paid youth work.) Chris' wife Mary Jane was a part time minister in TPP from the beginning but resigned May 2014. They live in the manse behind the St Stephen's church complex in Wai iti Rd. Rev Rory Grant arrived as a new graduate in Nov 2010 and has been in TPP for just over 3 years. He has his own house a block from the St Stephen's complex in Wai iti Rd. At the time of writing, a laywoman who is a retired teacher is paid to do pastoral work one day a week.

A Youth Worker was employed 2010/2011. She began maternity leave July 2012. During that leave her position was covered by a part-time worker. This appointment came to an end in 2013 with the end of maternity leave. The original youth worker could not return full time. Since August 2013, no youth worker has been employed.

## **Office**

The parish has two part-time secretaries, who together maintain an office 9am – 3pm, Tuesday to Friday. The Church office is at 349 Wai iti Rd in the St Stephen's church complex. The office has two rooms, one houses two secretaries and occasional visitors who come to work on book keeping tasks.

The second, smaller room is shared by three ministers and the photocopier. The ministers take turns at being present at the office in the mornings. The ministry team's staff meeting is weekly, on Tuesday mornings. It begins at 9.30am with prayer, includes a coffee break and social half hour and finishes between 12noon and 1pm. The pastoral lay visitor attends the prayer meeting and liaises through coffee about her workload, then leaves.

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<sup>3</sup> Len Home has recently completed a history of the Presbytery, *Presbyterianism in South Canterbury*.

## **Other groupings**

Several bible study groups operate in the parish. They generally reflect long term associations connected with the former parishes. TPP has run short term study groups on particular topics, but these have in the main not continued once the study book was finished. On paper they are under the oversight of the Doing group but this has taken an organisational form only.

There are more than one APW groups (Association of Presbyterian Women) which are focused on mission fundraising and information. They reflect the original parishes in their composition but members cross over the boundaries as well.

Several monthly dinner groups meet also which were/are associated with the former parishes. People meet at various restaurants – groups connected with Chalmers, St Paul's and Washdyke come under this category. These have always been informal and do not report to any 'official' parish body.

Statistics for the parish can be found listed with other Presbyterian parishes on the national church website [www.pcanz.org.nz](http://www.pcanz.org.nz).



## Chapter Two: Introduction

This report has been completed using study leave owing from my time at TPP at the point of my departure for another parish. The topic was chosen therefore as one which might be useful to both the parish and myself as a reflection on the first five years of TPP's life.

The 2009-2014 historical timeline used throughout the report has been drawn from a collation of Link reports and articles which were gathered, at my request, by Derek Hughes, the Link editor, for TPP's fifth birthday celebrations. It therefore 'hits the highlights' and does not have the minutiae of detail which might be derived from Council's agendas, reports and minutes. The story prior to these five years can be found in Helen Martin's study report *The Timaru Story: How four Presbyterian parishes became one*, 29 November 2009 and in *Timaru Presbyterian Church: A Vision Proposal*, 30 November 2007.

Most of the tools used in this report to analyse the progress thus far are tools I used during my time with the parish to place what was happening within wider frameworks. It will be seen that in many different ways, the TPP experience did not conform to the ideal patterns which these models suggest. This is largely because TPP is full of human beings!

Comparison with analytical tools however, does not leave the space or give the opportunity for naming the extreme dedication and hard work put into TPP by a wide variety of people. This report has given me the space to compare in my mind the cautious suspicion with which ministers and people regarded each other five years ago with how people interact now. Amazing changes within people have taken place.

Transformation of attitudes and consequently of action has been noticeable. Buildings once regarded as the preserve of a particular group are now cared for by the whole. People are invited into groups which once catered only for former members of one parish. People are enjoying meeting others and the variety of groups which are possible with different mixes of types, personalities and theological orientations. A visitor commented last year that TPP was 'being formed in the desert'. Just like the people of Israel on their way from Egypt to Canaan, TPP faces challenges. While within the chaos of Roxburgh's 'red zone'<sup>4</sup> people have become tired, confused and sometimes processes have been lacking, it is clear God is at work among this group of Presbyterians in Timaru. I pay tribute to those who are keeping optimistic, thinking carefully, working hard and continuing to pray for the eventual 'success' of the parish and its mission.

What has been most disappointing are those in the wider church watching from outside the system and deciding whether or not they think 'Timaru' is going well, or 'having problems'. In such a large amalgamation, affected also by earthquake, it would be surprising if there were *no* emotional reactions. People have always exercised their right to leave a church if they find it a poor fit for them. Instead, the wider church needs to put its energies into supporting and resourcing such a large venture rather than critiquing it from the outside. There are promising signs that the new Alpine Presbytery will be proactive.

In Appendix Four, I note that to evaluate this amalgamation now would be akin to taking a half baked cake out of the oven and wondering why it was unappetising. The job is only partly 'done'. I wish the ministers and people of TPP well as they continue with the process. "*For I know the plans I have for you,*" declares the LORD, "*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*" Jer 29:11.

Susan Jones March 12 2015

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter Five Commentary



## Chapter Three: 2009 Inauguration – timeline and events

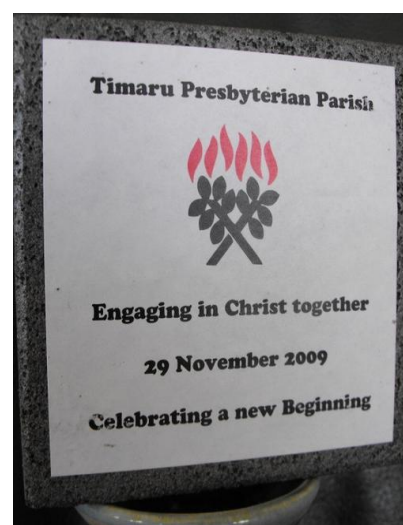
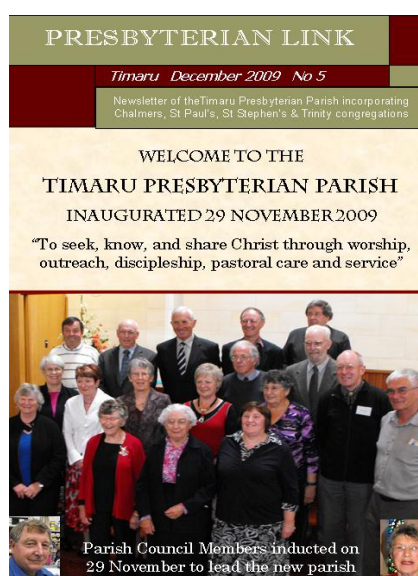
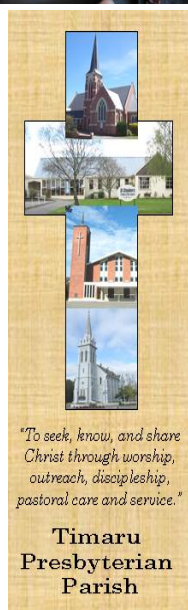
### November 2009

After a lengthy period of visioning, discussion and decision making, (as far back as 1998) the new Timaru Presbyterian Parish was inaugurated on Advent Sunday, November 29 2009. Events prior to this are documented in a study leave report compiled by the Rev Helen Martin.<sup>5</sup> Present parish members report they enjoyed the combined study groups which focused on *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren which were part of this preparation and bringing-together process. This brief history is a compilation of events using the monthly parish newsletter 'Presbyterian Link'. Greater detail can be gained from Parish minutes and Council reports.

### Inauguration service 29 November 2009, Advent Sunday



The combined congregation at the inauguration service in Trinity Church, College Rd



A bookmark and commemorative bluestone block were created by Rev Chris Konings.

<sup>5</sup> *The Timaru Story*

**The monthly newsletter, the Link, carried photographs of the event.**



Communion elders and the ministers, Revs Chris and Mary Jane Konings, Bryan Gilmour and Evan Stenlake gather in the Trinity Chapel prior to the service.



The ministers of the parish with Rev Ian Hyslop, Presbytery Moderator.

Australian minister Rev Bryan Gilmour with his wife Dorelle, had been serving at St Paul's in a transitional capacity as was fellow Australian Rev Evan Stenlake with his wife Alicia at Chalmers parish. Revs Chris and Mary Jane Konings had been called to a combined 1.5 position with Trinity and St Stephens, February 1 2009.

## **The First Parish Council is inaugurated 29 November 2009**



Back: Hermann Frank, (s, T) Ken Falconer, (Clerk, C) Noel Crawford, (s, C) Eoin Powell, (s, P) David Lockhart, (s, S)

Middle: Ann Munro (S), Margaret Littler, (T) Margaret Hughes, (s, C) Helen Carter, (C) Ken Linscott, (P) Elizabeth Lockhart, (S) Derek Hemming, (T) Ron Paulin, (s, P) Jim Pearce, (S)

Front: Cherie Reynolds, (P) Gwenyth Jones, (S) Mollie Thomson, (s, T) Judith Begg (T)

Absent: Averil Demetriades, (s, C) Max Muldrew (P). (C= Chalmers, P = St Pauls, S = St Stephen's, T= Trinity)



**Signing the Formula**



## Members of the original Vision Group present at the Inauguration Service



Back row: Derek Hemming, (T) David Draffin,(C) Eoin Powell,(P) David Lockhart (S)

Middle row:

Jim Garden, (C) Indi Jeeveratanam, (T) Judith Begg, (T) Elizabeth Lockhart, (S) Wendy Sutton, (S)

Front row: Doug Wallace, (P) Kay Beatson, ,(P) Anne Knipe, (C) Jim Pearce(S)



Rev Helen Martin had been a key Presbytery influence in her position as interim moderator of Chalmers parish. She sent this message to the inauguration service: “Dear Timaru Presbyterians, I am with you in spirit as you celebrate with fear and trembling, excitement and hope the end of an era and the beginning of another. ”

Rev Dr Susan Jones had been voted in as the new minister for Chalmers on the same Sunday the parish voted for whether they would join the new parish. The vote for Susan was 98%. The vote for the parish was 67%. Not yet inducted, she sent the following message to the new parish. “Hello Timaru Presbyterian Parish! How appropriate to begin a new parish on Advent Sunday so you start worshipping and serving Christ together at the beginning of the new church year. I am amazed at all those who worked so hard to make this new parish happen. What vision and dedication, what obedience to the call of God.”



## FAREWELL BRYAN & DORELLE

After eighteen very busy and demanding months Bryan and Dorelle Gilmour were farewelled by St Paul's prior to Bryan leading his final service at St Paul's on Christmas Day. Their warmth and energy in leading the transition to the new Timaru Presbyterian Parish will long be remembered and admired. Without Bryan's devotion to the task, the birth of our new parish would have been more drawn out.



The talented Frank Family provided the music for Bryan's final service

At their home in Queensland they will be enjoying catching up with family and friends and hopefully more settled weather than Timaru has experienced so far this summer.

Thank you Bryan and Dorelle for being a significant part of the journey to the new Timaru Presbyterian Parish.

## Ministerial movements

The Gilmours left soon after the inauguration and the Stenlakes after a brief break in Australia returned to a period of ministry at St Paul's in 2010.



Rev John Daniel was a keynote speaker at 'Mission Fest' held around the time of the amalgamation.

**PRESBYTERIAN LINK**

*Timaru March 2010 No 7*

Newsletter of the Timaru Presbyterian Parish incorporating Chalmers, St Paul's, St Stephen's & Trinity congregations



**Welcome Susan & Roger**

**Rev Dr Susan Jones** was inducted to the Timaru Parish on 10 February in Chalmers Church. This much anticipated event took place before a large congregation which included many friends and supporters of Susan who had travelled from as far away as Dunedin, Mosgiel and Gore.

We thank God for her willingness to become part of the Parish Leadership Team and trust her ministry in Timaru will be a blessing to the Parish and a fulfilling time for herself and husband Roger.

**Rev Dr Susan Jones**

In February 2010, Susan Jones was inducted as the third minister of the Timaru Presbyterian Parish.

March 2010

### **Mt Nimrod Men's Breakfast 6 March**

13 people varying in ages from 10 to 76 met for breakfast with a chorus of bellbirds on this early autumn morning - hot tea and coffee with sausages and bread fed the body while the soul was refreshed with fellowship and a talk about mission in Ecuador from Lindsay. Nine then completed the 3 hour bush walk up to the waterfall and onto the rocky top where the sun was starting to shine. Overall a great morning enjoyed by all attending!



### **A Chalmers tradition continued at Easter with the sunrise service on Caroline Bay beach**



At this stage the author remembers caution at continuing former 'one parish' events - whether to continue, how to advertise, were you welcome at a 'another' parish's event? Everyone was trying out the fit of being combined.



## OUR NEW LOGO



The Timaru Presbyterian Parish (TPP) logo was decided after workshopping the results of the logo competition advertised earlier in the year. The blue vertical of the cross represents the initial stake in the ground planted by Presbyterians as they claimed this city for Christ. The green horizontal arrow indicates we are now moving in a new direction – green for "Go!" and for growth. The person has hands raised in praise to God, facing outwards to the

world from the cross. The cross also provides the 'T' for Timaru and the shape of the entire logo suggests TPP, Timaru Presbyterian Parish. We aim to take the good news of Christ into the wider community of Timaru and this logo expresses that.

Mid 2010 - a new logo had been developed. .Chris Konings led the process for this, marrying the 'person' part of the logo with the cross shape contributed by Susan Jones

### TPP logo as explained in the June/July Link



By Pentecost 2010, four worship services were still continuing in the four churches on a Sunday. Chalmers maintained its relationship with St Mary's Anglican on Pentecost with a combined service which began this year at Chalmers and transferred to St Mary's half way through. The churches had taken turns at where the service began each year.

## E100

E 100 was a big focus in mid 2010, with several new groups forming to study these 100 readings prepared by the Bible Society which took people through the entire Bible. Some study groups were groupings of people familiar with each other from the four former parishes, others were combinations of people from more than one former parish. Last the experience was repeated using the J100 material





The Link editor, Derek Hughes, developed a new look banner for the monthly newsletter which picked up with the colours of the new logo.



The parish was employing an youth intern during 2010. Subsequent to Lachlan's departure after a year, interns have been hard to find in Timaru. From left: Lachlan, Mary-Jane, Evan, Chris and Susan

## Ministry groups

The ministry groups planned to cluster round the Parish Council began their work in 2010. It was thought the elders from each of the four former parishes would form the membership of these groups which would feed policy and ideas for direction in to Council. The take-up by elders was much lower than expected. Several took the opportunity to 'retire' from active service. Most interest was shown in Pastoral, Worship and Admin ministry groups. Discipleship and Outreach were poorly subscribed to, while Service began with a small but dedicated group.



### Administration Ministry Group in the Chapel at the St Paul's complex

Back: Max Muldrew, (P) Eoin Powell (Treasurer, P), David Draffin,(C), Jim Garden, ,(C), Ngaire Pearce,(S), Chris Joyce,(T), Derek Hughes,(C),

Front: Jim Pearce, (S), Susan Jones, Bev Quigley,(S) Mollie Thomson,(T), Judith Begg, (T).



### **Service Ministry group in the Church Office of the St Paul's complex**

Back: Evan Stenlake, Michael Wilkinson, (C), Alison Linscott, (P), Elaine Goodfellow,(T), Ron Paulin,(P).

Front: Felicity, (P), Anne Knipe,(C), Elaine Falconer,(C), Estelle Cormack,(S), Joy Elliott,(P).



### **Outreach Ministry Group**

Back: Kay Beatson, (P), Derek Hemming,(T), Neil McKinnon,(P), Warwick Brown,(P), Atholea Shanks,(P), Margaret Hughes(C).

Front: Ken Linscott, (P), Leo Neale,(C), Chris Konings, Tania Wade, (S).

**And a vision statement was approved**

### **Timaru Presbyterian Parish's Vision Statement**

*As an outward looking church;  
we will engage with the people of Timaru  
with passion, enthusiasm and energy,  
showing and telling God's love  
listening to and caring for community needs  
so people find meaning through knowing God  
and move forward in faith.*

(Approved at the August Parish Council for bringing to the AGM)





### Youth Worker

Shannon Hansen is appointed (behind is Juliet Crawford, member of the new Family Mission Team ministry group which was added as a sixth group when Discipleship and Outreach were combined into Do-ing)

### Shannon Hansen TPP Youth Worker introduces herself.

I was born in Timaru and lived in the area until I was 19.

At that point I moved to Auckland to attend Excel, a Christian performing arts school which then led me to do a 3 year youth work diploma at Bible College NZ. During my study time I also worked as a youth pastor in West Auckland, which was a dream come true. I have a deep passion for New Zealand's youth and want to see them do and be all that God intended for them. Following that line of thought I did what was in my heart and spent a few years living in London and travelling the world.

After ten years away from home I am once more living in Timaru and have re-fallen in love with our beautiful young people. I am truly delighted to be working for TPP as your full time youth worker. Feel free to contact me at the St Paul's office with any queries, or even better for Youth Group information.



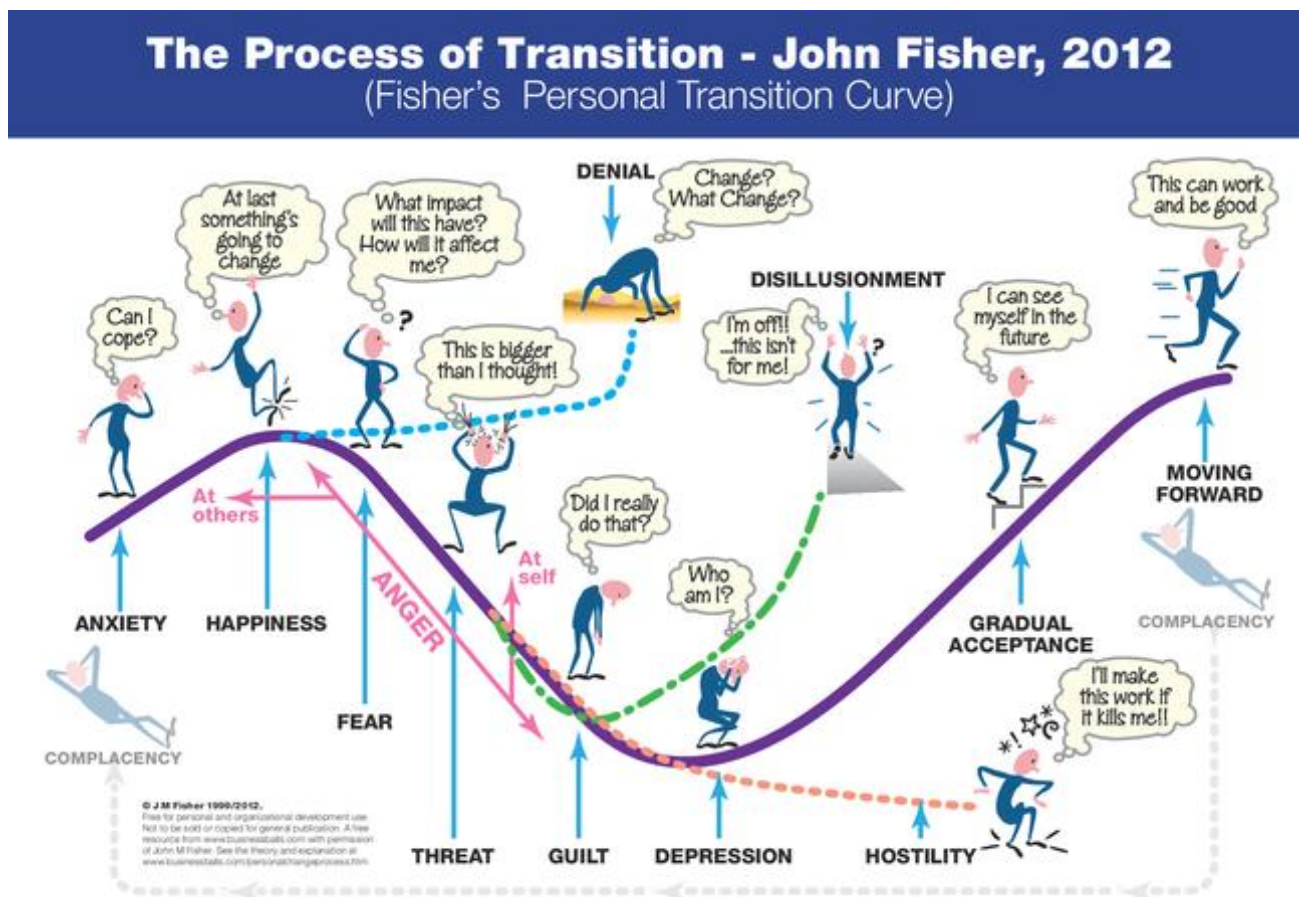
### The first AGM is held





## Chapter Three – Inauguration - Commentary on Personal Transition

### Fisher's Personal Transition Curve



#### Anxiety:

For many people in the original four parishes, anxiety over the future and the ability of their parish to remain viable had been endemic for some years. Worship attendance had declined on average 47% over all the four parishes between 1999 and 2009. It had become obvious younger generations were not there to pick up the workload.

#### Happiness:

So for some amalgamation was a positive answer. Pooling financial resources would, they thought, resolve financial anxiety. They agreed with the presbytery argument that having more people would assist mission to happen. The catch phrase 'from maintenance to mission' which had been about the national church for some time, formed the basis of real hope for the future. This happiness is reflected in the smiles for the camera on inauguration day.

#### Fear and Threat:

These more negative feelings would appear more slowly. Some who were reluctant about amalgamation or who had voted against it went into the new parish with these feelings uppermost. This included a third of the Chalmers congregation who had voted conclusively (98%) for a new minister who had pleaded with them (**not** to vote for her if they did not want change), but had only voted 66% for the new parish. Occasionally the way decisions were now made, and their relative distance from the centre of decision making made itself felt and led to people thinking "this is bigger than I thought."

### **Denial:**

Some, even though they initially participated when the four parishes still formed four fairly distant corners of the new parish, were in denial about the changes and talked as if they were still in a separate parish for some months/ years. The tension between a corner of the parish and the whole parish ethos showed in the property groups which were uncertain of their new role and jurisdiction. It took a while to work out what matters could be dealt with immediately and which needed approval from the 'central' Administration Ministry Group and/or Parish Council.

### **Disillusionment and Departure:**

For some departure happened quite quickly (they never arrived in the new parish) but for others this was delayed until the point where earthquake damage required the removal of all traditional worshippers to the Trinity church in TPP's College Rd complex, beginning Advent 2012. At this point of having no choice but to worship in a different church some people removed themselves. In a roll count prior to Christmas 2014, however, only 23 people on the current roll were identified as people who had deliberately left the everyday life of the parish post amalgamation. Others who were anecdotally named as having left because of amalgamation actually were people whose attendance had been spasmodic to non-existent for some time before November 2009. More departed after the turning down of the new building concept in February 2015. (two couples). They tended to be early adoptors or early Majority adoptors who had already expressed impatience at what they perceived to be lack of progress. (see Chapter Seven).

### **Depression:**

More overt and common signs of depression were noticeable after the non-reaffirmation of the new building complex at Wai iti Rd in February 2015. People who had been moving forward, finding their place in the new parish and were keen on its development and growth found this apparent reversal disappointing and disillusioning.

### **Gradual Acceptance and Moving Forward:**

A lot of anger was expressed at the point traditional worshippers began worshipping together at College Rd (Advent 2012). This focused on the formation of the rosters with overtly expressed disagreement about the different systems being employed. People were confused by the use of the same name for a duty which was described differently from what it had been in their former parish. They objected to being included in a roster of a church service which they were not sure they wanted to attend. One comment: "I see we are doing things the Chalmers way." When asked what they would have liked, the reply was "well, at St Paul's we did...."

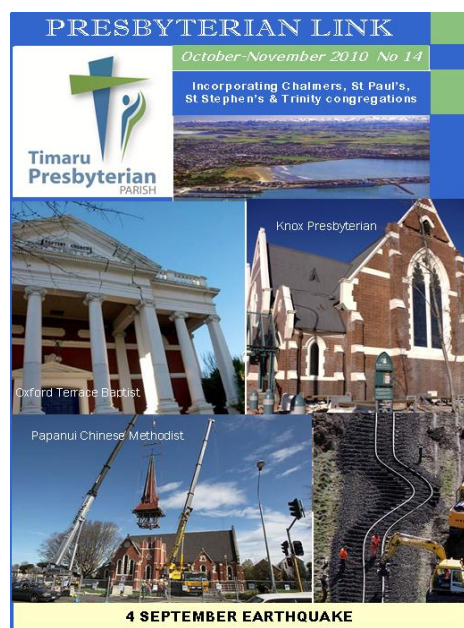
However, by the time the new building concept was being described and offered for the Wai-iti Rd site, it was obvious many had 'settled in' at College Rd and were appreciating both the style of worship there, the church building itself and getting to know 'new friends' in small groups and in the congregation on Sunday morning.

### **Conclusion**

It was very clear that people's personal transitions moved at different paces. For some developments were too fast, for others the same development moved far too slowly. When it was stated in the first year that the amalgamation might take 10 years to fully complete, one person replied "Well, in that case, I'm out of here!" They left after five years.

Once a person found a place within the new organisation and was able to integrate with others, begin something new, or continue in a pre-existing role or group, they were on the upwards incline shown to the right of Fisher's diagram. The most common way this was expressed was when people talked of getting to know other people through an event or a new arrangement of people. Perhaps the most appreciated aspect of the transition was discovering other Presbyterian Christians in Timaru and knowing that they were not alone in the post-Christendom world.

## Chapter Four – 2010 Earthquake - Time line and events



The initial Darfield-centred earthquake, 4th September 2010, caused building damage but no loss of life in Christchurch. It took a while for Timaru, and specifically Timaru Presbyterian Parish, to realise that damage to its two older churches at Seddon St (formerly St Paul's) and Elizabeth Place (formerly Chalmers) was significant and had long term implications for their continued use.

It took time for engineers to assess the buildings and for Council to make decisions about whether or not to keep churches open. Up until now the four churches had been used for worship each Sunday with four services being maintained most Sundays with occasional combined services.

The worship ministry group had already proposed a plan that there be only two worship services per Sunday, one contemporary based at the former St Stephen's church in Wai iti Rd and the traditional one rotating on a 3 monthly basis around the former St Paul's, Trinity and Chalmers churches.

Once engineer's reports were received, almost overnight St Paul's congregation joined Chalmers, then with the realisation that Chalmers was as unsafe, by Advent 2011, the traditional worship service was permanently located at the College Rd complex, leaving the parish with two foci, south Timaru and Glen-iti.

### St Paul's Earthquake Report

Approval from the Insurance Assessors has been received to employ a Bricklayer to erect scaffolding in the rear of St Paul's church so that the loose plaster, where the roof timber joins the brick wall, can be removed. This will enable a Structural Engineer to inspect the brickwork of the wall and to design the strengthening work necessary to secure the wall to the roof structure. The initial cost for this scaffolding and loose plaster removal work, which is in excess of \$2000, will be met by the insurers.

The Parish Council awaits the full engineer's report and the estimates of the full cost of the repair and strengthening work as well as an indication of how much of this cost will be met by insurance.

The Parish Council that made the decision not to use the church, will review this when full information is available from the engineers report and insurers.





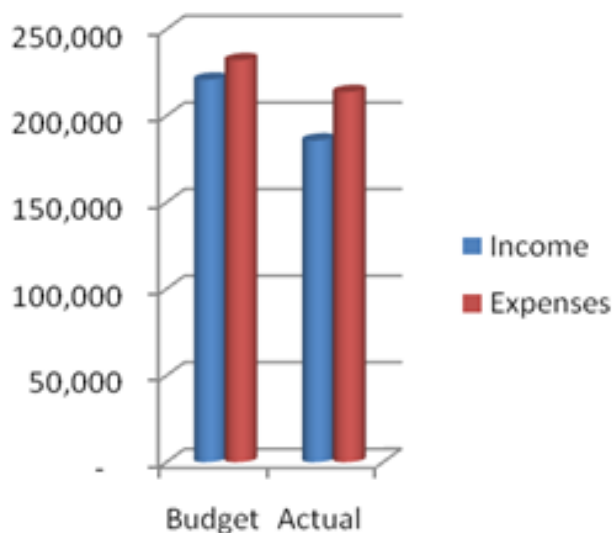
After the new 2010-2011 budget was set at the 2010 AGM, by Christmas concern was being communicated from the Administration Ministry Group

## MONEY MATTERS - for your information

Halfway through our 2010-11 financial year Parish expenses are less than budget, but unfortunately there is a bigger shortfall in income. Thus our actual deficit of \$ 27,987 for the half-year is over twice the budget deficit.

55% of income is from offerings and 29% of expenses are property related. Offerings need to increase, and/or other sources of income pursued and expenses reduced to make funds available for mission related growth. This will be helped by moves to sell surplus property

A breakdown of actual income and expenses for the half-year is shown in the charts on the next page. .



Part of the reason for the drop in income was the reduction of church fairs – from four fairs prior to amalgamation, now only two still operate.



TPP's first Christmas Parade float





Part of the new worship initiatives was creation of a 'Night Series' which included Celtic worship, SoulSpace, Worship Jazz'd and Taizé worship. This is the first Worship Jazz'd service which began in Chalmers church in February 2011 with local singer Sheryl Higgs and her daughters

### Parish Council at their retreat February 2011



### Entering a team in Relay for Life

a continuing outreach every year since 2011 for TPP. This is largely due to the persistence of one individual, Neil McKinnon, but a variety of people from the four former Parishes have joined the effort. From left: Dawn Ussher, Robin Hamilton, Elaine Falconer, Margaret Hughes, Neil McKinnon, Jim Pearce, Derek Hemming, Alan Poulson. Each individual contributes a personal fundraising total each year



**Trinity West Church had been on the market for some time and during 2011 it was announced "an unconditional offer has been made for the Trinity West Church and a group is planning a worship service for the closure of the building which will be held when the final date is known."**



The engineering reports came in before Easter 2011 for the buildings at Elizabeth Place and Seddon St.

The St Paul's church was cleared for use by the engineers using limited exits but with only one exit known to be secure, Council decided the church should not be used.

It was some time before the reality of 'earthquake strength' figures sank in and when another exit seemed to be compromised in the Chalmers church it was later in the year that it was decided to close it too and move the traditional service to Trinity church, College Rd.

Both the Chalmers and St Paul's churches were found to be around 10% earthquake proof and the national church would later require a standard for 66% for a time.

TPP Council acted before its time moving to close both of these churches for normal use. Later the national church would regulate that churches could not use buildings which were under 67% earthquake proof. This put the Trinity Hall and Church under suspicion. This regulation was not reduced to 34% until the 2014 General Assembly.

This communion fall and the decision to use it at Chalmers' service when communion was celebrated is an example of the greater blending of services and symbols which the earthquake forced on the parish. Banners from Chalmers were also brought across to the Trinity/College Rd site.



This delightfully designed fall was created by Joyce Binney and presented to the people of St Paul's on the 90th anniversary of the church in 2007. It depicts wheat and grapes which were previously grown in the area. The chalice ties all together. Until the future use of St Paul's is clarified it will be used at Communion Services at Chalmers



## Trinity West - Final Service 12 June 2011



### First Building Sale

The sale of Trinity West, a preaching place within the former Trinity parish had been mooted and initiated before the inauguration of Timaru Presbyterian Parish

The results of this move came to fruition during 2011 and so a small group within the new parish grieved the loss of this part of their Christian identity.

Trinity West was bought by the Church St Bible Chapel

In mid 2011 optimism that St Paul's could be repaired was still high for some. The delays in waiting for reports and conclusions are obvious from this entry in the Link

### Earthquake Damage Update

A quotation is awaited for repairs to the St Paul's church which will then be considered by our insurers and the Timaru District Council. Presbytery and Church Property Trustees' approval will also be required. TDC have verbally approved use of the Church for up to 120 people. The church will need to be closed again when the repair work commences. We are still waiting on insurance company response for damage to the Chalmers Friendship Centre and the Chalmers Manse. Continuing concerns about reduced numbers of exits [at St Paul's] have led to Parish Council deciding at its June meeting that worship will nevertheless continue at Chalmers for July and August. Partly the reason for staying at Chalmers is to only heat one church building on winter Sundays for morning and evening services.

## Grief at moving churches

Muriel Shepherd whose story below was written in the Link at the time of her being awarded Elder emeriti on 12 June 2011, is an example of the close ties people had with the buildings in which many of them had worshipped for most of their life. With her husband's name on the memorial plaque and a memorial window dedicated to her parents, Muriel would be practically 'walking out' on her family when Chalmers was to be closed. She was not the only one. Others also had strong ties to both of the affected churches.

### Muriel Shepherd - Elder Emerita

On Pentecost Sunday, 12 June, the status of Elder Emerita was awarded to Muriel Shepherd in recognition of her long life of involvement in the church.

Her family lived in King St and they walked to Chalmers. She went to Trinity Sunday School first at South School then to Chalmers in the early 1920's. She went through Bible Class as a teenager, loved the big crowds, socials, table tennis, badminton and picnics. Muriel was president of the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union, Linking Committee and Good Companions. In 1977 she and the late Joan Struthers became the first women elders at Chalmers.



Muriel was a keen sportsperson - S.C. basketball (netball) rep for 5 years, involving travel to Auckland by train and ferry. Later she played tennis, golf and then bowls. Her husband was killed in WW2 and his name is on the memorial in Chalmers. There is also a stained glass window in memory of her parents.

Muriel still competently drives her blue Honda and is one of Timaru's most senior drivers. This most gracious lady is a deserving recipient of this honour.

At the time of writing Muriel still lives at the Croft, (A Presbyterian Support rest home) and is in her late 90s.

The St Stephen's sanctuary was well filled for this 2011 seminar which had been promoted particularly by Rev Chris Konings and David Draffin (convenor of Doing Ministry Group)

### Why did this man wear a funny hat in church?



1. He is promoting a new Dr Seuss Book?
2. He is supporting his rugby team?
3. It's cold in church?
4. It's the latest fashion?
5. He wants to draw attention to himself?

**Correct answer No 5**

He is taking registrations for our

### Bridge Builders Course on 11 - 13 August at St Stephens

It's not too late to register for this course that can help you become more skilled in developing relationships. Many of us would like to develop deeper relationships but find it difficult to get past the weather or the rugby. We realise that we lack the ability to listen effectively, ask good questions and touch people's lives in a way that's not counselling or directive. At the heart of an abundant life are all our relationships.

Registration forms are available in churches and should be returned to the Church Office. Course cost \$ 25.

### Bridge Building at St Stephens



The recent "Bridge Builders Course" at St Stephens was attended by nearly 50 TPP people. Spread over two evenings and one day the course was designed to equip participants to be more effective communicators, especially with new people they meet.

As the pictures above indicate, the course involved practical aspects of communication as well much serious contemplation!



Slowly a greater degree of sophistication in advertising and promotion was happening.

Local choir Rythmix at Worship Jazzd in Chalmers church



## Family Night at the Rugby On the **BIG** Screen continues

Games of the World Cup  
hosted right here at  
St Stephens 349 Wai-iti Rd!!

- ◆ Rugby on the BIG screen
- ◆ Movies in the lounge (for non-rugby fans)
- ◆ Supervised games for children in the Hall
- ◆ Free entry
- ◆ Refreshments available

### See all the All Black's games:

- ◆ Friday 16 September 8.00pm, Japan
- ◆ Saturday 24 September 8.30pm, France
- ◆ Sunday 2 October 3.30pm, Canada
- ◆ Plus finals.



*Come with your friends and have a great time*

These events drew good crowds and a variety of people who were not already TPP members





Enjoying the rugby and refreshments at St Stephens.

Peter mans the coffee machine while Neville and Murray dress for the big occasion



## The appointment process for a fourth minister is begun

Towards the end of 2011, the name of Rory Grant was being talked about for an additional minister

The TPP Ministry Settlement Board invited Rory to visit the parish and preach with a view to a call to full time ministry. "Rory introduces himself. "I'm a big guy with a soft heart. I began my theological studies in 2007 with a firm conviction that God was leading me somewhere new. Very quickly it has become clear to me that the Spirit is calling me and preparing me for a life in pastoral ministry.'" The Link added:

*A Congregational Meeting will be held in the Seddon St Parish Hall at 4.30pm on 30 October for the purpose of voting on this proposed appointment*

The choice of venue was intentional. Though it was not intended that Rory would become "St Paul's" minister, this venue was chosen so that people from that former parish would feel they were on home territory and be more likely to attend. St Paul's people had an asymmetric experience from the other three parishes without a 'designated' minister thought all the ministers we meant to be thought of as serving the whole parish, Chris Mary Jane and Susan had pre existing relationships with members of the former Trinity, St Stephen's and Chalmers' parishes.

The vision proposal had this to say about their vision of a team ministry:

### *Benefits of team Ministry*

- *Each member of the team would have different strengths/gifting*
- *Variety of ministry style – something to suit everyone*
- *Ability to offer worship/ministry at different times and places*
- *Leaders would be enthusiastic about their area and so enthuse others*
- *Less risk of burnout if working in area of interest*
- *Allows people to say 'No' to those areas outside their gifting/talent and participate enjoyably in those area which they feel passionate about*
- *Members of the team will be able to cover each other for holidays, etc.*

Because the team was not set up intentionally on this model much of these benefits were not experienced.

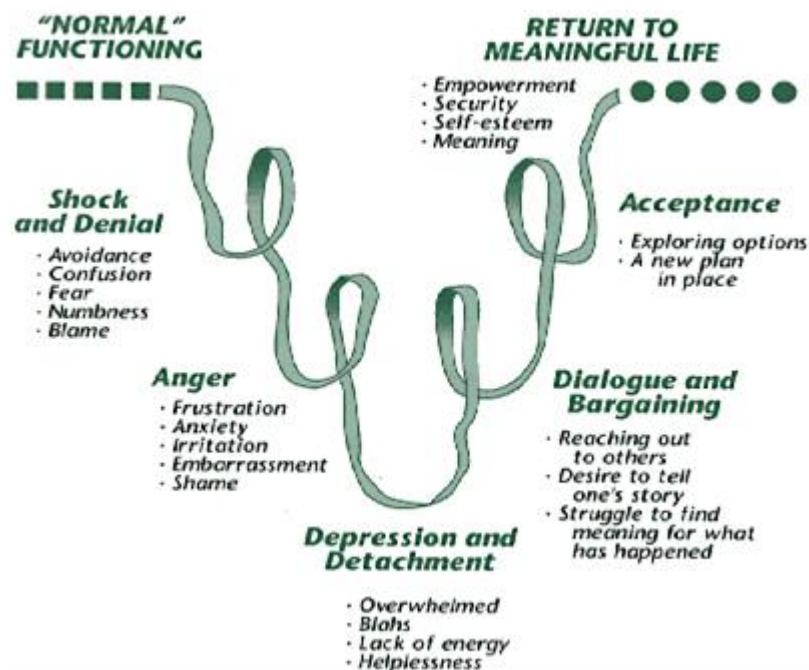


The traditional Spring Flower service continued but the people pictured here are from three of the former parishes - Chalmers, St Paul's and St Stephen's parishes - showing integration is happening even with traditional events.

From left: Nessie Home,(C) Nona Johnson,(C) Rosalie Turner,(C) Dianne Paulin (P) and Raymond Smith(S)



## Chapter Four – Earthquake – Commentary on processing grief.



The traditional Kubler Ross cycle (shown at left) has been shown to be not a cycle so much as a mixed up process of multiple emotions, many of which can be felt at the same time. However, this commentary will move through them as illustrated on the diagram.

### Shock and Denial

For all church members the amalgamation was not the real grief. That had already begun in the 1960s when church decline became more obvious and the usual handover of power and responsibility to a younger generation had not occurred. That elders in particular had been carrying a load of self blame and confusion was obvious when Anthony B Robinson's book *Changing the Conversation* was studied at a Council retreat held in Temuka in February 2012. There was a palpable air of relief when his first

chapter "it's not about you..." was covered and societal forces at work in the world leading to church decline illustrated. The state of the church rolls on the amalgamation showed the depth of the denial being practised in all of the former parishes. The rolls had needed revision for some time and carried many names of people who had not attended for years. When worship attendance is declining, to take names off the roll seems too difficult.

People would return to shock and denial when earthquake damage led to the disuse, sale and in the case of St Paul's eventual demolition of buildings.

### Anger:

Those who had not wished for amalgamation moved into anger, expressing it in different ways. Some were frustrated at what they saw as slow process. Others were irritated that their well known methods were not being adopted by the new parish. Some were ashamed at feeling negative when they felt they 'should' be behind the new ideas.

It was possible to name shock, denial and sadness when talking about the processes and even to name anger as being expected. The anger however was harder to express within the traditional 'nice' Christian setting, especially when constructive dialogue was called for in church meetings. Anger was often expressed privately and within cliques of friends. When asked in February 2015 about why they had amalgamated, a group of present and former Parish Councillors and elders were slow to answer. What answers were given showed a lack of clarity about the reasons why. Some said they had had no choice and that the experience in the former parishes was better than the present combined experience, indicating continuing anger at being uprooted from what they had loved.

Since it was proposed that the former St Stephen's and Trinity sites be called TPP's Wai-iti Rd site and TPP's College Rd site, anger has been expressed vocally and periodically by a group who had not voted for amalgamation – especially not for St Stephen's amalgamation into TPP. Among a small group of leaders it had been thought that when the new complex was built on the Wai-iti Rd site, a name change would go with that

process, but with that complex being non-existent at present, a new naming opportunity has not presented itself.

### **Depression and Detachment**

This was seen mostly in those for whom the amalgamation had always been a 'bad' idea. They found living in a corner of the new parish bearable because they were still worshipping with and meeting regularly the people they had always known. Largely worship continued in much the same style with occasional combined services and swapping of ministers between pulpits.

When movement away from known worship centres and more combining happened with traditional worship, several expressed their grief and disapproval by stopping their worship attendance. One woman said to her minister on the eve of the move to College Rd for combined traditional worship. "We promised to support you as our minister, but how can we support you when you are leaving us." She was still invested in the present church building and perceived her minister, (now a TPP minister), as deserting her. The elderly woman pictured above almost did not start attending the new traditional worship at College Rd but was persuaded when another elder said that he would miss her if she didn't attend. She was offered a ride the first Sunday and the second Sunday she drove herself and continued to do so each Sunday until she grew too old to drive safely.

### **Dialogue and Bargaining**

When the grief process was talked about in meetings, people were urged to keep contact with those who had detached from the new parish. This has happened in many cases. Personal friendships have been maintained and sometimes those not attending are as well informed about parish movements as those within the parish! At present there is a move to invite back those who used to attend before amalgamation. Afternoon tea events are planned by the Pastoral Ministry Group as a kind of reunion based on the four former parish groupings. Elders have identified people they are prepared to visit and talk with, with a view to their return to parish life. It is noticeable that those who have reduced their involvement, the majority are from the former Chalmers' and St Paul's parishes.

### **Acceptance**

Given the 51% vote for reaffirming the new building at Wai-iti Rd, half the voting congregation are in favour of TPP. Another 21% - the ones who voted in favour of the new building initially but changed their minds when given a second vote – are in favour of TPP but cautious of taking too many financial risks. Probably only 28% of the voting congregation are unsure of TPP taking this particular step of locating expensively on one site. They may nevertheless be in favour of the idea of having amalgamated and working together, since they have indicated that by remaining within the parish.

## Chapter Five – 2011 Locating the Future, a fourth minister – timeline and events

Subsequent to the earthquake and looking at the financial accounts, the need to rationalise buildings comes to the fore late in 2011. A “Locating the Future” workgroup is formed. The Link reports:

The Locating the Future Workgroup thanks those who attended the Open Forum on 6 November 2011. Responses were mature and helpful. The more detailed responses will be used in the next consultation stage early 2012. The collation of Forum responses on coloured papers is available from the Church Office.

The Workgroup now presents this discussion paper to the congregation with Parish Council's approval



***The two choices presented here are just a skeleton of what you will be asked to vote on in April-May 2012.***

From March through April 2012, more discussions will be held, more figures and concepts will be presented to small groups and different age groups. Your comments on these ‘broad brush’ choices will help ‘tweak’ and develop the final choice which will be put to the vote April-May 2012.

The Workgroup's primary consideration was first what mission we should focus on and only then where we should therefore physically locate.

The vote for Rory Grant, graduating ministry student, who had interned in Rotorua is successful and Rory and Andrea are set to arrive before Christmas.

### **Welcome Rory & Andrea**

Rory Grant is presented with flowers at his Licensing Service in Dunedin on 7 December by TPP Clerk Ken Falconer.

Rory, Andrea and their boys Oliver and Jonathan have arrived in Timaru where Rory is to be part of the TPP Ministry Team





As 2011 ends, the Christmas Parade float incorporates the handing out of fliers to those watching the Parade.

### Timaru Christmas Parade

TPP put *Christ* back into *Christmas*

1000 invitations to the TPP Holiday Programme & Christmas Services were given to members of the public.

Well done TPP Doing Ministry Group



### "Locating the Future" Workgroup

Back row: Eion Powell,(P) James Davies,(S) Roger Carter,(C) Derek Hemming(T)

Front row: Susan Jones, Tim Underdown,(P) Robyn Rawstorn,(P) Ann Munro,(S) Ken Falconer(C)



## Rory Grant inducted to Timaru Presbyterian Parish 14 December 2011



Parish Clerk Ken Falconer presents gifts to Rory, Andrea and their sons Oliver and Jonathan



Chris Konings and Susan Jones offer collegial direction to Rory



Jonathan & Oliver had a great time

## Early 2012

### Earthquake Damage at St Paul's - Settlement Close

An insurance settlement amount of \$74,224 has been agreed to by the loss adjusters acting for the PCANZ in full and final settlement of the earthquake damage to St Paul's Church. Once received, this money would be held by the Church Property Trustees, and can be used for building related purposes including repairs, remodelling or demolition.

A Kids Friendly training day was held later in the year on Saturday March 17, led by national Kids Friendly coach Jill Kayser.

Locating the Future formed by Parish Council continued its work through 2012.

### Locating the Future Forum 3

4.00-6.45pm Saturday May 12

St Stephen's @ 349 Wai-iti Road



The Locating the Future process in fact became dominated by 'locating' and reached an impasse at the final voting meeting where making a decision about which properties to move to provide impossible, though some felt that had the process been allowed to unfold, St Paul's complex in Seddon St would have been chosen as the one site for the parish.

Meanwhile the parish went on and the Girls Brigade continued work well as shown by a Church Parade on June 24<sup>th</sup>.



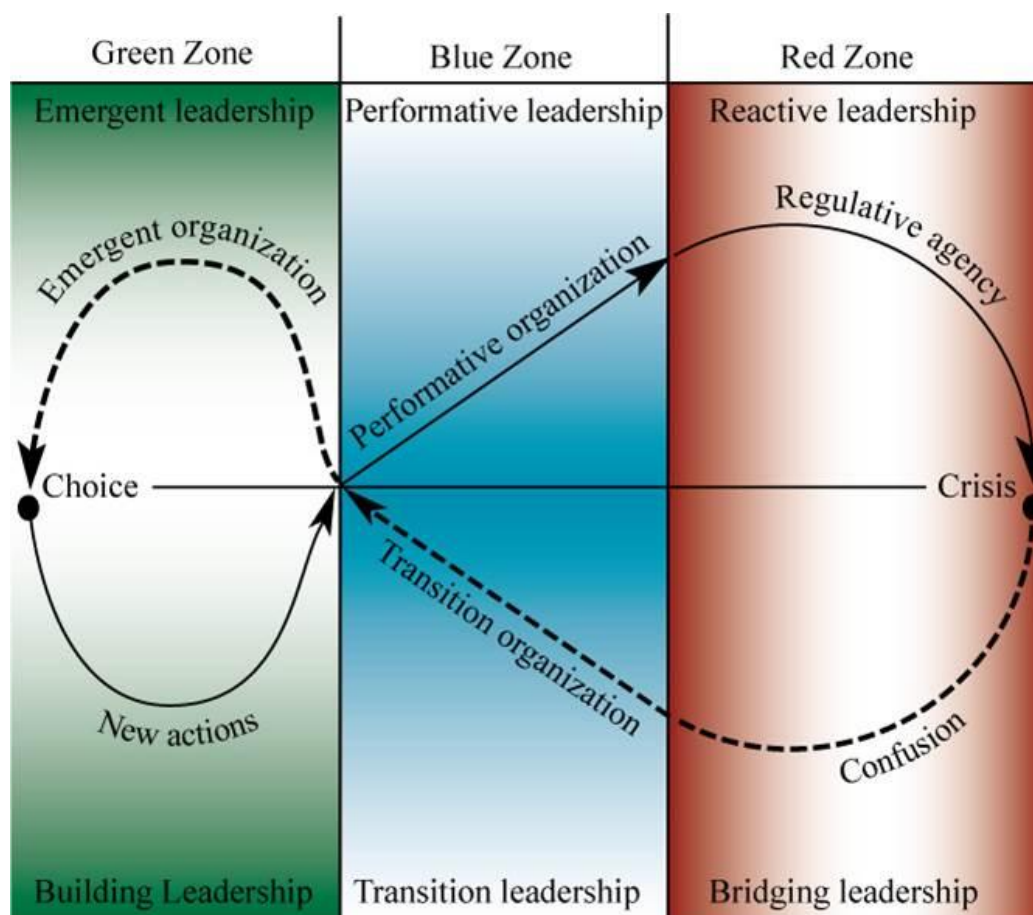
to



And a quiz night at the Wai iti Rd worship complex, organised by the Pastoral Ministry Group.

## Chapter Five – ‘Locating the Future’, a fourth minister – Commentary on Roxburgh’s 3 zone model of missional leadership

Alan Roxburgh’s “3-zone model” of missional leadership from *The Missional Leader* by Roxburgh & Fred Romanuk (Jossey-Bass Press, 2006).



Not many Timaru Presbyterians would have had memories of being in an truly emergent (green zone) congregation. Members of the former St Stephen’s may have memories of the beginnings of that parish, with the Hall being built in 1968. Also, members of the Trinity congregation remembered the excitement and commitment of building fresh buildings in South Timaru. Several could identify the stones they chose for the wall of the chapel in the Trinity church building (opened 1965). However, Trinity would have brought with it an existing parish infrastructure. Washdyke also had a new building in 1965, but it too was an established congregation.

Therefore the majority experience of most people entering TPP from the time their children were in Sunday school would have been of blue zone churches. Many lived through periods when the attendances were stable and the feeling of success was constant – both leadership and organisation were performative.<sup>6</sup> While taking funeral services, the author had several experiences of adult children who had returned for a parent’s funeral, telling stories of their Sunday school attendance in halls packed with children. The hall at Chalmers now houses a restaurant and the owners report many people remember such Sunday school experiences in the building. Stories are also told of Chalmers church being filled including the gallery, when well known preachers were in

<sup>6</sup> Performative means ‘relating to or being an utterance that performs an act or creates a state of affairs by the fact of its being uttered under *appropriate* or *conventional* circumstances.’ My italics. Performative leadership is ‘steady as she goes.’

full cry. There was general lack of understanding as to why church attendance had dropped away so conclusively. Sometimes the assumption was stated that just a few things needed to be tweaked and the numbers would return. Certainly the amalgamation was seen as a way to return to a blue zone style of church existence.

All the four joining parishes were in the red zone at the point of amalgamation. The decision to amalgamate could be seen as reactive decision-making.<sup>7</sup> In a red zone, the tendency is to try to do better what is not working, so amalgamations appeal as they will increase numbers and consolidate financial and material resources. They therefore tend to be an attempt to return to the blue zone state.

Alan Roxburgh, co author of a book containing this model, argues that in the red zone, in which most mainstream churches find themselves, the internal maps we carry within us are no longer suited to the terrain in which the church finds itself. Roxburgh argues that churches, leaders and people need to make new maps as they test out the terrain and 'discover what God is doing in the neighbourhood.' These maps are not strategic plans and objectives, they begin with small experiments leading to discovery of what God is already doing 'in the neighbourhood'.

Some of the experiments conducted at TPP are in this league – the rugby world cup nights, Soulspace, Journey 21. Others are not but are more attempts to return to blue zone church style by attracting an audience back into the church.

[space], held in an empty shop prior to Christmas 2014 was a small scale experiment using the talents of church members to create a space where people could be listened to and talked with. Getting to know what God was doing in the neighbourhood?

According to Roxburgh, there is a need for people in TPP to be engaged in story telling so they can name a new framework for looking at the world, at their neighbourhoods. The task is to learn how to live in the crisis and chaos of the red zone, by not being threatened by instability but using it to find where God is disturbing our world and the church or, as the popular saying goes, '*Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass...It's about learning to dance in the rain.*'<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> To be *reactive* is to be ready to react or respond to something else — as opposed to ready to act on one's own. A person who's *reactive* does things only in response to others. Roxburgh comments: Reactive leaders "work harder at what they know, even when things stop working."

<sup>8</sup> Vivian Greene



## Chapter Six – 2012 - The Mission Action Plan approved, organisation tested – Timeline and events

After the impasse reached by Locating the Future, the Parish Council had commissioned a Mission Action Plan and appointed a workgroup to begin this work. The concept was that our focus on mission would be the central issues of this plan and location and buildings would come second to this.

### 2012

#### **Mission Action Plan Workshop at College Rd on 1 July**

Chris and Rory encouraged people to get involved and sign up for small groups.

A good attendance of parishioners shared in the first Parish Forum with the new MAP Workgroup.

There was opportunity for good discussion and a shared lunch was enjoyed.



Small groups recorded suggestions for the Mission Action Plan Workgroup to consider.

Beanies knitted for the Mangere Refugee Centre – a mission effort coordinated by the Service Ministry Group



See the Appendices for the full Mission Action Plan booklet. What follows are the final few pages which focus on the recommendations. The proposal to build on the Waiti Rd Site was passed 82%

- **Chalmers'** - Investigate best ways to develop income streams or mission from this site. Explore working with an independent trust in regard to the church or offering for sale all or part of the total site.
- **St. Paul's** - Develop for income stream(s). This land is a valuable asset and income generated from it will be key to TPP's ongoing future. We are thankful to St Paul's for its creation and maintenance over years. Two possible options to explore - retirement village in partnership with the community; re-subdivide and sell smaller sections.
- **St. Stephen's** - Retain site with a view to developing as our main "one site" worship centre, office & youth facilities in future. Aim for architectural plans approved by November 2013 and work completed by November 2014.
- **Trinity** - Retain in meantime, with minimum expenditure. Discuss lease of Hall with Connect Church for when Wai-iti Rd worship complex is ready and Trinity as an income stream is re-evaluated.
- **Funding the Future** Parish Council establish workgroup to develop income streams from surplus property and other ventures to fund our future. **Nov-Dec 2012**
- **Building the Future** – Parish Council establish workgroup to develop architectural plans for a redeveloped worship centre at Wai-iti Road. **Nov-Dec 2012**



## Rationale

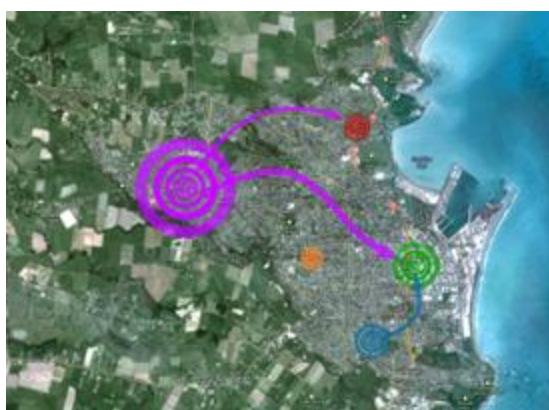
*Robert Maguire – Architect*

*If you are going to build a church,  
you are going to create a thing which speaks.  
It will speak of meanings and values,  
And it will go on speaking.  
And if it speaks of the wrong values,  
It will go on destroying.  
There is responsibility here.*

*The use and improvement of buildings at St. Stephen's, Wai-iti Road fits well with our Mission Action Plan. Locating ourselves on the busy, public and visible street front of Wai-iti Road will also really help us to shift our culture.*

## Neighbourhood Focus

*In order to shift towards acting in neighbourhoods we need to re-group and consolidate resources. Rex Booth, (of the Bridge Builder course), says this: **"Where you live is no accident. God has strategically placed you in your neighbourhood"**. We need to re-connect with the Timaru community one neighbourhood at a time. Our Wai-iti Road site will allow us to resource neighbourhood mission around Timaru, with an initial focus on building on the strong relationships that we are already forging with young families in the Gleniti neighbourhood. As we consolidate there, we can then move out into the rest of Timaru as these maps show.*



## **Outward facing**

*Rev. Prof. Murray Rae      Mission begins with worship. It flows from our meeting with God. In worship we are addressed, equipped and commissioned."*

*We need a worship centre that not only allows us to meet with God, but that also prompts us to go out into the community and our neighbourhoods fully equipped; a worship centre that is outward focused and visible in the target community.*

*James F. White      Most people who pass a church's door never enter it. But they do form impressions of the Church from the physical church. Protestant Worship and Church Architecture*

*So that the public form a positive impression, our new worship centre needs to be fully open. The whole interior needs to be visible to the outside, so any passer-by can see that the church is about people worshipping God not just a fancy building.*

*349 Wai-iti Road has a large road frontage on a busy major arterial road; this allows us to have dominant visibility. Building a worship centre that has a large glass façade would bring our worship into the public arena and show Timaru that TPP is present in the community.*

*We also have to incorporate who we are now into any new building to highlight our combined histories. This way the story the worship centre portrays is not a blank canvas, but depicts the continuing journey we have been on and walk still.*

## **People**

*Many of the newer relationships TPP has formed with community people are with young families, both parents and children, who have connected with programmes based at St Stephen's, Wai-iti Rd. We have made contacts with schools in that neighbourhood because of family connections. We will build on these beginnings. Concentrating our resources in one neighbourhood at the start will help us to be more effective more quickly.*

## **Financial Considerations**

*The Locating the Future Team did an excellent job of collating the financial value of our four sites. The Building Blocks group are presently working on costs of engineering estimates and work which will be needed for any earthquake proofing required. Previous comparisons of costings in the Locating the Future booklet are now outdated in terms of the different proposal in this booklet and changes in the market and insurance requirements. Before individual decisions are made about specific church and other buildings, detailed costings will be provided to the congregation. Other income streams may be developed through activities and use and sale of property. Savings also come from lower running costs on buildings no longer used or owned by TPP.*

***This is a major step for this parish. We will have mixed feelings. Scripture speaks to people like us in situations like ours:***

*'The Lord who created you says, "Do not be afraid – I will save you. I have called you by name – you are mine. When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire you will not be burnt; the hard trials that come will not hurt you. For I am the Lord your God, .... who saves you." Is 43: 1-3a*

*and, at another stage of Israel's history:*

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jer 29:11*

### ***Original report presented by the MAP team to Council:***

*Kay Beatson, Fiona Blisset, James Davies, Rev. Rory Grant, Sandra Hetherington, Rev. Dr Susan Jones, Peter Jordan, Rev. Chris Konings, Robyn Rawstorn & Tania Wade.*

### ***Acknowledgments***

*Council wishes to convey its special thanks to all who have been and are continuing to be involved in giving time and energy to this discernment process. We express to you our gratitude and appreciation. Thanks also to all the families who put up with their loved ones being at interminable meetings!*

***Building Blocks (still continuing):*** Ken Falconer, Jim Garden, Derek Hemming, Ken Linscott, Jim Pearce & Bev Quigley

***Locating the Future Group:*** Roger Carter, James Davies, Ken Falconer, Derek Hemming, Rev. Dr Susan Jones, Ann Munro, Dianne Paulin, Robyn Rawstorn & Tim Underdown

***Vision Establishment Team (wrote Blue Book):*** Kay Beatson, Judith Begg, James Davies (alternate) David Draffin, Jim Garden (alternate), Derek Hemming, Anne Knipe, David Lockhart, Jim Pearce, Brodie Park, Eoin Powell, Ian Sawers, Hugh Smith, Wendy Sutton, (alternate) Doug Wallace, Michael Wilkinson.

#### ***Transitional Team:***

*Cleave Hay, Elizabeth Lockhart, Margaret Walker, Leo Neale, David Draffin, Margaret Hughes, Ron Paulin, Doug Wallace, Alan Poulson, Janet Hogan, Derek Hemming, Herman Frank, Indi Jevaratnam, Judith Begg. Also: Revs Ian Hyslop, Helen Martin, Brian Gilmour, Evan Stenlake*

***Visioning Group:*** David Draffin, David Lockhart, Brodie Park, Eoin Powell and Rosie Staite

***After all this time and effort, prayer and visioning, thought and calculations, discernment and discussion, we've come to the time for moving on.***

***This proposal is presented to the parish from the MAP group and by the Parish Council as the strategic plan for TPP for the next 5 years, 2013-2017.***

***Let's adopt this MAP together and so catch up with God  
(who's already at work in our community!)***

***Susan Jones (Ministry Team Leader)***



# ***The Process now...***

1. **Now:** *You have received this booklet with your LINK on or before Sunday 14 October. Copies available at Church Office for people on the parish roll.*
2. **Presentation of the Report: 7.30-9.00pm Wednesday 24 October**  
*Venue: St Paul's Parish Hall. Forum at which the report will be presented by members of the MAP group and the Parish Council. Supper will be served at 9pm after which people are welcome to stay and ask questions.*
3. **Discussion Period: 24 October to 11 November.** *A period where questions boxes will be around the parish for your queries (College Rd, Wai-iti Rd and Seddon St). MAP study groups will re-convene to provide discussion opportunities. APW and other groups are encouraged to ask for a speaker from MAP or Council to come to their regular meetings for information and questions. This is your time to get familiar with the plan and proposals which we will adopt in mid November.*
4. **Response Forums: After morning worship Sunday 11 November.**  
*Venues: 11am @ 22 College Rd; 12.15pm @ 349 Wai-iti Rd. Opportunity to hear answers to questions received and to ask other questions.*
5. **Congregational Meeting: 12.15pm after morning worship Sunday 18 November.** *Venue: 349 Wai-iti Rd, St Stephen's. The purpose of the meeting is to adopt the 2013-2017 TPP Mission Action Plan and recommendations brought by Council.*
6. **Parish Third Anniversary Celebration Sunday December 2.**

## ***Notice of Motion***

*That the 2013-2017 Mission Action Plan and the recommendations it contains be adopted. Parish Council to begin implementation immediately.*

Children's Holiday  
Programme  
at Wai-iti Rd



The holiday programme was becoming more and more popular

TPP's 3rd Birthday Celebration 2 December 2012

New elders were ordained and transferring elders inducted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday celebrations.

Rory's son Jono helped cut the birthday cake as the youngest present.



Photos: Stephanie Grant



## Chapter Six – Mission Action Plan – Commentary on Kotter’s Change Model

### Kotter's Change Model

Kotter identified eight steps that need to be taken in order to manage change successfully. These steps translate the best of change management theories into practice.

- 1. Establish a sense of urgency**
- 2. Form a powerful guiding coalition**
- 3. Create a clear vision**
- 4. Communicate the vision**
- 5. Empower others to act on the vision**
- 6. Plan and create short-term wins**
- 7. Consolidate improvements and produce still more change**
- 8. Institutionalise new approaches**

These steps are based on a solid foundation of communication, empowerment and focus. Once the change has been made, it is important to embed the new approaches, so that people do not slip into old habits. Monitoring, feedback and intervention are necessary for a sufficient period after the changes have occurred.

Kotter’s change model can be divided into three components, one regarding beginning the process, comprising his first two steps, establishing urgency and forming a powerful guiding coalition. The second component has to do with vision and comprises his next three steps, creating clear vision, communicating that vision and empowering others to act on that vision. The third component is his last three steps, planning and creating short term wins, consolidations and more change and institutionalising new approaches.

#### **First component: Beginning the process: urgency and a powerful guiding coalition**

A sense of urgency reportedly developed as individual parishes realised their ability to fund full time minister was declining. Chalmers had a minister retiring and could see it had the ability to promise only 5 years of secure ministry to anyone they might call in the near future. St Paul’s minister saw the way things were headed and took up another position elsewhere. Trinity and St Stephens were also vacant. This is often the point at which denial is finally challenged.

There was a concerted effort in 2009 to bring matters to a decision point with study groups mixing people from the different parishes and a forum focusing on the idea of amalgamation. While not all parishes were equally ‘on board’ during this year, progress was made and the ‘powerful guiding coalition’ was provided by the Presbytery with Rev Ian Hyslop and Rev Helen Martin contributing their considerable skills at clarifying the essential issues. They were joined by Rev Bryan Gilmour a transition trained minister from Australia and Rev Evan Stenlake a minister with transition experience also from across the Tasman.

This was a strong coalition of guides. The impression gained by some was that they had no choice but to amalgamate, but this was not only the message from the team. It seemed to be the message offered by declining numbers and unhealthy financial positions in the four parishes. “There is no alternative’ is often a response to decline and decay. There was another alternative – to let all or some of the four parishes die slowly but intentionally over a period of time. What this would have done to the assets of money and property and people existing in those parishes is a moot point since this process was not followed. Alan Roxburgh argues that consolidation such as amalgamation is an attempt to keep on going the way the church has always gone – expecting continuation of the blue zone experience or a return to that experience. Since the Council of Assembly has now issued a warning to presbyteries not to amalgamate declining congregations, it would seem,

that this alternative is not the preferred method now. What then the Council of Assembly would then recommend when a town has only declining congregations has not been stated.

Part of the purpose of a powerful guiding coalition is to make sure that the right and helpful procedures are followed despite, some people's preferences or feelings. In fact presbytery approved the appointment of ministers in two of the prospective amalgamating parishes at a point when the amalgamation seemed doomed, instead of refusing to be precipitate. Then, when amalgamation was back in prospect again, presbytery did not follow Book of Order procedure and require resignations of those ministers in order to prepare a ministry team properly. The Ministry Team with Parish Council would be the 'coalition' which would take over the guidance of the process. It was important that team was set up so it had the power it required. This team may or may not have been only ordained clergy but once clergy were put in place, removing them or changing positions was very hard. The same care should have been taken when Chalmers church called a minister independently of the amalgamation process. Instead, the new parish was expected to endorse the call and accept a minister popularly expected to be the Team leader without an endorsing vote of the entire parish. This set the ministry team off on a basis different from that envisaged by the Vision document.

### **Second component: Creating, communicating vision and empowering others to enact it.**

Looking back, a lot of energy had gone into the vision of amalgamating the four parishes. That was the vision. Admittedly, people had bought the idea that together they could do more mission, but this was ill defined at this stage. Among the four parishes there was a difference of opinion on what constituted mission and what did not.

Also at the beginning, people did not know each other well, nor did they have a good idea of how each parish organised itself, what assets they had, what condition they were in or what kinds of programmes already existed. There were a lot of discoveries to be made over the next few years. Not all this information came to the fore immediately, even when asset registers were drawn up.

Then there were trust issues. At first the four churches continued much as they had before and there was a tentative feeling about using 'others' buildings or evaluating 'others' programmes. Preferences for their original methods and customs was obvious when groups mixed.

For these kinds of reasons there was a lot of energy being required just to co-exist and make the first real steps to merge and join and cooperate. To define a vision and agree on mission was initially a step very far beyond where the hearts and minds of the people were. It was beyond a poorly defined team also.

As well, the 'powerful guiding coalition' had left the scene. Now the new parish was formed, Presbytery took its accustomed position as a more distant advisor and coordinator. Another factor was that now the new parish covered the space previously held by four parishes, a majority of the leadership positions in the small South Canterbury Presbytery were held by Timaru Presbyterian Parish members. For a brief three months in 2013, TPP members held the positions of Moderator, Clerk, Administration Committee Convenor, Convenor of Ministry Committee, Convenor of Finance and Property and Treasurer.

Perhaps a more realistic interim vision would have been the organisation of the parish first and then looking at discovering what part of God's mission to Timaru was suitable for TPP to cooperate in.

### **Third component: Short term 'wins', consolidation and more change, institutionalising change**

Some short term wins did occur and were celebrated. What could be called regular mission initiatives continued due to the enthusiasm and hard work of small groups – A TPP float in the annual Christmas Parade became an annual event culminating in first prize in 2013; TPP has entered a team in Relay for Life for five years now, Girls' Brigade continued, Rugby World Cup was used as an outreach opportunity, alternative worship was created



and advertised. Some short term wins became the selling of property after the Christchurch earthquakes though these brought more grief and anger along with them.

With earthquakes affecting the parish from 2011, stress affecting ministers and staff in 2013, consolidation has proved difficult to achieve, though quietly some has happened in the relationships between individuals. Trust in and optimism about the organisational side of TPP has waned, shown in the reduced numbers interested in participating at Council and ministry group level.

Caution about investing in the future through a building which would have tested the parish's ability to maintain its operating budget, won the day in February 2015, and rethinking the vision has been made the prime objective. Listening to Alan Roxburgh's concept of acting as divine detectives to see where God is already working may be more reliable as people in TPP need to feel that what they are thinking and experiencing is being taken into account. Journey 21 and the Living the Questions study group have been a response to hearing what church members want and need to pursue what God is already doing in their lives. A similar process needs to be working for non church people so TPP can discover where God is working outside the church and join God there.

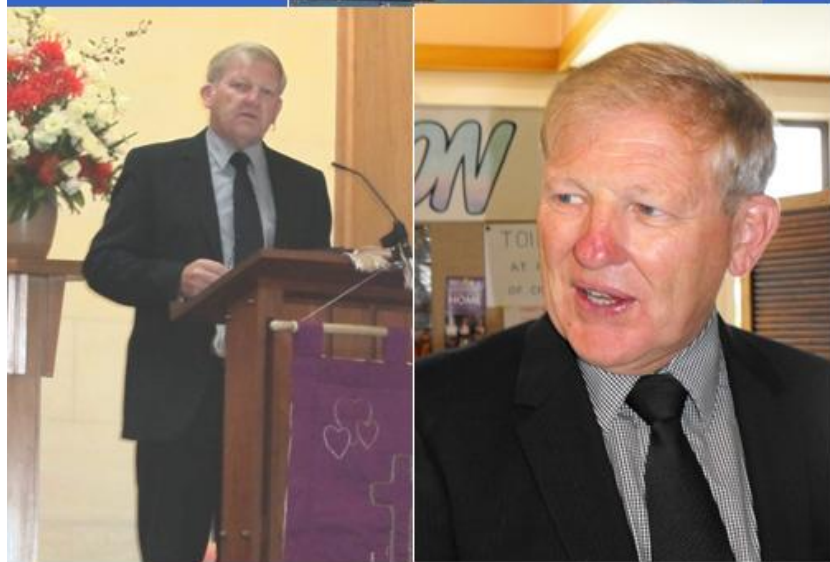


## Chapter Seven – 2013 Buildings Sales and Concepts - timeline and events



### 2013

December January and February 2013 saw fund raising to send Girls Brigade girls to Fonomare for Jan 2013, creating Meals and Wheels Christmas gifts and the Parish Retreat and Church worship and Picnic at Lindisfarne campsite in February.



**The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa NZ, the Right Reverend Ray Coster preached at Trinity Church, College Rd on 10 March.**

Ray commenced his ministry at Trinity in 1977 and recounted happy memories from his time in Timaru. He preached with passion on the uniqueness of Jesus as a person and how he stands out from all other leaders with his amazing influence on all areas of life throughout the last 2000 years.



**TPP Team at 2013**

**Relay for Life**

Team Leader Neil McKinnon reported that team members covered a total of 230km and raised over \$2,300 for the Cancer Society.



## Buildings become the focus.

Two workgroups were formed as a result of the Mission Action plan decisions at the end of 2012. These reports appeared in the Link regarding the terms of reference of both of them.

### KEEPING YOU INFORMED!

#### THE FIRST TASK OF THE BUILDING GROUP

was to prepare a detailed brief for an architect to develop concept plans and budget costs, presenting these to the appropriate bodies; the Congregation, Church Property Trustees, National Church Architects and other appropriate parties along the way. The objective is to have a new complex Grand Opening at the end of 2014. This group will be focussing solely on the Wai-iti Road site.

#### THE CAPITAL FUNDING GROUP'S TASK

is to work towards the disposal of our surplus properties - Elizabeth Place (Chalmers) and Seddon Street (St Paul's) immediately. And later to do the same with College Road (Trinity) on a more extended time frame as that complex is presently being used, and may also accommodate St Stephen's/Wai-iti Rd congregation during the construction phase.



**Easter Day  
Dawn Service  
at Caroline Bay.**

It was a little damp during the Service but just like the first Easter Day women did what needs to be done.

A warming breakfast of fish, buns and hot drinks was served following the service.



**Harvest Thanksgiving at College Rd**

Parish activities continued in the meantime, though by this stage the former church fairs (St Paul's fete, Chalmers' Monster Market, St Stephen's Market Day and Plant Sale) prior to amalgamation had reduced to two – the Market Day and Plant Sale at the Wai iti Rd complex.



## Back by Popular Demand

### TPP Women's Dinner 22 June

Following the success of last year's dinner TPP men are again preparing to pamper their women folk.

Think about some non-church person you could bless by inviting them to this event.

Mark you diary for a fun night out.

Tickets available from Church Office soon.



The women's dinner becomes a tradition. A feature of it was the mixing of both the female guests from the four former parishes and of the men who manned the kitchen, also drawn from across the new parish.

Without a great deal of fanfare but with a lot of behind the scenes work, the Holiday Programme and the Girls' Brigade continued to be a successful mission to primary school children



### 85 Years of Girls' Brigade in NZ

The 3rd Timaru Company which has been based at Trinity since its formation in 1939 held a Church Parade and party lunch at St Stephens on 9 June to celebrate the anniversary. Company Chaplain, Rev Mary-Jane Konings, presented Fiona Blissett with a certificate and gift for her outstanding service to the Company.




### TPP Holiday Programme

Many new skills were introduced. Knitting was so popular with the girls that a weekly knitting group has started.



## Journey 21 had begun the previous year.


J21 is a 'Fresh Expression' which is aimed at people who find the regular Sunday morning services inconvenient to attend or too 'religious' for them. The 21 refers to a spiritual journey suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The group meets outside when possible so as to interact with the environment which brings many closer to God. The group's monthly themes tend to be environment related. 7-10 people attend on average.



### Journey 21

**Sunday 16 June 8.00am**

**Skating Rink Car Park**



Walking through the Bay symbolises the spiritual journey we are all on. It is followed by a time of reflection and then culminates with coffee at C Bay Café where discussion continues.

Last month, we once again braved the rain and reflected on the storms of life and how the journey Jesus calls us to journey transcends our limits and overcomes the storms we face through a deeper humanity and infinite and eternal love.

In the tradition of the Buddhist belief we wrote prayers on prayer flags and let the breeze carry our prayers across the countryside.

## Mid 2013 the Capital Funding group reported

### The CAPITAL FUNDING GROUP...

...continues to work on providing funds for the building project. We now have permission from the Church Property Trustees to sell the St. Paul's and Chalmers properties, subject to certain conditions. One of these is that we are not allowed to sell for less than the valuations, which had to be done as part of our application to the Church Property Trustees.

Some of you have been worried that we will start building and not have funds on hand to cover the cost. This is not the case. We plan to have the capital funds from property sales available before we commit to building. And by the time you read this we hope to have in place marketing strategies to sell both sites

Fundraising took the form of a silent auction



## Another successful Holiday Programme @ Wai-iti Rd

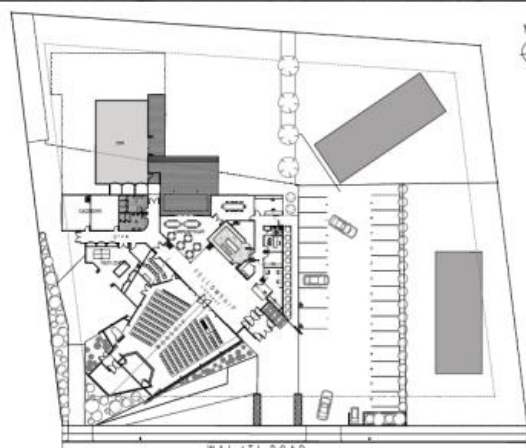
Our holiday programmes keep growing in popularity with a "sell out" attendance on each of the five days in July.



### The Watery Winter

theme provided lots of fun times.

A big thank you to Cherie, Mary-Jane, Chris and their team of helpers for making this happen.



Artist's  
Impression  
& Site Plan  
for proposed  
new building  
at Wai-iti Rd

## 2013 Building Concept Launch

Presentations will be held following the Morning Services at both College Rd and Wa-iti Rd on 25 August, plus another at Wai-iti Rd on Tuesday 27 August at 7pm. Each presentation will take an hour.

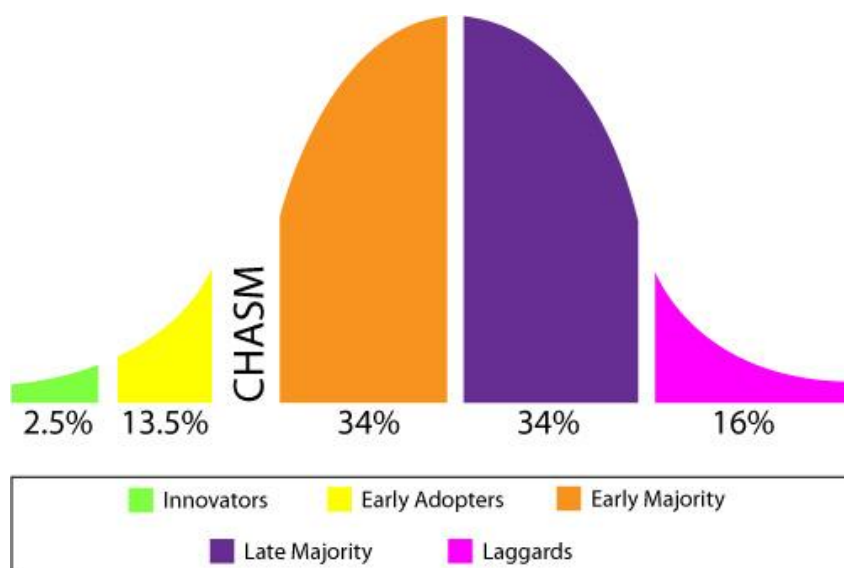


## This was the plan!

<b>Requirements of Church Property Trustees sale process</b>	<b>Seddon St.</b>	<b>Elizabeth Pl.</b>
Adoption of Mission Action Plan	November 2012	November 2012
Approval of congregation to sell properties	March 2013	March 2013
Detailed current market valuation	April 2013	April 2013
Approval of Presbytery to sell properties	April 2013	April 2013
Approval of Church Property Trustees to sell properties	3 May 2013	3 May 2013
Open marketing period	15 August – 25 September 2013	15 August – 25 September 2013
Parish Council accepts offer that meets valuation and requirements of Church Property Trustees	30 September 2013	
Church Property Trustees sign sale and purchase agreement	3 October 2013 (conditional on demolition consents)	
Settlement date	30 January 2014	



## Chapter Seven - 2013 Buildings - Commentary - Rogers' Adoption Curve



Innovators are a small percentage of any group. If the average congregation size across the two main Sunday morning congregations is 120, then 2.5% of that number is 3. Innovation happened with the beginnings of alternative worship services such as Celtic Worship, Soulspace, Worship Jazz'd and Journey 21<sup>9</sup>

It was noticeable that several early adopters are present in the congregation. Some of these had been in the original vision group. 13.5% of 120 is 16 people and there would have been this number and more prepared to serve on the various groups from the Vision group, to Locating the Future, to the Mission Action Plan group and then the Capital Funding and Building groups. Early adopters have found the careful processes designed by the Presbyterian governance system to provide adequate checks and balances frustrating. They see the idea quickly and equally quickly commit to seeing it through as swiftly as possible. An early adopter seems to have the ability to emotionally detach and move on. Clinging on to the past or even to present arrangements is something they cannot understand and with which they are impatient. While at the beginning it was laggards who exited the parish or never joined the new amalgamation, after the non-affirmation of the new building complex in 2015, it was some early adopters who left in disappointment.

At the vote for the new building complex in February 2015, 51% affirmed the concept going ahead. This neatly comprises the combined total of innovators, early adopters and early majority types. Early Majority people are convinced by early adopters. While they would not move as quickly themselves, left to themselves they can see the new idea will work and are keen to move on into the future. They might think innovators are slightly crazy, but they are convinced by early adopter's arguments and get on board at that stage.

Early majority people have a role however in bringing on board the late majority person. Late majority adopters are not convinced by innovators nor by early adopter's arguments. They need more reassurances about financial risk and the suitability of the project. That a project is new or different is not a compelling argument for them. During the process of the amalgamation, it was interesting to watch late majority adopters come on board more slowly but usually steadily and surely. In TPP's case late majority people were often very quiet in meetings. They might ask questions for clarification and information but seldom made impassioned speeches. It was therefore hard to tell what the tenor of a meeting was

<sup>9</sup> People involved with these innovations along with Susan Jones were (Soulspace) Anne Knipe, Averil Demetriades, Ellen McClintock, Estelle Cormack and June Mitchell as well as other helpers including Ann and George Munro; Worship Jazz'd was the brainchild of Helen Carter. She worked with Susan Jones and was assisted by Gillian Allen. Journey 21 sprang from a request made by Ellen McClintock and early adopters were Fraser Ross and Alan McClintock. Others joined in the 'Direction Finders' planning as time went on - Anne Miles and Alison Gray with Fraser and Alan and Ellen. Chris Konings was key in some of the events planned and carried out through the Doing group as were David Draffin (convenor), Leo Neale, Derek Hemming, and Margaret Hughes. Chris and Mary Jane Konings were instrumental in creating a different atmosphere and structure for contemporary worship at TPP's Wai-iti Rd site.

until the vote came in. The vote for the Mission Action Plan recommendations (including focusing on the Wai-iti Rd site) was startlingly high for the Ministry Team who found out later that each of them had been mentally writing their letters of resignation the night before and were not sure right up until the result was announced how the meeting would vote.

This late majority group were convinced, having heard more accurate and realistic roll numbers and financial figures, that the risk of this new venture was too high. It needs half of this group (17%) to be convinced for the church to achieve the 67% needed for a 'successful' vote. In the usual process of adopting a new product on the market, late majority people will only adopt a product when most people are already using it and it is 'proven'. This makes voting for a new building difficult for them as the product is not in existence yet and so remains unproven until built and used. It needs to be said, however that the greatest personal transformations have been among this group of people as they have watched and thought about things, been asked to change and have experienced disruption. They have adapted and grown and often changed their minds about difficult decisions and arrangements. Some of those showing the most change are former members of St Paul's and Chalmers who have been uprooted by earthquake and took their time adapting to worshipping in the Trinity Church at College Rd. Now many of them name meeting new friends as a plus of the amalgamation and will state voluntarily that they now like worshipping in the Trinity Church building.

Another group which has changed is the relatively small group of former Trinity church members who had to adapt when two other congregations joined them quite suddenly post earthquake. While the congregation worshipping in the former St Stephen's church has had to cope with change in worship style, the fact that they have not had to shift buildings shows in attitudes and comments made. Sometimes other TPP members not from this location originally do not feel they are welcome on "St Stephen's" territory.

TPP has a laggard group which is at times bitter and angry and quite vocal. Some of these did not vote for amalgamation in the first place, yet have remained in the parish and cite their long term membership when objecting to changes in worship style, naming and location of churches, though they are not the most long serving members. 16% of 120 represents 19 people and particularly if they are together in one worship service or one location, this can be a formidable opposition, even if it is smaller than any other group in voting terms. They can frighten late majority thinkers who are listening quietly in the meeting, especially if the early majority are not well organised in putting an optimistic and future facing argument.

An individual's adoption profile is different for different issues. Someone who is a laggard regarding building new buildings, can be an innovator when it comes to fund raising. A person who is an early adopter when it comes to music can be a late majority person, slow to be convinced, when it comes to employing a youth worker. It is important not to pigeonhole people. A laggard regarding amalgamation might be an early adopter theologically speaking. In fact it is true for some at TPP that they prefer a traditional (formal) service format, but progressive theology when it comes to the sermon. Others like a contemporary service where more conservative theology is preached. In between there are others who have a different set of preferences as well!



## Chapter Eight 2014 Decommissioning churches, two ministers leave – timeline and events

The Seddon St complex, formerly St Paul's parish church and buildings were sold to property developer Kevin Pateman who plans to develop the site for houses to be built.



Possession date was the end of January 2014. The decommissioning service was led by Rev Rory Grant and the sermon delivered by Rev Dr Susan Jones.<sup>10</sup> Former ministers were invited and Rev Chris Elliot and Rev Haydn Pirie accepted the invitation.

### St Paul's Service of Thanksgiving and Decommissioning

The Service was led by Rev Rory Grant. Former ministers Revs Chris Elliott & Haydn Pirie spoke & Rev Susan Jones preached.

Below (clockwise from top left) are former minister Rev Haydn Pirie, former youth leader Janet Hogan who read a lesson, and Peter Jordan, Ron Paulin Heather Moffatt (holding a Communion Table Fall made by Joyce Binney) and Ken Linscott, who removed significant items from the Church.



It was a disappointment to many that the service could not be held inside the church itself. Not least because the January day was cold and windy! The procession of symbols wound its way to the church hall where a final hymn was sung before afternoon tea.



Photo: Roger Jones

Rev Rory Grant leads Service of Thanksgiving & Decommissioning at St Paul's on Sunday 19th January 2014

<sup>10</sup> See appendices for the text.

The culmination of four years of entering the Christmas Parade with a float had come in 2013 when TPP won first prize. The fate of the Hydro Grand hotel had been in the news for some years post earthquake so use of the building in this context was very topical.

A keen band of men and women worked on constructing the float over weeks beforehand in Leo Neale's shed.




## Minister leaves

After a period of 2 months stress leave for both Konings, Rev Mary Jane Konings resigned from TPP, (though not the Presbyterian ministry) in May 2014.

Chris's position which until then had been part of a combined 1.75 position held jointly by the couple was converted to a 1.0 ministry. This would put extra strain on the Ministry team, and Mary-Jane's skills in preaching, music and holiday programmes would be acutely missed.


## PRESBYTERIAN LINK




**Timaru  
Presbyterian  
PARISH**

December-February 2014 No 49

Incorporating Chalmers, St Paul's,  
St Stephen's & Trinity congregations

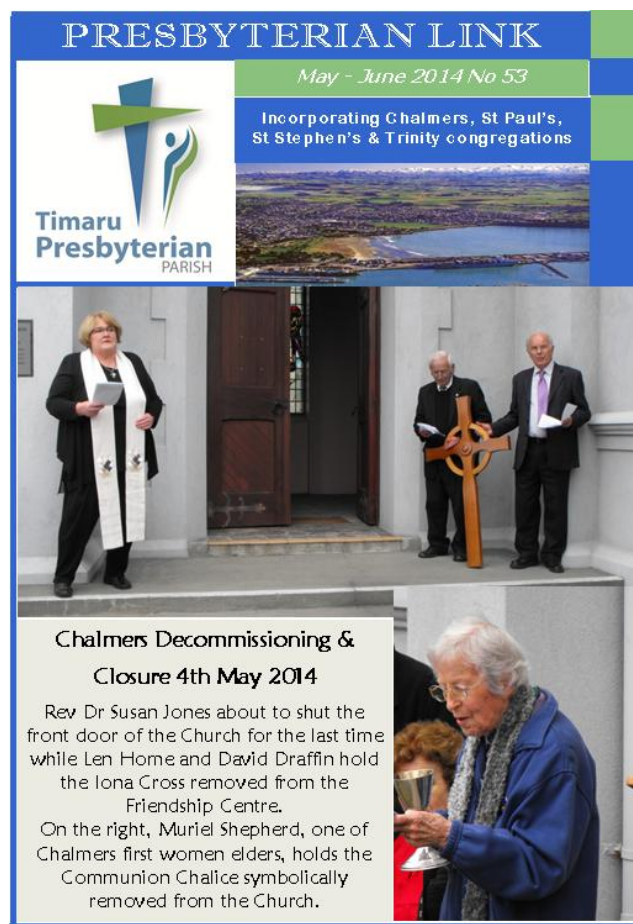
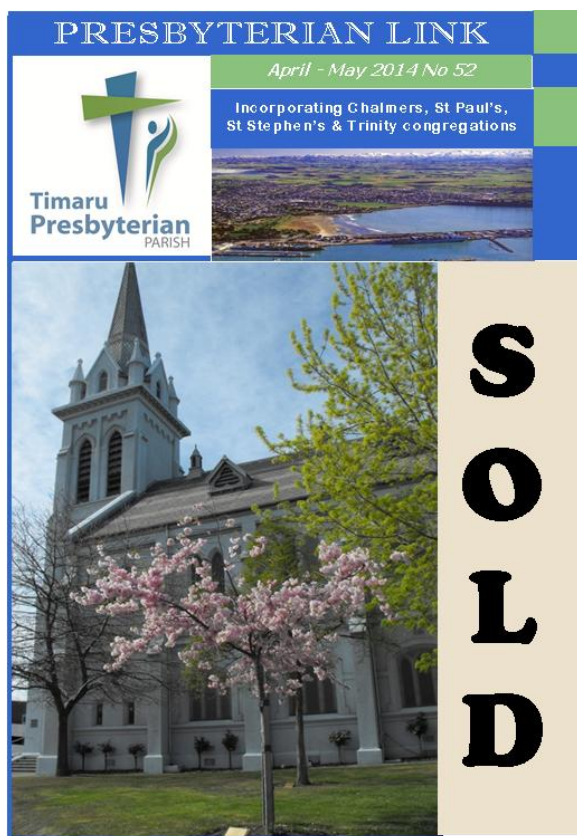




A Winning Witness

Three floats comprising Donkey, "Hydro Grand" and Nativity Scene which TPP entered in the Timaru Christmas Parade with the Life Church won the competition for the "Best Float" in the parade. The idea was "dreamed up" by David Draffin and Derek Hemming led the team which brought this successful project to fruition.





Chalmers' first church service had been held in the Theatre Royal and after the ceremony involving the removal of symbols 'from' the church which had had to be held outside the building, the group walked over to the Theatre Royal on Stafford St to continue the service and enjoy the afternoon tea and fellowship which followed.



Geraldine singer Zoe Scott sang at the last Worship Jazz'd. This had fallen to one of the ministers to organise after the original innovator had pulled back due to personal commitments and WJ provided too time consuming to continue, though the monthly event had pulled in a variety of people, different each time depending on which local musician was performing

## To build or not to build?

PRESBYTERIAN LINK	
June-July 2014 No 54	
	Incorporating Chalmers, St Paul's, St Stephen's & Trinity congregations
<b>Building Proposal Update</b> <b>Upcoming events to progress the proposal</b> <b>Sunday 15 June 10am</b> Combined Worship & Communion at Wai-iti Rd followed by a Congregational Gathering for information and discussion. <b>Sunday 6 July 10am</b> Combined Worship and Communion at Wai-iti Rd followed by a Congregational Meeting for decision making.	

### “Parish Council

To build or not to build? Half of this month's meeting was spent discussing the concept plans for the new building at Wai-iti Rd.

Council had already met with the Building Group and with the elders. Pros and cons were carefully compared.

Council decided to promote the building of the new complex to the congregation, with the encouragement to seek ways in which such a building would assist our mission to the community.”

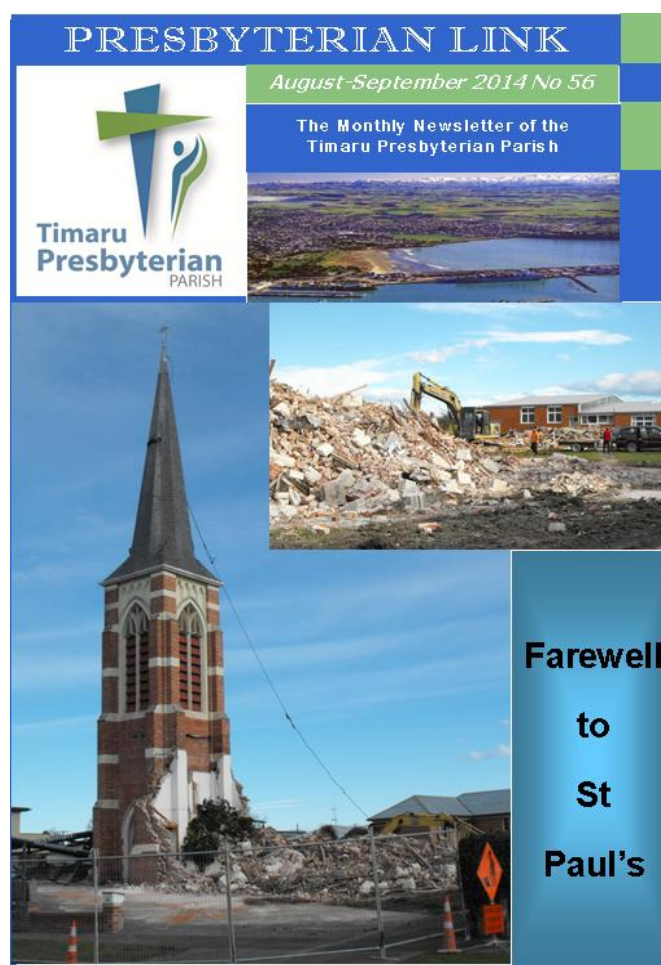




The third vote approved applying for permission to build a church following this concept with a budget of \$2.5million; passed 77% to 23%, with 8 abstentions. Those voting 'no' were asked to leave brief notes on their reasons in case some changes could be made.

PRESBYTERIAN LINK	
 <p>Timaru Presbyterian PARISH</p>	<p><i>July-August 2014 No 55</i></p> <p>Incorporating Chalmers, St Paul's, St Stephen's &amp; Trinity congregations</p> 
<h3>CONCEPT PLANS APPROVED</h3>	
<p>The Congregational Meeting on 6 July approved the Concept Plans for the new building at Wai-iti Rd by 72% to 27% with some abstentions.</p>	
<p>The vote applying for permission to build a church following this concept with a budget of \$2.5million was also passed 77% to 23%, with 8 abstentions.</p>	
<p>Approval for the project is to be sought from Alpine Presbytery, then from the Church Property Trustees</p>	
	

The women's dinner had become an institution and had a Thai theme in 2015 after Chris and Mary Jane had visited south east Asia for a family wedding.



The Seddon St complex having been sold the previous year and decommissioned almost 6 months previously in January 2014, it was a shock to many that one day in August 2014 the developer demolished the church without a lot of warning for TPP church members.

A group gathered across the street outside Margaret Wilson home to view the proceedings.





Towards the end of 2014, three Fan the Flame events were planned to act as stimulus events while the church waited for the Church Property trustees' response to the new building proposal. The first was in September focusing on Spiritual Growth. This one, the second focused on Connecting with the Community. The third with its focus on Worship was postponed by Rory until March 2015 in order to make the presence of Malcolm Gordon possible.



**Event # 2**  
**"Fuel the Fire"**  
**Connecting the**  
**Community with Christ**

**Friday 17 October 7-9 pm at St Stephens**

Includes coffee & dessert

Gathering again Saturday 18th at 8am for breakfast,  
 finishing at 12 noon.

The traditionally popular Plant Sale continued September 2014, held in the former St Stephen's church complex on Wai iti Rd.



Then came the news TPP had been awaiting for some months.

### **'Amber light' from Church Property Trustees – Reconsideration needed**

Just before Christmas, Church Property Trustees responded to the application to build with concerns on whether our total numbers were engaged in the project and whether TPP had a realistic idea of its ability to be financially buoyant once the \$2.5million had been used to build the new complex. Research began immediately into the roll and into financial scenarios to forecast for the next five years.

Parish Council reported to the congregation before Christmas, December 7<sup>th</sup> with the news that the regular congregation was approximately 187 people, whereas the total roll of members and associates was 581.



The Holiday Programme run by Cherie Reynolds(P) and helpers again was fully subscribed.

This picture shows Gwenyth Jones (S) and Elaine Falconer (C) working with the children

## **[space]** *watch this*

**[space]** was an important foray into the community with a mission opportunity.

This was a drop in space for busy Christmas shoppers and 100 people came through during the ten days it was open.

More than 10 people worked with Susan Jones to make this happen, most of them over 70 years of age, some over 80!

An Easter follow up would be planned for 2015 by a group led by Rory Grant. (The **[space]** logo was Rory's concept)

...a calm oasis...

...space to reflect...

...rest for the soul...

Monday - Friday December 1-5 @ 10am-4pm

& Saturday December 6 @ 10am-1pm

in the former Goodwill shop, Church St, Timaru



**The parish celebrated its fifth birthday on Advent Sunday 2014**





## Chapter Eight - 2014 -Decommissionings, ministers leave – Commentary using Carl S Dudley’s chart on Dynamics of Church Size

Church Size Dynamic Chart				
“One size doesn’t fit all...” is not only the title of a book but is a reality for Church Leadership. This chart presents four general categories of church size, each with its own organizing dynamic and leadership challenge. The answer to such questions as: <i>how is the church structured? Who provides direction and ministry? What is the role of a Board, of a Pastor, of Staff? What opportunities and challenges exist? How are decisions made and directions identified? How is vision developed and mission fulfilled? ...</i> differ according to size.				
Church Size	<b>SMALL CHURCH ... Family Church</b> 50–200 [95% of NAM churches]	<b>Large-SMALL CHURCH ... Pastoral Church</b> 200 – 400 [3%]	<b>SMALL-Large CHURCH ... Program Church</b> 400 – 800 [1.5%]	<b>LARGE CHURCH ... Corporate Church</b> 800 – 1,200 [.5 %]
<b>Structural Model</b>	<b>Collective Board</b> Single Pastor; Ministry Board – Consensus Structure Shared responsibilities, little or no management hierarchy, decision by consensus, primarily relational	<b>Working/Administrative Board</b> Pastor/Staff; Working Board Working Board with some responsibility for operations, staff and board create plans and implement programs in consensus, balance between relational/programmatic concerns	<b>Traditional Structural Board</b> Senior Pastor/ Organizational Staff and Working Board Partnership between Board Chair and Pastor key to leadership and management, committees work in partnership with senior staff	<b>Policy Governance Board</b> Senior Pastor / Board Chair partnership Board develops policy, benchmark measurements, staff/executive plan – implement – and report ministry,
<b>Board Role</b>	<b>Boards are primarily ministry partners focused on expanding the pastoral care</b> - Leadership tends to reside in a few key personalities and/or families - Board work is primarily focused on immediate ministry concerns, and there is little distinction between Board membership and Ministry responsibility	<b>Boards elevate their focus from congregational care to Mission/Vision development</b> - Continue to coordinate the work of a variety of committees and groups - Learn to assess, evaluate, and approved/disapprove of ideas and activities that support the Church mission. - Develop new lay leadership	<b>Boards focus primarily on creating policy and systems for performance management, maintaining accountability, and preventing vision drift</b> - The governing board relinquishes the daily management of the church to the staff team to focus on vision direction and staff protection	<b>Board grows smaller and operates from a strategic and generative mindset:</b> - The board provides strong support and an accountability system to the head of staff - Other leaders learn to trust the decision-making lead of a smaller group
<b>Pastoral Role</b>	<b>Relational Leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Serve as a chaplain in relationship to the congregational needs - Primary focus on the functions of ministry as assigned and expected, management is related to personal pastoral responsibilities	<b>Vision-Driven leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Discern and articulate an energizing vision for the congregation, translating the vision into specific goals to be accomplished, and be able to clearly describe the congregation and it’s mission in real terms. - Elevate the generative activity of the board to work in a strategic partnership - Communicate a caring presence in the congregation while beginning to transfer the level of one-to-one care to others	<b>Managerial Leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Redirect a purely relational style of leadership with the congregation in order to provide management perspective, shifting the focus of care to the staff team and key lay leaders. - Guide and direct the collective performance of the staff team - Maintain vision focus while providing managerial direction	<b>Strategic leadership. As the head of staff the Pastor</b> - Learns to focus on the right things, say no to the wrong things, and spend time on the important things - Focuses on big picture rather than day-to-day management, projects the leadership image of the church
<b>Staff/Team Role</b>	Staff serve to supplement and assist the Pastoral role through specific tasks [secretarial, janitorial] and/or ministry assignments [worship, youth] - Staff are primarily drawn from volunteers or part-time employees. - Staff work assignments, while primarily directed by the Pastor, are subject to the direction of church leaders as needed	<b>Addressing Specific Ministry Targets</b> - Staff are added primarily to address specialized programs. - Staff addition is related to budget concerns - Challenge to begin to embrace staff identity as a distinct team - Balancing the work of a generalist with the work of a specialist	<b>Organizing and Training Others to Minister</b> - Because volunteerism can’t keep pace with leadership needs, staff serve to organize ministry - Staff carry responsibility to recruit and train volunteers - Staff move from general pastoral skill to specific ministry specialization - The executive leadership team emerges, consisting of both staff and key active lay leaders	<b>Align the work of multiple staff subteams:</b> - Integrate independent ministries into a coordinated symbiotic system - Program staff challenged to maintain a relational focus in ministry as the administrative components expand - Administrative support staff begins to match Program staff in numbers - Role of administrative director/pastor emerges as senior pastor focuses more time on strategic leadership and teaching.
<b>Growth Challenge</b>	<b>Growth by Attraction:</b> - Growth primarily derived through relationships, galvanized by pastoral contact not program involvement - Challenge to involve new people and initiate new ministries - Challenge to extending sense of purpose and vision beyond existing relationships	<b>Assumptions about Growth must be examined:</b> - The congregation must come to terms with an understanding of growth and its dynamics, whether growth is desirable and if the culture can accommodate growth. - Growth at this stage is primarily a leadership and vision issue.	<b>Growth is related to capacity:</b> - Ideas to generate growth are only limited by the capacity of the staff team and limitations of facility / resources. - The church’s capacity for growth is largely a function of the size and adaptability of its budget	<b>Growth is assumed and planned</b> - Growth to this size created an understanding and expectation of growth, including the idea that a lack of growth leads to stagnation. - Growth is an ongoing management issue. The nature and direction of growth is continually negotiated and strategically planned.

### Common history – four small family churches

The four former parishes were all family sized churches (yellow). Some still carried infrastructure and programmes (especially St Paul’s)<sup>11</sup> which reflected their recent past history as large small church (green) but

<sup>11</sup> St Paul’s had an afterschool club with a paid worker and a youth coordinator at the point of amalgamation.

they had one focus in their Sunday morning service. Generally the core of the Sunday morning congregation knew each other quite well, though it did become clear that people whom folk said they ‘missed’ after amalgamation were people whose names they didn’t always know. They had however, grown used to seeing their faces at church on Sundays. The communities of the former family churches proved to be quite ‘thin’ as there were **not** good networks which could have been helpful in persuading some more fringe members to ‘hang in’ with the new parish. In the end this author decided, after listening to nostalgic comments about life in the former parishes, that the ‘Chalmers’ and ‘St Paul’s’ communities etc., had only really existed on Sunday morning between approximately 9.30am and 12 noon before and after and during Sunday morning worship.

<b>Collective Board</b> Single Pastor; Ministry Board – Consensus Structure Shared responsibilities, little or no management hierarchy, decision by consensus, primarily relational	Most of the former parishes had a sole ministry when they could afford it. The Session was the ‘Board’ and decisions were reached at by general agreement. It would be unusual for a Session to be widely divided on a decision.  Elders who were not on Parish Council in TPP missed the monthly Session meetings which were as much as anything, a meeting of friends and colleagues. Also, this was the place in the parish where actions were conceived and generated and they missed being in at the start of ideas. “We don’t know what’s going on” generally meant “we didn’t know this was coming because we weren’t in at the start” or “I don’t understand this idea because I wasn’t in on its development from the beginning.
<b>Boards are primarily ministry partners focused on expanding the pastoral care</b> - Leadership tends to reside in a few key personalities and/or families - Board work is primarily focused on immediate ministry concerns, and there is little distinction between Board membership and Ministry responsibility	The author could name 3-4 people who were the key leaders in the four parishes. Sometimes they were powerful enough to reverse Session decision made in their absence. Some of these power blocs dissolved after amalgamation and 2-3 significant people began attending other denominations in the town after 1-3 years. This allowed others into the decision-making process and allowed new ventures, especially in worship to develop.  Elders on Session generally all had an elder’s district of people who were under their pastoral care, so their role was both governance and pastoral. Sometimes this dual role of pastoral care for the people along with governance prevented Sessions making difficult decisions to address decline.
<b>Relational Leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Serve as a chaplain in relationship to the congregational needs - Primary focus on the functions of ministry as assigned and expected, management is related to personal pastoral responsibilities	By the reactions when TPP ministers sought to ‘lead’ rather than ‘moderate’ meetings, this kind of leadership from the minister was not known before. Since both spiritual and temporal matters were the business of Council, property matters were dealt with through Council and this also was a change to which some, especially those with considerable Board of Managers experience did not adjust well.
Staff serve to supplement and assist the Pastoral role through specific tasks [secretarial, janitorial] and/or ministry assignments [worship, youth] - Staff are primarily drawn from volunteers or part-time employees. - Staff work assignments, while primarily directed by the Pastor, are subject to the direction of church leaders as needed	Former parishes with the exception of St Paul’s had barely employed secretarial assistance. What secretaries there were, served part time. St Paul’s assisted by a church member, employed workers in the children and family area. When the first paid employment happened, volunteer workers were upset and left the church, so the transfer from fully volunteer to partly professional was a problem. This may account for the rocky beginnings to employment at the TPP level. There was some confusion over the role of a paid worker as opposed to the role of volunteers/helpers.
<b>Growth by Attraction:</b> - Growth primarily derived through relationships, galvanized by pastoral contact not program involvement - Challenge to involve new people and initiate new ministries - Challenge to extending sense of purpose and vision beyond existing relationships	Personal contact was the modus operandi of the former parishes. With the greater infrastructure and increased meeting time in the amalgamated parish, regular parishioners missed the pastoral contacts they had had with ‘their’ minister. Also with the restructuring of the visiting list to make their more geographically rational, people missed known pastoral contacts and connections.  People had felt in the smaller family sized churches that they ‘knew everyone’. They also liked the feeling that they knew everything that was going on because it all went on pretty much on Sunday morning when they were mostly all present. The two Sunday morning worship services have led to an ‘us and them’ feeling and lack of knowledge of what is happening elsewhere leads to suspicion of others. (This is the second challenge noted on the left)

## Amalgamation: a sudden change to being a small-large church from four small churches

Initially when the rolls were put together, (Appendix Two) the total roll was about 1040. 40% of these were pastoral members, (not official members, but often relations of members or family members contacted through weddings, baptisms or funerals). This places the new TPP in the Large church category which ranges from 800-1200. There was already an intimation that the rolls inherited from the family churches were inflated with non attenders and even some names of people who had moved out of town, since roll revisions are not easy in a declining small church.

	Year	Members	%	Assoc Members	%	Pastoral Roll	%	Total
TOTAL	2009/2010	486	46.7	134	12.9	420	40.4	1040

Since then with some revisions and adjustments, the total members' roll has reduced to 481, comprising 368 members and 113 associates. A 'good' attendance at voting meetings is 130 (with 40 apologies) i.e. slightly less than half of the total eligible to vote. Also, an educated assessment of the roll indicates that only 187 are regular worship attenders. These are probably the ones who contribute most financially to the church's income.

	Members	%	Associates	%	Voting Roll	Pastoral Roll- nonmembers	Total roll
<b>Nov 2014</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>76% of voting roll</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>24% of voting roll</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>815</b>

So while the numbers put TPP into the LARGE church (800-120) range, (purple) *effectively* TPP is operating only in the small LARGE church range (blue) or even with further realistic roll revision, may be operating only in the large SMALL church (green) range.

Church Size	SMALL CHURCH ... <i>Family Church</i> 50–200 [95% of NAm churches]	Large-SMALL CHURCH ... <i>Pastoral Church</i> 200 – 400 [3%]	SMALL-Large CHURCH ... <i>Program Church</i> 400 – 800 [1.5%]	LARGE CHURCH ... <i>Corporate Church</i> 800 – 1,200 [.5 %]
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Roy Oswald argues that the transition between Family Church (yellow) and the Pastoral church (green) and the transition between the pastoral Church (green) and the Programme Church (blue) are the two key transitions if a church is growing through these stages. TPP did not grow through these stages but jumped in one move from family church where the people are in charge and the minister is a chaplain to them with pastoral care the emphasis, to whatever size TPP chooses to settle at. The people moving through this abrupt transition brought with them their family church expectations, culture and mind set (described above in the yellow table). They liked the feeling they were cared for and cared for others in a well functioning pastoral network. They liked that the primarily operating mode was relational. They liked knowing and relating to their sole charge minister. They liked being in one location. This preference for family style church has showed up most clearly when the decision whether or not to operate from one site came under discussion. Some were very firm that the new parish would not 'work' until it was located on one site and everyone was together.

The main challenge of the transition from small (yellow) to large-Small church (green) (family to pastoral) is the shift in power from established parishioners to the clergy. When this grows slowly over a period of time it is because the minister has stayed on, usually past the 5 year mark and trust is developing and growing between minister and lay people. When the minister stays beyond 5 years, the congregation can trust that they are serious and committed to the health and well being of the parish. When a model abruptly changes, that time of relationship and community building is not available.

The challenge of the transition from a large-small church(green) to a small large church (blue) (pastoral to programme church) is the need for the church to operate with the senior minister in more of a leadership role, maintaining the vision, and leaving daily management to (usually) paid staff. While the minister relates to the congregation it is through a management mode, and pastoral care must be primarily the responsibility of either volunteers or paid staff. This is a very different ministry role from that of personal chaplain to a close knit family which everyone had been used to in the small, family church. When "staff move from general pastoral skill to specific ministry specialization" that indicates the growth of specialized areas of the church, perhaps with different programmes for different age groups or types of people (youth, parents and children, men, elderly

etc.) This is also very different from the one-cell family church where everyone knew what everyone was doing, and types or generations were not having different experiences of church.

<b>Large-SMALL CHURCH ... Pastoral Church</b> 200 – 400 [3%]	<b>Timaru Presbyterian Parish experience or challenges posed by this model</b> <b>(Roll numbers November 2014 = 420)</b>
<b>Working/Administrative Board</b> Pastor/Staff; Working Board Working Board with some responsibility for operations, staff and board create plans and implement programs in consensus, balance between relational/programmatic concerns	The present Parish Council still has members for whom pastoral concerns are uppermost. The Council has difficulty working at the level of creating and implementing plan proactively, but tends to react and to get bogged in detail. (see commentary to Chapter Nine for discussion of levels of work)
<b>Boards elevate their focus from congregational care to Mission/Vision development</b> - Continue to coordinate the work of a variety of committees and groups - Learn to assess, evaluate, and approved/disapprove of ideas and activities that support the Church mission. - Develop new lay leadership	These abilities are growing. The intentional recruiting training and developing of lay leadership has been promoted by the clergy and agreed to by the Council but could not be said to be a proactive intentional direction of the Council.
<b>Vision-Driven leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Discern and articulate an energizing vision for the congregation, translating the vision into specific goals to be accomplished, and be able to clearly describe the congregation and it's mission in real terms. - Elevate the generative activity of the board to work in a strategic partnership - Communicate a caring presence in the congregation while beginning to transfer the level of one-to-one care to others	Ministers have put considerable energy into this in different forms. When they do this, however, they are accused of being 'directors' rather than 'moderators' (the traditional Presbyterian model.) Strategic planning and looking ahead is a task many of the past and present Councillors have struggled with. (see Commentary on Chapter Nine) There is discontent particularly among those who are housebound that the traditional one to one chaplaincy style ministry is not happening. This is seen as a defect in the minister(s).
<b>Addressing Specific Ministry Targets</b> - Staff are added primarily to address specialized programs. - Staff addition is related to budget concerns - Challenge to begin to embrace staff identity as a distinct team - Balancing the work of a generalist with the work of a specialist	While staff have been added, this specialization worked to some extent in the youth area, though there were areas where the difference between how volunteers and professionals worked was not understood. Within the ministry team, it was a struggle to define specialties – due to trust only growing slowly, the traditional expectations of parishioners continuing, poor definition of roles and the ministers' own needs to be satisfying parishioners' expressed needs – all perfectly understandable reactions on all sides given the history of the former parishes. The valuing of the eldership is a strength of the Presbyterian system but it can also lead to an anti clericalism which mitigates against trusting the leadership of ministers as opposed to their moderating and pastoral care.
<b>Assumptions about Growth must be examined:</b> - The congregation must come to terms with an understanding of growth and its dynamics, whether growth is desirable and if the culture can accommodate growth. - Growth at this stage is primarily a leadership and vision issue.	There have been some instances where it seems no more members of 'the family' are desired, i.e. the culture cannot accommodate growth. Probably not enough credit was given to the time and energy needed for people to adjust emotionally to suddenly living in a 'reconstituted/blended family' with all the stress and trust issues that brings. While people were taught that the attractional model no longer worked, what people actually did was redouble efforts to produce more attractive attritional events. Still older members attributed the absence of the younger generation to that generation's lack of commitment and could not understand why they simply didn't come. Desire for growth was heavily influenced by the perceived need to have more people attending the main Sunday morning events and thereby contributing financially through offerings.

Some of the characteristics of the large Small church (pastoral) church were being picked up, but slowly and with reluctance and an only slowly growing awareness of the issues. With quite a large number of people to educate and involve, it was difficult to find the opportunities which would work best to talk over the changing culture outside the church and how the culture inside the church needed to adapt not only to the demise of Christendom, but also to the increase of numbers within TPP itself. This kind of education and motivating communication was often 'scuttled' by emotive and urgent issues to do with earthquake damage, sale of buildings and decisions on location. There was a lot going on!

<b>SMALL-Large CHURCH ... Program Church</b> 400 – 800 [1.5%]	<b>Timaru Presbyterian Parish experiences or challenges to achieve this kind of church. Nov 2014 Voting members = 420. Add 334 pastoral contacts = 754 total</b>
<b>Traditional Structural Board</b> Senior Pastor/ Organizational Staff and Working Board Partnership between Board Chair and Pastor key to leadership and management, committees work in partnership with senior staff	Understanding of how to put this kind of structure into practice started to become clear to past and present Parish Councillors when the CGO Transitions workshop happened February 2015. Till then there had been confusion about the relationship between the TP Parish Council and the ministry groups ('committees') only some of whom had paid staff to work with. It appeared that people felt their concerns were heard only when they had talked to a minister.
<b>Boards focus primarily on creating policy and systems for performance management, maintaining accountability, and preventing vision drift</b> - The governing board relinquishes the daily management of the church to the staff team to focus on vision direction and staff protection	This kind of clear 'division of labour' had not been achieved by the end of the five years under study. This is quite a cultural shift for former family style church members to make.
<b>Managerial Leadership: The Pastor must</b> - Redirect a purely relational style of leadership with the congregation in order to provide management perspective, shifting the focus of care to the staff team and key lay leaders. - Guide and direct the collective performance of the staff team	While pastoral care was being picked up and managed quite well by one of the ministry groups, there was still the general disappointment that the ministers were not visiting more in a traditional manner



- Maintain vision focus while providing managerial direction	Maintaining vision focus was difficult when it had not been clearly set by the Council. Council members were therefore not clear themselves and so not able to help maintain vision focus among the congregations.
<b>Organizing and Training Others to Minister</b> - Because volunteerism can't keep pace with leadership needs, staff serve to organize ministry - Staff carry responsibility to recruit and train volunteers - Staff move from general pastoral skill to specific ministry specialization - The executive leadership team emerges, consisting of both staff and key active lay leaders	For a time the youth worker did train volunteers working in that area. Ministers trained prospective elders and maintained Parish Council annual retreats. Ministry specialization was difficult to achieve due to continuing traditional expectations by both ministers and parish members. Allowing an executive to operate seemed to be a step too far for the family-style mindset which was still operating. This meant the volume of work and contacts proved difficult to handle and the workload climbed, especially for the ministers.
<b>Growth is related to capacity:</b> - Ideas to generate growth are only limited by the capacity of the staff team and limitations of facility / resources. - The church's capacity for growth is largely a function of the size and adaptability of its budget	In hindsight the tying of ministerial time to traditional minister roles in the main meant that financial resource was tied up in traditional ministry while the ministers were not released to do strategic and managerial work required by the numbers now on the roll. The same conversations were being held with the same issues being raised, a poor use of time but necessary because people were not convinced at an emotional level that a seemingly more distant but still relational managerial/ strategic approach was required to handle the greater numbers and greater complexity of the parish.

That TPP members and ministers found it difficult to operate in the church dynamic required for the size of the new parish (either as a pastoral or a programme church) is not surprising.

- There had not been enough time to trust the new leaders who had joined more or less at the point of amalgamation.
- Trust was also only *beginning* to grow between church members and elders.
- There was 'history' between the former parishes which meant distrust and suspicion and judgment was the default position between some individuals. Some former parishes had reputations as being 'aloof' or 'working class' or 'liberal' or 'suburban'. This made the forming of trusting relationships a slow process. Considering this, there has been amazing progress in community building, but it has resulted in a happier blended family, not a happy pastoral or programme church.
- The family church culture which had been most familiar was still the default position emotionally for many members. As has been already stated, this is particularly seen in the publicly expressed desire to be on one site and the anathema with which a feeling of 'us and them' has been detected between the Wai-iti Rd congregation and the College Rd congregation. It brings to mind the saying "culture eats strategy for breakfast."
- Without the structures of a pastoral or programme church to adequately address pastoral needs, the falling away of some more fringe or needy members is not surprising. It is as if the numbers are adjusting to the parish's ability to handle them.



## Chapter Nine - 2015 - Postscript – timeline and events

### Postscript to Five Years

#### Second Minister leaves

Susan Jones would announce just before Christmas that she was accepting a call from St Andrews on the Terrace (Wellington) beginning 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

#### Decision to reaffirm the new complex or not

Over the Christmas period, twenty financial scenarios were worked up by a workgroup appointed by Council. Twelve would be presented to Council after Christmas and one chosen to present to the congregation. This included the need to raise \$500,000 as well as building the new complex in order to keep the operating budget solvent while building happened. As a result of this new information the decision to build was **not** reaffirmed at the congregational meeting on February 1 2015.

Recommendations that renewed effort be put into building a strategic plan were carried.

### Events in February/March 2015

- Organisational seminar with elders and Parish Councillors with CGO Transition Ltd Feb 13/14.
- TPP's first five- yearly parish review – led by new Alpine Presbytery resulted in Rev Martin Stewart being appointed Interim Moderator, Convenor of the Settlement Board and Ministry Team Leader. Two Presbytery-appointed elders will attend Parish Council with him.
- Fan the Flame – on Worship, held with Geraldine and Temuka parishes March 14/15 with Revs Malcolm Gordon and Mark Pierson.





## Chapter Nine - 2015 - Postscript – Commentary using CGO Transitions’ Developmental Steps

### CGO<sup>12</sup> Transitions Ltd – Stages of Development

In August 2014, Susan Jones and the newly acting Parish Clerk, Ron Paulin attended an organisational seminar hosted by Hope Presbyterian Church, Christchurch and presented by Judith McMorland and Hazel Hodgkin. So many helpful concepts were presented, Susan promoted this at TPP and they came (with some generous financial support by elders) to present a seminar specifically for TPP in February 2015. The CGO Transitions model includes three building blocks – Developmental stages, the 5 C’s (capacity, complexity, context, capability and composition) and Levels of work.

#### Developmental Stages

##### **Founding/Forming**

Requires practical hands-on work for initiating action a cause, and providing resources (people and material) to translate idea into action.

##### **Getting Established/Organising**

Oversees the practical work, resourcing the people who are active, setting up basic systems and practices, leading teams, providing training and developing staff and volunteers, attending to basic infrastructure, translating current activities to the common cause, problem solving.

##### **Becoming more productive/Managing**

Supports *organising* by setting up systems and structures independent of particular people/office holders; planning and budgeting for the medium term, managing deployment of resources, creating a climate of effective practice, quality standards and personal responsibility; managing people and their responsiveness to change, building capacity and capability, sustaining the operational integrity of the organisation.

##### **Leading/Governing**

Supports *management* by clear definition of the strategic aims of the organisation, developing policy and direction, reinterpreting the mission/cause in light of changes in the environment, preparing for the long term viability of the agency, evaluating effectiveness of outcomes and the integrity and on-going relevance of the organisation in current social, economic and political contexts, maintaining reputation and resources.

##### **Charting new water/ Elaborating**

Builds confidence for the future by diversifying and adapting to changing contexts, reinterpreting, re-visioning purpose and mission; supporting management through strong external advocacy and effective critical review of organisational and governance practices; imagining the future and preparing the organisation to meet new challenges of service and resourcing; seeking opportunities to make fundamental change at national and global levels.

#### Stages of Development in TPP

The four former parishes had grown through the first two stages of an organisation’s life mostly before the time of present members, so the behaviours associated with founding/forming were unknown to most members. Procedures in each former parish were already established and in many cases, prized and valued by church members, sometime consciously and sometimes unconsciously. Most members had experience of their churches being productive and managing well. The need to return to ‘forming’ tasks was therefore an ill-fitting manoeuvre ‘Founding/forming’ behaviour was overlain on top of established structures and customs.

‘Getting established’ tasks required at this point were a new experience for most members. *Oversees the practical work, resourcing the people who are active, setting up basic systems and practices, leading teams, providing training and developing staff and volunteers, attending to basic infrastructure, translating current activities to the common cause, problem solving.* In an atmosphere where quite a lot of clinging on to customs and patterns was happening, it was difficult for an entirely new structure to emerge and be owned by everyone.

<sup>12</sup> Common Good Organisations

More 'getting established' tasks were needed with corresponding changes in structures to fit the needs of the new parish but people were still getting to know each other and adjusting to different people having a say over 'their' property and worship. From a leadership point of view while there was the right to make decisions over these aspects, there was a consciousness of the need to move carefully and to have 'permission' to go on to others' 'territory'

## Levels of Work

The CGO Transitions team also developed the concept of levels of work as a building block for organisations going through transitions. In general the first four-five levels are relevant to organisations of the TPP's size.

### LEVELS AND TIMEFRAMES Elliott Jaques' model

7	20-50YRS	VALUE SYSTEMS
6	10-20YRS	
5	5-10YRS	
4	2-5YRS	ADDING VALUE FOR FUTURE
3	1-2YRS	
2	3 - 12 MONTHS	SERVICE DELIVERY
1	0-3 MONTHS	

Part of the Council's activity from time to time needs to be strategic Level Four work, developing the 5 year plan which undergirds yearly planning. Then yearly planning refers constantly to this plan to fine tune the individual activities which will lead to completion of the plan.

Level Three is the area in which Parish Council needs to be operating most, planning the whole years' activity, where it dovetails with last year and how it will lead on to the year ahead.

Level Two is where a team leader gathers, e.g., musicians and plans out the next 3 months or term of repertoire dealing with issues deeper than only this week's playlist.

Level One is 'grassroots' work where small projects are undertaken or the routine work needed daily/ weekly in a parish (cleaning, preparation of services, flowers, music etc.)

## Levels of Work in TPP

The strength of the parish is in its level one thinkers who act well at the grassroots on practical projects. These continued through this unsettled time. The Christmas Float, the starting up of Worship Jazz'd and the continued participation in the Relay for Life are examples of this. Several women were vital to the success of Soulspace through their contribution of practical carrying through of creative ideas to create each 'station'.

Level two thinkers are those who fill the roles of ministry team coordinators. They can look ahead approximately a term at a time to organise and plan individual outreach projects, youth group programmes, kidstime staffing, rosters, etc. This is also a strength, Presbyterians are good managers and organisers

It is at level three that TPP tends to run out of resource. It is notable that year planners have been slow to emerge and in some years have not taken form at all. The inability to look forward a whole year is a lack of inherent ability to think at level three, rather than only a response to the unexpected crises that have happened due to earthquake, illness, resignations etc. Also working against concerted level three thinking has been a lack as yet of a combined purpose and vision to which people have given their mental and emotional assent.

This combined purpose/vision requires more level four thinking than has been happening in the TPP project. Some of this level of thinking was applied in the lead up to the amalgamation, but that 'powerful guiding coalition' went away and the parish did not grasp the need to create a specific vision with well defined roles for leaders at all levels in relation to that vision – to use Kotter's phrase, leaders were not 'empowered' to enact the vision.

Now, having been given the building blocks of the CGO Transition's development model, there is hope this can happen.

## Chapter Ten - Epilogue – an overview of the change process

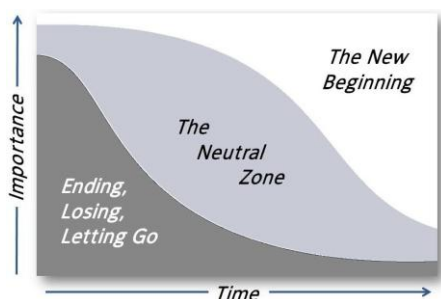
In any transition, it is not as simple as only an ending and a beginning. Transitions do not happen with a snap of the fingers, but are usually an elongated process.

In churches where the majority of the workforce is volunteers, and the main employed people have a dual role of spiritual/pastoral oversight and leadership, the ability to enact the transition and achieve even short term goals is compromised. Add in these facts

- few church members are experienced in making change happen in church culture,
- they are long term members of that culture and likely to remain so,
- they are emotionally involved in the way the culture works
- they are all members of a family-style system,

then the task is complex. Following William Bridges' model of transition change, the task is described as simple: "Quite simply, these leaders work to identify exactly what is changing (*'endings'*); enable people navigate through the transition (*'neutral zone'*); and build readiness to deliver the change (*'new beginnings'*)."<sup>13</sup> But, in a largely volunteer, value-laden system where there is a long, slow, throughput of people which follows a God operating on an eternal time frame, this is not a fast nor a simple process.

Another insight from Bridges' model is that neither the ending nor the beginning nor his proposed neutral zone are separate from each other. All three coexist for a large part of the process. The ending/losing/letting go part of the transition extends well into the period of change, while right from the start of the transition the new is already present, probably, in some cases, before people are quite ready for it. The neutral zone coexists with these two states, swelling to a large part of the process in the middle and diminishing towards the 'end' (if an end is ever reached)



Bridges' model depicts the 'importance' of the three components rather than their amount or volume. Ending becomes slowly less important, the new becomes more important, and the neutral zone has its place, then makes way for the new to be the arrived at state. Appendix 3 is a paper written to capture some of the discomfort of the liminal space or neutral zone as a group moves through a transition. Already but not yet, might be the motto for such period. This paper contains scripture metaphors such

as the story of the exodus gives us. First Exodus supplies us with the release from the old, (escape from Egypt), then the liminal journey through the desert, and finally the arrival in the Promised Land. In the first few years, when the early days of amalgamation did not offer instant release from pain and uncertainty, it was an 'aha' moment when TPP members realised they were still in the 'in between' space, not already arrived at the Promised Land. It gave them some perspective on their experience. This 'aha' however was a moment when it could have been realised too that amalgamating was only half the vision. Amalgamation was intended to be a means to a more important end – to be more effective in mission. Fresh visioning was required to achieve that.

It is difficult to pin point when 'the new' has arrived. In some senses for TPP it has already arrived in wider relationships, greater spiritual depth, new expressions of worship and combined efforts at different types of mission. The new building complex planned for the Wai iti Rd site was seen by many as the arrival point- the destination, the point from which the new parish could move forward together. To their surprise some found that now they had got used to the worship arrangements at Trinity Church in College Rd, they were not sure they wanted to shift again. This brings to mind David Griebner's story of the Carpenter and the Unbuilder, which

<sup>13</sup> <http://changeworks.com.au/transition-management/>

illustrates the human tendency to be daunted by the idea of journeying on and the human need to settle and seek refuge from the difficult and disturbing task of making the next transition and the next and the next.

The Unbuilder offers this sage advice when the Carpenter confesses to confusion about which path to take next. "Let your desire to be with the ruler become more powerful in you than your uncertainty and fear about choosing the right or wrong path." When an individual church member is able to come to that stage, where following what they perceive to be the best path to God is what they see as most important, *then* there comes a corresponding ability to let go the old which may have seemed impossibly dear until then, to step out into the transition and make the journey into the unknown new of the commonwealth of God. May we all manage to be so trusting and so free!

## Epilogue to the Epilogue!

### *The Carpenter and the Unbuilder: The Invitation* by David M. Griebner<sup>14</sup>

Once upon a time there was a man living in a certain kingdom who received an invitation from his ruler to come to dinner. Something inside him was excited as never before by the invitation. Something was afraid as well. Would he have the right clothes to wear? Would his manners be good enough for his ruler's table? What would they talk about when they were not eating? Above all, the man was frightened by the long journey to the ruler's castle. So what did the man do? Well, he spent one month deciding what to wear and buying the clothes he did not already have. He spent two months learning the rules of etiquette and practicing them as he ate. He spent three months reading up on all the latest issues faced by the kingdom so he would have something to say. Finally he faced the journey itself. By trade the man was a carpenter. He built small houses and extra outhouses and garages better than anyone else. After he had packed the clothing and food he thought he would need for the journey, he had room for only a little more. So he decided to pack a few tools, enough to permit him to build adequate overnight shelter on the journey. Then he started out.

The first day he travelled through the morning and early afternoon, stopping only to eat some lunch. Then he set about constructing a rough shelter to spend the night in. After a few hours labour he had a small, safe, dry place to sleep. The next morning as he was about to start out again, he looked at the shelter he had built. He began to notice places where it could be improved. So instead of resuming the journey right away, he began to make improvements on his little dwelling. Well, one thing led to another, garage to kitchen to indoor plumbing, and so on. Soon, he had pretty much forgotten about the invitation and the journey.

Meanwhile the ruler was beginning to wonder about the man. And so, as rulers are able to do, the ruler arranged for another person who was also travelling to the dinner to stop by and see how the man was coming along. When the ruler's friend found him, the carpenter was living in his second house. He had sold the first one to someone, remembered the invitation, and moved on for a day or so. However, he had soon settled in and built an even bigger and better house on the profits he had made from the sale of his first one. The carpenter was only too happy to invite the visitor in for lunch; but while she was content to accept the offer of food, the visitor said she preferred to eat out in the yard under a tree.

"Is there a reason you don't want to come inside?" asked the carpenter, immediately wondering if his house wasn't quite right in some way.

"Why yes," replied the visitor. "You see, I am on a journey to have dinner with the ruler of our land. It is important for me to stay on the journey. Perhaps after lunch you would like to come with me?"

"What you say sounds familiar to me," said the carpenter. "I think I too received an invitation to have dinner with the ruler, but I have been a little bit uncertain of the way."

"I know," responded the stranger. "I was once uncertain as well. As a matter of fact, once I was a carpenter just like you. I too wanted to build safe places along the way to stay in. One day, another person on the journey helped me learn how to unbuild instead of to build. She helped me leave the house I was living in and trust the

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<sup>14</sup> The author has changed the gender of the sovereign from Griebner's original story, called her a ruler rather than a king and has been bold enough to imagine that Unbuilders can be female too. In its original form Griebner's story was a nevertheless a powerful metaphor for my own spiritual growth for which I have been grateful ever since.



journey itself. I was worried about following the right path. She told me that there were a number of paths that would lead to the dinner. The ruler had set it up that way, and the ruler had also set up warnings along the wrong paths. The important thing was simply to put one foot in front of the other with love and trust. I was also worried about what I had left behind. To this she said that the ruler had seen to it that everything worth saving would be at the castle waiting for me."

"What you say is certainly of comfort. It helps to know that you have been just like me," said the carpenter.

"Well then, why don't we let go of this house and get on with the journey?"

"I don't know. Maybe. Can I sleep on it?"

"I suppose."

"May I fix a bed for you?"

"No," countered the visitor. "I will just stay out here under the tree. It is easier to notice the wonderful things the ruler has put along the way when you aren't looking out from inside something you have put up to protect yourself."

The unbuilder waited outside all night. The next morning the carpenter indeed had decided to resume the journey. Together they prepared to set out.

"Well," asked the carpenter. "Which way shall we go?"

"Which way seems right to you?" replied the unbuilder.

"I'm not sure."

"I'll tell you what. Let's just sit here a few minutes and imagine being with the ruler. Remember the stories you have been told about her. Remember how much you love and respect her. Remember how much she loves and respects you. When you have remembered as clearly as you think you can, consider the paths that lie before you and see which one seems to satisfy your longing for, and remembrance of, the ruler. Let your desire to be with the ruler become more powerful in you than your uncertainty and fear about choosing the right or wrong path."

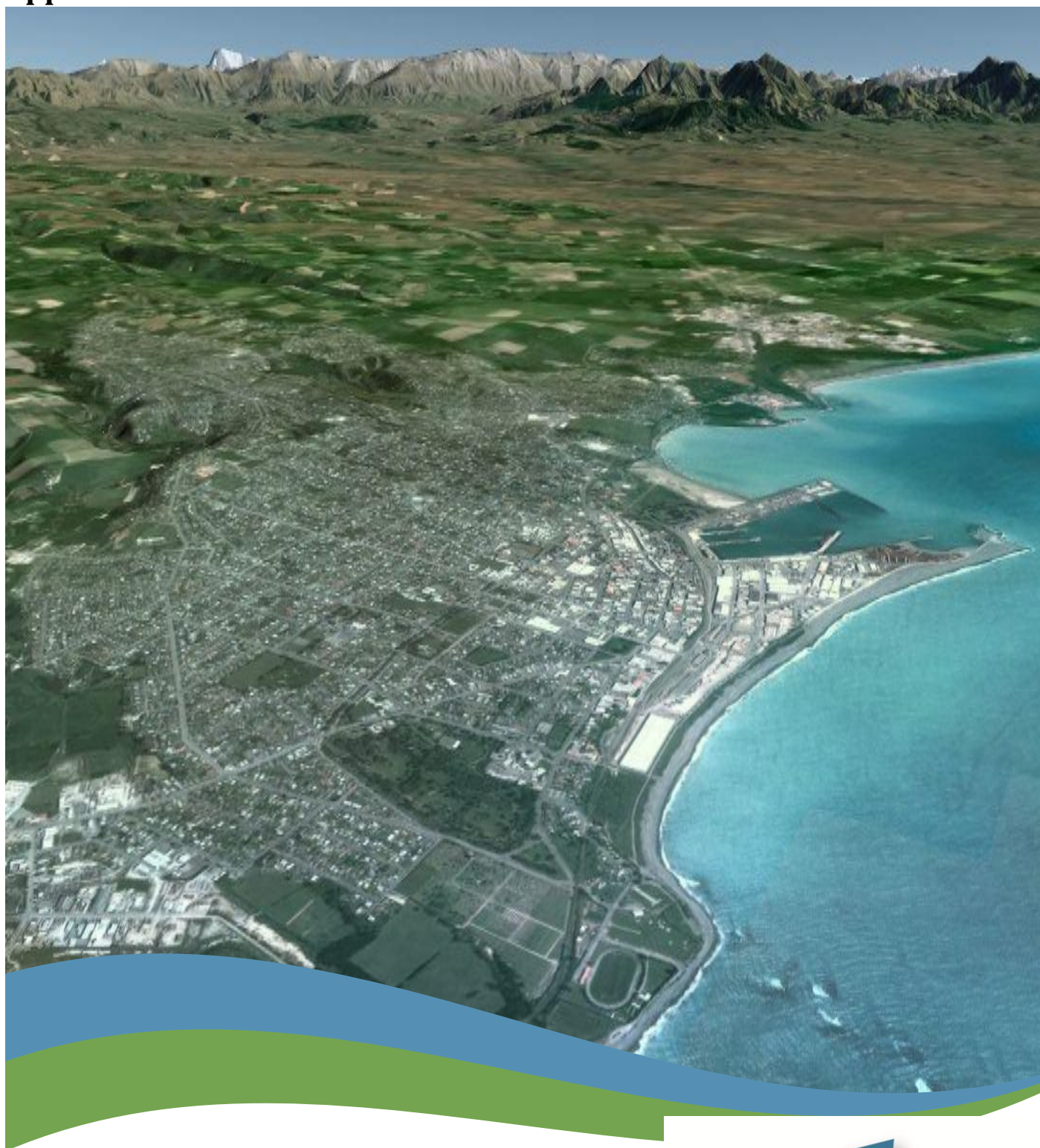
Silently they sat through the morning in the carpenter's front yard. Slowly it began to seem as though they were already on the journey. As that feeling grew and grew, it suddenly didn't seem like any decision needed to be made; it just happened. With a deep sense of freedom they were off. Many of the days went just like that, new steps out of silent beginnings and pure desires. They simply waited until the sense of journeying wrapped itself around even their waiting, and then they were off without worrying whether they were on the "right" path or not. In the stillness of their hearts they made room for the path and the path seemed to come to them. Of course the carpenter still felt the need to build a home from time to time. The unbuilder made sure he understood what he was doing and then let him do it if he really wanted to. While the carpenter laboured, the unbuilder, his guide and friend, would continue the silent waiting in the yard under a tree, and soon they would unbuild yet another house and begin the journey again.

In the meantime the ruler kept the food warm, which she was very good at doing.

## Appendices

1. Timaru Presbyterian Parish Mission Action Plan full booklet
2. Scanned script of the decommissioning sermon preached at St Paul's, 19 January 2014.
3. Sermon preached at the decommissioning of Chalmers' church, 4 May 2014
4. A paper, 'God and the miry pit' Susan Jones, September 2014.
5. A narrative of rolls and numbers at Timaru Presbyterian Parish before, after and during amalgamation. November 2014

## Appendix One: Mission Action Plan 2012-2017



# MISSION ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017



# Contents

## **PART ONE – MAP MAKING**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Our Story</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Road</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Signposts for our future</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Issues we must face</b>	<b>7</b>

## **PART TWO – CHANGING THE CONVERSATION**

<b>Shifting our Culture</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Strategic Goals</b>	
<b>Relevant worship,</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Spiritual growth, Connecting others with Christ</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The Questions we must ask</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Case Study 1</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Case Study 2</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Case Study 3</b>	<b>15</b>

## **PART THREE – RE-LOCATING IN THE NEW LAND.**

<b>Locating Our Future</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>The Big Picture</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Rationale – Neighbourhood focus</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Outward facing</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>People</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Financial Considerations</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>The Process now... &amp; Notice of Motion</b>	<b>24</b>



# Introduction

ISAIAH  
43:19

See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?  
I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland.

## THE BRIEF FOR THE MISSION ACTION PLAN WORKGROUP

1. **Develop a Timaru Presbyterian Parish (TPP) mission action plan for 5(-10) years by:**
  - Utilising work already collated and generated by the Locating the Future group.
  - Consulting and motivating the congregation along the way so there is a general acceptance of the MAP once finished.
  - Being realistic about sustainability of such a plan, recognising that there will continue to be some congregational decline for the next 5 years at least.
2. **Recommend to Parish Council (and thereby the congregation) a particular location or location(s) which the parish will need to carry out the MAP**

**For the last three months the MAP team has been hard at work,** discerning what God is calling us to be and do here in the Timaru community over the next five years. We are not here to re-invent the wheel. Neither are we interested in telling people what they can or can't do. In fact, much of this report is simple and straightforward, a mix of common sense and the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to give the congregation a sense of **purpose, direction and focus** so that we can build on what we are already doing well, **reinvigorate** the areas where we are struggling, and **embark** on new mission adventures together. We need to face up to the major challenges that face us in our life as a congregation. **This will require a genuine shift in our congregational culture.**

# Our Story

NUMBERS  
14:7-8

“The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us.

Right now in TPP we are going through an **Exodus** experience. We are following God through uncharted wilderness. The amalgamation of the four Timaru Parishes in 2009 was like crossing the Red Sea. On that day we became one people, under God. We have not yet crossed over the River Jordan into the Land of Promise. The MAP team has come to believe that the MAP we are drawing is not to guide us to through the wilderness, but to help us navigate as we move into that **Land of Promise**.



2009

2012

# The Road

MATTHEW  
22:36-40

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Any good MAP will keep you on the right road. Our purpose is to stay on the right road, *together*. There are three key relationships we must nurture in order to enter God's future together. These relationships are like the markers that keep us on **the Road**. We must first build real relationships with God, and real relationships with each other, as well as real relationships with the Timaru community which we're called to serve and love. As long as we keep these three markers in sight, we know we're on the right track.



# SIGNPOSTS

## for our future

### 1. LOVING GOD

Everything we do will be infused with our love for God. This begins with an appropriate variety of worship experiences, continues in our prayer lives, and is borne out in our relationships with God, with one another, and with our wider community.

### 2. GROWING

To love God is to grow. We will build each other up in love, we will explore our faith together, we will invite others to know Christ and follow Him, to experience the power of the Holy Spirit and to grow in God's love.

### 3. CARING

We are the Body of Christ. We are called to build one another up in love. We are called to laugh together, to weep together, to pray together, to love and serve God together. We will build real relationships where we share our lives together.

### 4. CONNECTING

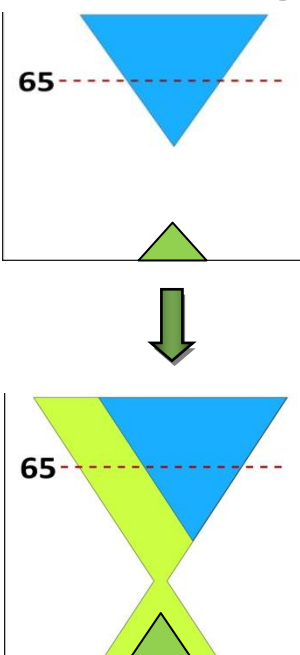
We are Timaru people. We will be engaged with Timaru, bringing the life and love of Christ into the lives of those around us. We will get to know our neighbours. We will love and serve our schools and other community groups. We will build real relationships together. We will live out the Gospel and express God's Word in everything we do and say.

### 5. RESPONDING

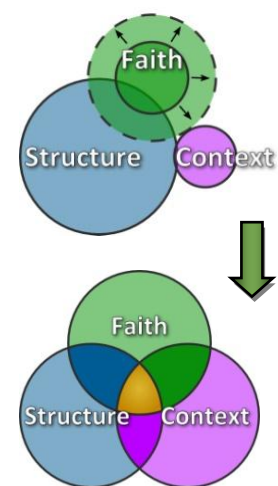
God calls. God's people respond. That is our story in a nutshell. Our responses are as many and as varied as we are as people. We respond by participating in the ministries to which the Spirit calls us. We respond by dying to ourselves so that we can live in Christ. We respond by giving and sharing all that we have. We respond by caring for the people and the creation that God has given us.



# THE ISSUES we must face



**Our age profile.** 75% of our congregation are over 65 years old. (the blue triangle). The small green triangle represents our smaller numbers of under-45 year olds. This imbalance needs to change, (to something like the second graph with new older and younger members represented by the increased light green sections.) Or, we simply won't be here in 20 years time! A key indicator of healthy congregations is their age profile matches the community around them. The wider Timaru community is older, on average, than most New Zealand communities, but TPP's membership is much, much older again.



**Our connections with Timaru community** The biggest challenge we face is establishing strong links of love, service & mission with the Timaru community (shown as context in the purple circle). As the circles show, we're good on structure (blue circle) and working on our faith (green circle). Our connection with our community (our context, purple circle) lags behind. Building real relationships with neighbours is being involved in their lives. This is not just to keep our church alive, but we're called to. Jesus' life in us brings new life to others.

**Our spiritual growth:** In order to re-connect others with the life-giving Gospel of Christ, we need to continue to foster our own spiritual growth.

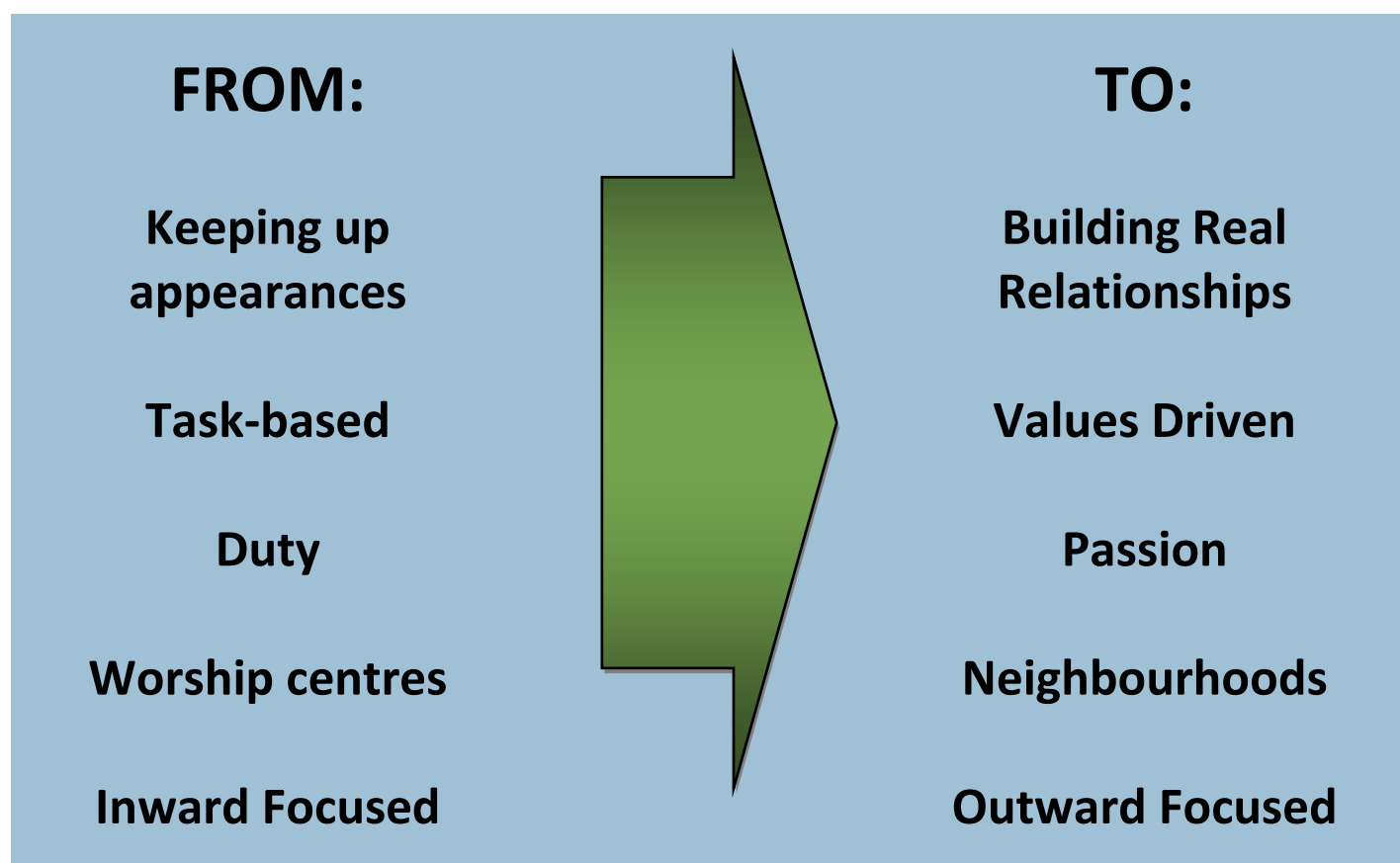
**Our worshipping life:** Communal worship has been the heart of Christian faith since its beginning. Let's foster a worshipping environment that helps our people to connect with the Living God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Our buildings:** We have too many buildings. Though well loved, they are now old and unwieldy for 21<sup>st</sup> century church. Some aren't safe to use and cost us a huge amount of money. Because of increasing deficits and limited reserves we need to make wise decisions about buildings with a sense of urgency.

# Shifting our Culture

ROMANS  
12:1-2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will.



In our discussions, several key cultural themes have become very clear to us:

- The importance of building **real relationships** with God, with one another, and with the wider community
- The need to move from **being task based to being values driven**
- The need to motivate people by connecting with their **passion** as opposed to their sense of **duty**.
- The need to move from being solely **inward focused** towards being **outward focused**
- We need to move from thinking in terms of **worship centres** towards acting in our **neighbourhoods**

# Strategic Goals

JEREMIAH  
29:11-13

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Our road and our signposts remind us of our purpose. Our strategic goals are based on these and provide direction and focus. We have settled upon three strategic goals for the MAP. **Relevant Worship** keeps us connected to real relationship with God through the salvation of Jesus Christ and the experience of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. **Spiritual Growth** is the key to continuing to grow in faith with one another. **Connecting Others with Christ** lies at the heart of why and how we relate to the wider Timaru community.

It will be the responsibility of Parish Council to set and review annual milestones for each of these. This will help keep us on the road, heading in the right direction! Achieving these goals and milestones over the next five years is our challenge, *together*.

## Relevant Worship

People connect with God in many different ways. "Worship" for an 18 year old looks very different from "worship" for an 80 year old. Whatever the style of our worship, the substance is the same: an authentic experience of connection and communion between God and God's people. Our challenge is to create opportunities for those experiences for the people of TPP, *and* for the people whom God is calling to become part of our worshipping community.

Openness and engagement with newcomers is a key to facilitating worship. We will do our utmost to be a welcoming, inclusive community from the moment people walk through our door.

We currently have three excellent Sunday worship options: traditional worship; contemporary worship and the Night Series. These will continue to be fully supported. We will explore new forms of worship too, including listening for opportunities to engage in Fresh Expressions of worship. Our future will include a mixture of forms of “church”: *attractional*: attracting people to TPP programmes, *engaging*: engaging with people in the community, then inviting them to join TPP; and *incarnational*: where we ‘act as Christ’ in the community, embodying the message of the Gospel to those with whom we live and work.

## Spiritual Growth

We want to see the people of TPP grow in their relationship with God through knowing Jesus Christ and experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit:

- By building **trust, honesty and real relationships** through being in a variety of small groups – long and short-term seasonal or topical study groups.
- By providing ongoing opportunities for people to connect with their **passions, gifts and callings**
- By **empowering all of our people** to take responsibility for their spiritual growth and participation in worship, leading to authentic encounters with the risen Christ in our midst.
- Everything we do must be bathed in and **undergirded by prayer**. As the apostle Paul put it – some plant seeds, others water, but God grows them.

## Connecting others with Christ

In order to carry the story of the Timaru Presbyterian Parish into the future we need to connect with new, younger families. We need to help and invite people to move from the “community” into the “crowd”; from the “crowd” into the “congregation”; from the “congregation” into the “committed” and the “core”.





To achieve this we must build relationships with people beyond our current congregation. This will take more than a programme or better advertising. We need to share our lives with our neighbours to let them catch a glimpse of the light and life of Christ in our lives. This is a person to person, neighbour to neighbour process of building real, honest relationships.

Programmes and advertising are an important part of creating situations where relationships can grow. Programmes such as the Toolbox parenting course and events like the Fish & Chip tea provide good platforms for establishing new relationships and serving the needs of our community. To genuinely reach out to and serve the Timaru community we cannot wait for people to come to us. We must become involved in the existing social networks to which Timaru people belong. How can we best share the light and love of Christ with our town's schools, clubs and community groups?

## THE QUESTIONS we must ask

Purpose	Is this task “on the road”? Does it build our relationships with God, with each other, and with the wider community?
Capacity	What does this task need in terms of time, people, facilities and money? Realistically, can we do it? Is someone else already doing it? Can we do it together?
Timing	When should we start this task? When should we finish? What milestones do we need to meet?

These help evaluate how our ministries and activities serve the MAP. Too, they assess probable effectiveness of new ideas. How might they be applied? The following case studies give *theoretical* examples. Case Study 1 takes a situation already familiar to us, Case Study 2 assesses a possible request for new activity, Case Study 3 shows how Council might use the questions to evaluate a possible ‘gap’ in our mission activity. ***None of these are planned schemes already in the pipeline, but are simply examples of possible scenarios.***

# Case Study 1

Our questions of **purpose, capacity and timing** could be used to review existing ministries, for example:

## **HOW DO WE MAKE SURE OUR OLDEST MEMBERS ARE ABLE TO WORSHIP IN WAYS RELEVANT TO THEM?**

Imagine use of older hymns, and traditional worship being timed reasonably early on Sunday mornings become topics of conversation! How can worship relevant for our oldest people be offered *and* meet our strategic goals – relevant worship, spiritual growth, connecting people with Christ? – for *all* ages?

**A. Purpose: Is this task “on the road”?** Let’s say, a monthly winter lunch on Tuesdays is preceded by hymn singing. Each Sunday traditional worship with an age range of 45-95 meets at 9.30am and contemporary at 10.30am. On the first Sunday afternoon a monthly communion precedes a cuppa at College Rd.

### **Does this build our relationships**

**1. with God?** Singing well known hymns recreates a spiritual space, known for decades, quickly bringing the heart of an elderly person to worship. Those under 65 however, love the introduction of traditional but new hymns with updated words. Addition of hymn singing gives a spiritual dimension to winter lunches. Fewer older hymns at Sunday worship disappoints some.

**2. with each other?:** Tension can mount over lack of older-style music at Sunday morning worship and over its over-supply! Timing of traditional worship may not suit all. Some feel left out as they cannot make the earlier time.

**3. with the wider community?** Winter lunches are open to the community and since they are held midday during the week may be most accessible for the addition of worship, rather than Sunday mornings or afternoon when mostly church members only attend.

## **B. Capacity: What does this task need in time, people, facilities and money? Realistically, can we do it?**

*One solution is to continue with ‘greening’ the hymn choices on Sunday mornings but to provide alongside, a shorter worship service every Sunday afternoon, (communion on the first Sunday, regular worship on the other Sundays.)* Are there people with a passion for worship for the elderly? People taking rest home services could repeat those services on Sunday afternoons.

This needs offers of transport and afternoon tea each week, not just monthly. Would the community come? Would people come four times a month or only once? Is Trinity/College Rd the best venue?

*Another solution would be to continue Sunday morning worship as above but also expand to a 30 min service before any weekday lunch.* This offers worship to those outside TPP attending weekday lunches. Fellowship by sharing food would be available without extra afternoon teas. This would not need extra transport as it dovetailed with an existing programme. Worship leaders could use services previously prepared for rest home use. Would monthly Tuesday worship be available when lunch is not served? Or, would the worship service always happen and lunch be available only during the winter?

The questions urge us to face the facts of whether our present system meets needs of the people involved, suits the capacity we have and achieves our strategic goals? Which of the above options allows for real relationships? Which option is neighbourhood centred? Which releases people into their passion rather than chaining them to duty?

**C. Timing:** If a change was decided we would then move to questions of ‘When should we start this task – or finish it? What milestones do we need to meet?’

By asking ourselves these three sets of questions about all our existing ministry activities, we seek to move from being **task based** to **values driven**, from being **worship centre-driven** to **neighbourhood centred**, from being **inward focused** to **outward focused**, from being **bound by duty** to being **released into our passion** and we seek to form **real relationships with God and with others**.

## Case Study 2

**The strategic areas and the questions could also used to assess new ministry initiatives as in this hypothetical example.**

Fifteen people ask for a new worship event to be developed from a progressive theological perspective. The first step is to ask which strategic area(s) this event addresses.

**Relevant worship:** The group might reply that they are seeking worship relevant for people raised in a scientific age. They believe this is not being offered by the present TPP large-group traditional and contemporary worship.

**Spiritual formation:** They might believe this worship experience would progress people beyond conventional stages of faith, and encourage spiritual growth.

**Connecting others with Christ:** The group might know non-attenders and some who had, but now no longer, attended church. It could be thought they would find this post-Enlightenment approach helpful. They might be prepared to invite people to worship which they themselves were finding useful.

**This could show that this worship experience, if carefully crafted, fitted the strategic areas. The next part of the process would be to ask the three questions about purpose, capacity and timing:**

**A. Purpose: Is this task “on the road”?** The answer would be not right now. The large TPP traditional worship caters for a conservative/middle-of-the-road theology. It could be argued that the ‘cutting edge’ exploratory nature of some preaching formerly at St Paul’s and Chalmers has been lost to some extent. This worship experience would seek to restore this.

**Does it build our relationships with God?** – progressive theology encourages people to think carefully about their faith, risk new ideas and study ways in which faith is relevant in a postmodern world – this helps people continue exploring God, rather than giving this quest up as out-dated.

**...with each other?** If all TPP members can worship according to their needs and work to maintain this opportunity, this may prevent feelings of alienation within the amalgamated parish, meaning this group of people are therefore likely to support the parish in other ways (e.g. social justice projects, pastoral care, financial giving, etc.). They may also be more likely to stay with church rather than leave it, disappointed.

**...and with the wider community?** When members are encouraged to bring others to church, they need to feel that expression of ‘church’ is something they like and trust themselves. They may therefore not be embarrassed to invite friends.

**B. Capacity: What does this task need in terms of time, people, facilities and money? Realistically, can we do it?** It would be a stretch to resource this service with ordained ministry, *and* maintain a variety of ministry for the large traditional service, especially if the new group was to be held on a Sunday.



Are compromises needed on timing? A venue in central Timaru might be requested. If TPP has no safe site there, will premises be rented? Are suitable ones available? How would costs be met and by whom?

**C. Timing: When should we start? When should we finish?** Should the group meet together first informally as a house-group-style to discuss the purpose and culture of the group? Especially, should individuals discuss the group being outward looking as well as focused on the group members' own needs and how this might be achieved? Would the group start before there was a 'suitable' worship venue ready? **What milestones do we need to meet?** What minimum number is needed to get started? What milestones would show the group was 'successful'?

## Case Study 3

**The strategic areas and questions could also be used by Parish Council to investigate gaps in the parish's mission action when the Council was conducting its annual review.**

For example, at a certain stage of the parish's life, Council might feel enough **relevant worship** is being provided and **spiritual growth** courses were well supported, but that **helping others to connect with Christ** was a weak area. When this is discussed, it could be felt there were few activities which helped church members make initial non-threatening contact with non-attenders, so the three questions could be used to analyse this:

**A. Purpose: Is this task "on the road"?** (It looks like the answer would be "no".) **Does it build our relationships with God, with each other, and with the wider community?** Key questions would be: 1. How could we learn to talk naturally about God changing our lives when in a 'non-religious' settings in the wider community? 2. How could we build relationships with the wider community in a non-threatening way. First, Council might feel we needed to learn how to talk about our Christianity in just the same relaxed way we talk about grandchildren, holiday plans or sport when with people who didn't have faith in God.

Second, Council might build on something already happening – for example, many TPP members are already involved in community organisations, from playcentre to probus, social netball to skating, art class to PTA., etc. It might decide to support them by offering specialised small mission home groups. Here those willing support each other, praying for community-based friends and co-workers, swapping experiences, learning communication skills and studying the faith in a twenty-first century style. The group keeps each other accountable in ‘talking-the-faith’ naturally and taking risks for God in the community.

**B. Capacity: What does this task need in terms of time, people, facilities and money? Realistically, can we do it? Time?** Little time would be needed extra to what might reasonably be spent on a church small group and their existing community involvement. **People?** All that’s required are those committed to the process. Also an idea of how to start the group and keep it fresh and supportive. The best initial leader would be someone already ‘talking the faith’ themselves in the community. Group leadership could be shared once a group process was established, since the issue is common to all in the group. **Facilities?** Members’ living rooms. **Money?** Apart from some DVD or book resources, little required. **Realistically it might be seen that we *could* do it!**

**C. Timing: When should we start this task?** Probably the truth is, any time, the sooner the better. **When should we finish?** The answer to this question might be “Never”. **What milestones do we need to meet?** The groups might set personal goals for a. establishing rapport, b. beginning conversations, c. deepening friendships d. talking of faith matters with the individual people they identify as possible connections. The most challenging milestone of course would be how many new people are connected/reconnected to Christ in one, two or five years. Another milestone might be the following: When several of these small mission groups are well under way, they get together and from their experience plan an attractive event for ‘seekers’ which provides a ‘halfway house’ between community-based conversations and ‘full-on’ church. This would be an event to which they felt it was natural to invite their community based friends. The planning and execution of this event might be a one or two year milestone for this group-support project.

# Locating Our Future

EZRA  
3:11-13

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.

When it comes to discussing buildings and locations, the MAP has found the excellent work of the **Locating The Future** (LTF) team very helpful. Our brief is to recommend a location or locations that best serve the purpose of fulfilling our Mission Action Plan.

The LTF team exhaustively examined all of our options, including real estate values, suitability for mission and the pros and cons of each of our four sites. All four sites have merits. All four have shortcomings. All four are part of the lives of our people in the TPP and the lives of Timaruvians. **You could make a strong argument for locating our future at any of these sites.** Our congregational meeting on June 10 was an illustration of this. However, we must make a decision. We must step out in faith. Our buildings are costing us money, and the building issues hanging over our heads take energy away from our mission to bring the light and life of Christ to the people of Timaru.

Our problem is not having too few options, but too many. We do not pretend that what follows is the only possible answer to these challenges. However, it is time to make a decision in order to move forward in our life and mission. We believe this recommendation will serve the MAP well. After prayerful deliberation and considering the numerous submissions on this matter, we believe this is where God is calling us to locate ourselves over the course of the next five years and beyond.

# The Big Picture

The MAP team is not working in isolation. Rather, we are part of an ongoing process of renewal and change that goes right back to the original vision of Timaru Presbyterian churches working together to participate in what God is up to in our town. Our work has especially built upon the strong foundations laid by the Locating the Future team.

## MAP

(Mission Action Plan + location recommendation based on missional values)

## Building Blocks

(Detailed Engineering Evaluations, cost, specification and viability of earthquake strengthening to 67% new building standard)



## Funding the Future

(dispose of lands and buildings or develop for income streams)

## Building the Future

(design & build alterations and/or new buildings to suit missional needs)



# Recommendations (in alphabetical order)

- **Chalmers'** - Investigate best ways to develop income streams or mission from this site. Explore working with an independent trust in regard to the church or offering for sale all or part of the total site.
- **St. Paul's** - Develop for income stream(s). This land is a valuable asset and income generated from it will be key to TPP's ongoing future. We are thankful to St Paul's for its creation and maintenance over years. Two possible options to explore - retirement village in partnership with the community; re-subdivide and sell smaller sections.
- **St. Stephen's** - Retain site with a view to developing as our main "one site" worship centre, office & youth facilities in future. Aim for architectural plans approved by November 2013 and work completed by November 2014.
- **Trinity** - Retain in meantime, with minimum expenditure. Discuss lease of Hall with Connect Church for when Wai-iti Rd worship complex is ready and Trinity as an income stream is re-evaluated.
- **Funding the Future** Parish Council establish workgroup to develop income streams from surplus property and other ventures to fund our future. **Nov-Dec 2012**
- **Building the Future** – Parish Council establish workgroup to develop architectural plans for a redeveloped worship centre at Wai-iti Road. **Nov-Dec 2012**

# Rationale

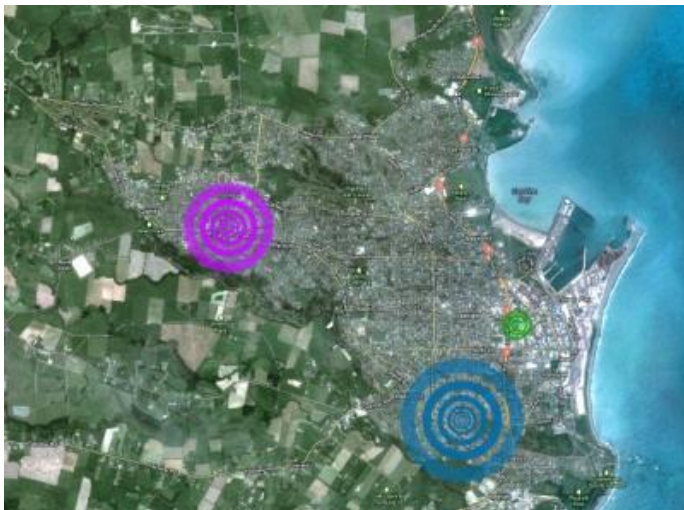
Robert  
Maguire –  
Architect

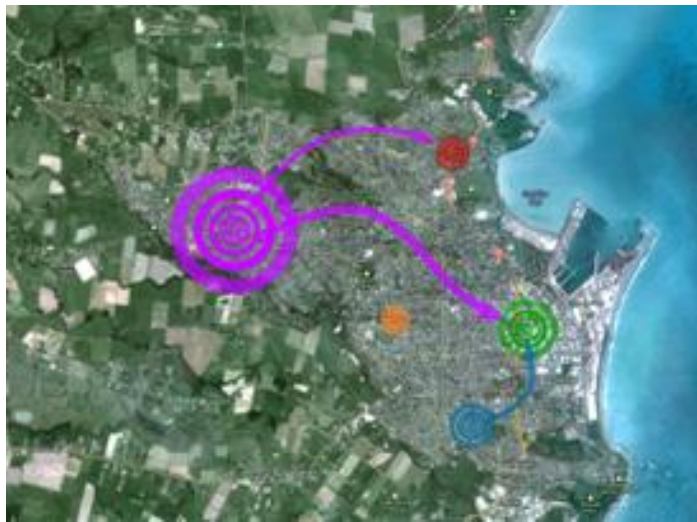
If you are going to build a church,  
you are going to create a thing which speaks.  
It will speak of meanings and values,  
And it will go on speaking.  
And if it speaks of the wrong values,  
It will go on destroying.  
There is responsibility here.

The use and improvement of buildings at St. Stephen's, Wai-iti Road fits well with our Mission Action Plan. Locating ourselves on the busy, public and visible street front of Wai-iti Road will also really help us to shift our culture.

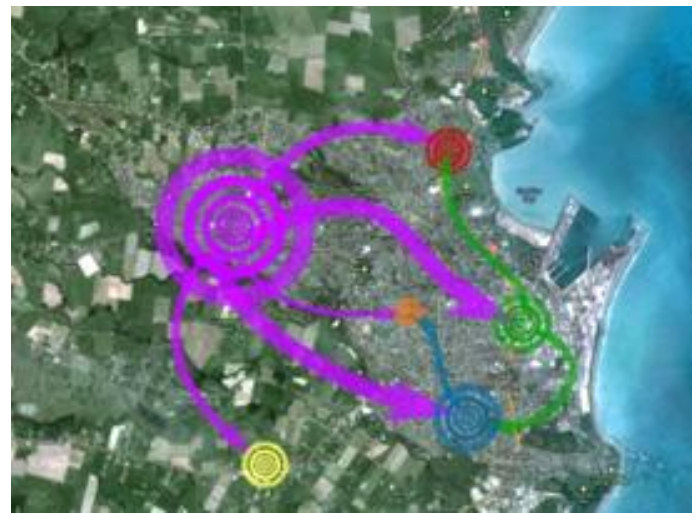
## Neighbourhood Focus

In order to shift towards acting in neighbourhoods we need to re-group and consolidate resources. Rex Booth, (of the Bridge Builder course), says this: **“Where you live is no accident. God has strategically placed you in your neighbourhood”**. We need to re-connect with the Timaru community one neighbourhood at a time. Our Wai-iti Road site will allow us to resource neighbourhood mission around Timaru, with an initial focus on building on the strong relationships that we are already forging with young families in the Gleniti neighbourhood. As we consolidate there, we can then move out into the rest of Timaru as these maps show.





2017



2022

## Outward facing

Rev. Prof. Murray Rae  
Mission begins with worship. It flows from our meeting with God. In worship we are addressed, equipped and commissioned."

We need a worship centre that not only allows us to meet with God, but that also prompts us to go out into the community and our neighbourhoods fully equipped; a worship centre that is outward focused and visible in the target community.

James F. White  
Most people who pass a church's door never enter it. But they do form impressions of the Church from the physical church.  
*Protestant Worship and Church Architecture*

So that the public form a positive impression, our new worship centre needs to be fully open. The whole interior needs to be visible to the outside, so any passer-by can see that the church is about people worshipping God not just a fancy building.

349 Wai-iti Road has a large road frontage on a busy major arterial road; this allows us to have dominant visibility. Building a worship centre that has a large glass façade would bring our worship into the public arena and show Timaru that TPP is present in the community.

We also have to incorporate who we are now into any new building to highlight our combined histories. This way the story the worship centre portrays is not a blank canvas, but depicts the continuing journey we have been on and walk still.

## People

Many of the newer relationships TPP has formed with community people are with young families, both parents and children, who have connected with programmes based at St Stephen's, Wai-iti Rd. We have made contacts with schools in that neighbourhood because of family connections. We will build on these beginnings. Concentrating our resources in one neighbourhood at the start will help us to be more effective more quickly.

## Financial Considerations

The Locating the Future Team did an excellent job of collating the financial value of our four sites. The Building Blocks group are presently working on costs of engineering estimates and work which will be needed for any earthquake proofing required. Previous comparisons of costings in the Locating the Future booklet are now outdated in terms of the different proposal in this booklet and changes in the market and insurance requirements. Before individual decisions are made about specific church and other buildings, detailed costings will be provided to the congregation. Other income streams may be developed through activities and use and sale of property. Savings also come from lower running costs on buildings no longer used or owned by TPP.

**This is a major step for this parish. We will have mixed feelings. Scripture speaks to people like us in situations like ours:**

'The Lord who created you says, "Do not be afraid – I will save you. I have called you by name – you are mine. When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire you will not be burnt; the hard trials that come will not hurt you. For I am the Lord your God, .... who saves you." Is 43: 1-3a

and, at another stage of Israel's history:

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jer 29:11

## **Original report presented by the MAP team to Council:**

Kay Beatson, Fiona Blisset, James Davies, Rev. Rory Grant, Sandra Hetherington, Rev. Dr Susan Jones, Peter Jordan, Rev. Chris Konings, Robyn Rawstorn & Tania Wade.

## **Acknowledgments**

Council wishes to convey its special thanks to all who have been and are continuing to be involved in giving time and energy to this discernment process. We express to you our gratitude and appreciation. Thanks also to all the families who put up with their loved ones being at interminable meetings!

**Building Blocks (still continuing):** Ken Falconer, Jim Garden, Derek Hemming, Ken Linscott, Jim Pearce & Bev Quigley

**Locating the Future Group:** Roger Carter, James Davies, Ken Falconer, Derek Hemming, Rev. Dr Susan Jones, Ann Munro, Dianne Paulin, Robyn Rawstorn & Tim Underdown

**Vision Establishment Team (wrote Blue Book):** Kay Beatson, Judith Begg, James Davies (alternate) David Draffin, Jim Garden (alternate), Derek Hemming, Anne Knipe, David Lockhart, Jim Pearce, Brodie Park, Eoin Powell, Ian Sawers, Hugh Smith, Wendy Sutton, (alternate) Doug Wallace, Michael Wilkinson.

### **Transitional Team:**

Cleave Hay, Elizabeth Lockhart, Margaret Walker, Leo Neale, David Draffin, Margaret Hughes, Ron Paulin, Doug Wallace, Alan Poulson, Janet Hogan, Derek Hemming, Herman Frank, Indi Jevaratnam, Judith Begg. Also: Revs Ian Hyslop, Helen Martin, Brian Gilmour, Evan Stenlake

**Visioning Group:** David Draffin, David Lockhart, Brodie Park, Eoin Powell and Rosie Staite

**After all this time and effort, prayer and visioning, thought and calculations, discernment and discussion, we've come to the time for moving on.**

**This proposal is presented to the parish from the MAP group and by the Parish Council as the strategic plan for TPP for the next 5 years, 2013-2017.**

**Let's adopt this MAP together and so catch up with God  
(who's already at work in our community!)**

**Susan Jones (Ministry Team Leader)**



# The Process now...

7. **Now:** You have received this booklet with your LINK on or before Sunday 14 October. Copies available at Church Office for people on the parish roll.
8. **Presentation of the Report: 7.30-9.00pm Wednesday 24 October**  
Venue: St Paul's Parish Hall. Forum at which the report will be presented by members of the MAP group and the Parish Council. Supper will be served at 9pm after which people are welcome to stay and ask questions.
9. **Discussion Period: 24 October to 11 November.** A period where questions boxes will be around the parish for your queries (College Rd, Wai-iti Rd and Seddon St). MAP study groups will re-convene to provide discussion opportunities. APW and other groups are encouraged to ask for a speaker from MAP or Council to come to their regular meetings for information and questions. This is your time to get familiar with the plan and proposals which we will adopt in mid November.
10. **Response Forums: After morning worship Sunday 11 November.**  
Venues: 11am @ 22 College Rd; 12.15pm @ 349 Wai-iti Rd. Opportunity to hear answers to questions received and to ask other questions.
11. **Congregational Meeting: 12.15pm after morning worship Sunday 18 November.** Venue: 349 Wai-iti Rd, St Stephen's. The purpose of the meeting is to adopt the 2013-2017 TPP Mission Action Plan and recommendations brought by Council.
12. **Parish Third Anniversary Celebration Sunday December 2.**

# Notice of Motion

That the 2013-2017 Mission Action Plan and the recommendations it contains be adopted. Parish Council to begin implementation immediately.

St Paul's Service of Thanksgiving and Decommissioning

January 19<sup>th</sup> 2014. 2.30pm Psalm 137: 1-6; 2 Kings 5: 1-8; Luke 2: 22-35

Who brought you to St Paul's and kept you there? They say style, timing and location are three important factors in attracting people to a faith community. A fourth is relationships. Many faces will move in and out of your mind, floating in with the memories, joyful and sad, which fill your minds today. You might have been touched by the innocence (or otherwise!) of children acting Christmas plays, or the beauty of voices helping you appreciate anew some passage of Scripture. You may have known people singing with you in the choir or enjoyed the camaraderie at Session, or Managers or working for a church fair or a catering job. Maybe someone came to sit with you on a day you felt lonely or upset. Or you might remember laughter, full and free.

The full human drama acts out in churches as in the wider community, so your memories will include too harsh words, your own or others, some cutting comment or moments when you almost left in high dudgeon. Perhaps you disagreed with the minister in or out of the pulpit or with another church member with whom you never quite saw eye to eye. Yet all of these encounters form a rich quilt of colour and design called St Paul's, stories sewing together individual patches, urban legends embroidering plain pieces and kind forgetfulness blurring lines drawn too fine, too strong or too tightly.

Let us pause to remember people and give thanks for them in our hearts – for the ways they loved us and challenged us, annoyed us and thrilled us on our spiritual journey.

.....

Another reason we come to the organised church is sacred ritual. In the Gospel reading, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the temple for cleanliness rituals required by Jewish law after a birth. We know they're poor because they offer the lowliest sacrifice of two turtledoves. This ritual released mother and child from the taint of the blood of childbirth and restored Mary to ordinary connection with her household. It's a custom that didn't continue into Christianity, but many babies were brought here for baptism and thanksgiving ceremonies. Many an adult walks about the world, maybe not at all connected with church now, but carrying with them the sign and seal of God's love and of the welcome the church extends to all. Maybe you were not baptised here, but

you brought your children to God in this place. Were you confirmed or ordained as an elder, or inducted as a minister or elder? Many tell me they were married at St Paul's – or their parents were – or they remember funerals for loved ones and acquaintances.

You could well have been hosted at the Lord's Table here many, many times. The invitation to be fed, to drink our fill, and be nourished for the spiritual journey rang out month after month, year after year – in formal language and with solemn hush or with contemporary words and joyful celebration. Communion celebrated regularly in a local church creates a strong feeling of family. As Shirley Murray puts it in one of her communion hymns: "Who is my Mother?/ Who is my brother?/ All those who gather round Jesus Christ://... Love will relate us,/ colour or status/ cant segregate us round Jesus Christ/ family failings,/ human derailings,/ all are accepted round Jesus Christ."

Mary and Joseph found great wisdom in Simeon's words that day. Our connection with God through the church's rituals grounds us in mysterious and wonderful ways. These moments together as a community at the significant intersections of people's lives connect us to God in ways we cannot fully describe. Whether or not the baby cries right through the baptism or the best man can't find the ring or we forget our lines in our nervousness, these moments are numinous, full of holiness, special and sacred. We will remember they happened here long after the building has gone. Let's spend a moment remembering those special, sacred occasions which were ours, or through which we accompanied others.....

Naaman would not have known there was a prophet in Israel had he not got sick. His illness was particularly difficult for a commander of a national army – it was contagious, socially isolating and humiliating for a man in his position. Similarly it was a new experience for him to not only follow the advice of a slave girl captured by his own army, but to go to a foreign king, an alien prophet and, as we know from the rest of the story, be forced to immerse himself in the enemy's river.

Being ill and facing personal crises have the potential to bring us closer to God as well as to wellness. That potential may not be realised if there are no people who know the way to God who can be with you in those moments of confusion and vulnerability. A visit is a special opportunity to show the love of God to



another. Knowing you are not forgotten by the outside world, that others understand and care, to know they are motivated not only by care for you but also by their love of God, adds something special. Some of you visited. Others of you were visited. Some baked and cooked, picked flowers, wrote cards, made phone calls. A community of faith in the local area is a precious gift to the wellness of the society in which it exists. That someone has thought about you in your need warms the heart and strengthens the soul. In the quiet, let us give thanks to God for the times we felt the support and love of God and the church through another person.....

The people of St Paul's are not the first to lose a worship place. In far more tragic circumstances, the Jewish people were conquered for the third time by a major middle eastern power in 586BC when the Babylonians sacked their temple. They were beside themselves - for them the temple was where God resided. Did that mean God was no longer with them? Their theology led them to believe that victory was a sign they were doing the right thing. Did this defeat show them to be a godforsaken people? And how could they sing the Lord's songs in a strange land without the resonating architecture of the temple around them? We could say "How can we sing the Lord's songs without the stained glass windows we love, or the pleasing regularity of the pew ends striding down the aisle, or the beautiful embroidery on the communion table fall or the grace of the Iona cross in front of us or the generous immensity of the baptismal font's bronze bowl?

The Israelites got the chance to return within their lifetime, though rebuilding the temple took them years. You will not be able to return to this building. But this does not mean the spiritual growth which happened here disappears. Already it is woven into the tapestry of your lives. Already it has born fruit on the vines of your vineyards. You carry deep in your lives what God taught you, loved into you, showed you and asked you when you came here for your rituals, in your moments of crisis or celebration.

Already I have seen many ways in which the people who worshipped here in this place, in St Paul's, have benefitted the new parish. They have brought their wisdom, their music and creativity, their care for children and young people. They've brought their desire to be a contemporary church, their yearning for the community and their zeal for mission. They've modelled for the rest of the parish how to grow and develop through difficult times, how to move on, giving

significance to their grief, but not allowing it to bury their sense of hope for the future. And now they have brought to the parish too a liquid asset which can be used in flexible ways to benefit the new thing God calls us all to be part of. In this they have again shown others the way which some of them will need to follow too. What riches you offer as a people of God! What good things happened here and how richly that experience will feed, has already fed, into the future of God's activity in Timaru.

Mary Fahy's story "the Tree that survived the winter" describes a tree which suffers through a long hard cold winter with some resentment that the sun had not stayed with her through the long hard cold days. "I needed you! I needed you so badly and you weren't there," she sobs "You've been gone so long, and I've been so cold and lonely and sacred. The days were so gray when you weren't here... Didn't you see me shivering?" The sun informs the tree that she had in fact survived the winter because she was, all appearances to the contrary, very much loved – and points out how the difficult winter in fact strengthened her. The sun continues "You have survived the winter because you are and were and always will be very much loved. For that small place deep within you that remained unfrozen and open to mystery that is where I have made my dwelling. And long, long before you felt my warmth surrounding you you were being freed and formed from within in ways so deep and profound that you could not possibly know what was happening... You have always believed and that is what enabled you to grow. For had you not kept faith with me in the centre of your being, you could not have blossomed into you."

At the end of the story the tree finds the sun has named her. "What do you call me?" asked the tree in the stillness of the night. "You are called faithful," was the quiet reply.

Becoming a combined parish was never going to be easy and I know it seems to some of you as if we have entered a long dark cold winter. Above all the groups who joined to form this parish, St Paul's people have been called to follow a particularly lonely path. Can you yet be faithful to this calling which has come to you from God through different voices these past few years? Can you continue to support, comfort and love each other? Can you, from your perhaps bitter experiences, support, love, comfort and challenge others who have yet to go through what you have been brought through? Can those of you who did not call St Paul's home, catch from them their vision of how to reach out to the



community and find where God is active in the world? Can we together be faithful in helping bring in the future God has in mind for us all? We need you to do so, though of you who have hung in with the new parish and those who have stood aside, waiting to see what will happen. We miss you. This is the time where you can continue your faith journey so that in the strange land which is Timaru Presbyterian Parish we can still sing the Lord's songs together.

Thanks be to God for the love which has shone out in this place,  
thanks be to God for the sacrifices which have been made in this place,  
thanks be to God for the spirit of willingness which was known in this place.

God was in this place and we knew it.  
God will be in the new place - we know that too.

AMEN



### **Appendix Three:** Chalmers Thanksgiving & Decommissioning Sunday May 4 2014. Psalm 139:1-3, 7-12 & 23; Luke 15: 17-24

Years ago, I did a stint as a Bible in Schools teacher with a rather hard line curriculum. One week with relief I discovered the lesson was Psalm 139, my favourite. I liked the idea of God surrounding me wherever and whenever. We read the psalm. The students' workbooks asked them to fill pre-prepared speech bubbles. One wrote: "What's God doing, poking his nose into my business!" I was shocked. But then, I figured, if your God was scary, distant and judgmental, then who'd want God poking a nose into your business! I realised in that moment the gap developing between a primary school student, the average man in the street or the regular woman at work and the church. That gap is why we're here today. Being a church member, supporting a religious organisation is no longer a value held in our community. Institutions are viewed with suspicion, especially the institution called the church. That's hard to understand when you are someone at the core of a faith community. Even in these sad few weeks, former Chalmers members have worked together with camaraderie and good will, frankness and patience and managed robust encounters with each other with compassion. Part of the sadness of releasing Chalmers' church is not only releasing the building and its assets, but realising that for some time now, that meeting of friends, of minds, of faith stories which once was, is now no longer happening on a regular basis. It's only as we allow God to poke a nose into our business of grieving, however, that we will come through this valley of the shadow to a healthy, creative space. If we hunker down, tucking painful feelings away, clutching resentment and bitterness, keeping our disappointments in others hidden and *not* allow God to gently touch and heal them, we will be the poorer.

We are a post-Easter people. Now as never before, we need to remember our identity as such. Crucifixions don't just come in the form of a man being nailed to a Roman cross in first century Palestine. This transition we're going through is a kind of crucifixion with all the attendant agony. But if our faith is worth anything; if it depends on the mystery which is God rather than only the concrete reality which is a building, our faith reminds us that after death comes life, after crucifixion comes resurrection. In Matthew 24 we read: "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, they must deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save their life will lose it; but whoever loses their life for My sake will find it."

Do we want to lose what the Church has proclaimed for millennia, that is do we want to lose the good news of the love of God? Do we not *want* to let God poke a nose into our business? At first it seems much easier to hold on to our resentments and grief; easier that is, than to open up to the refreshing breeze of the Spirit. Yet, although the Spirit can seem more like a tornado ripping apart what we have known and loved, that is the better route. We need to take the less travelled path; the paradox is -the unknown way is always the better choice. I learned that. It was shortly after earthquakes meant prudent steps had to be taken to prevent more damage. I couldn't put up what we've come to call the angel tree in the church – for a couple of years about 20-30 people had placed angels on the tree in memory of people who used to be present at their past Christmasses. We asked Kristy at Zest if we could put up the tree there. It was a delight to count the 60-70 angels hanging on the tree at the end of the Christmas period, some with very poignant messages. The next year there were even more! It took an earthquake and church regulations to propel me in a small way into the marketplace, out into community. I pray losing from these buildings from our possession will do the same for us now. We have to face it. Our previously preferred way of doing church does not suit our context. We are out of date, out of time, out of touch. That's not all our fault, though it is our responsibility. The message is still that there is a welcome at the gate to home for all who have got lost in the far country. But that gate to home is not necessarily the actual front door of a church. That gate to home is not necessarily the front door of any particular church. The gate to home is the open heart of God. It is to *God* we direct people, not to our theology or our community, to good

acoustics or the form of a particular service. The rearrangements needed in a new parish have surprised us by how much we'd come to depend on externals in a faith community – windows, choir, music, format; even how rosters were organised. We cannot afford in today's world to offer people anything less than an authentic spiritual experience. People long for connection. They long to be welcomed without judgment. They long for someone to show an interest in them. They don't want to have to conform to another group's patterns, but for a loving person to walk with them in *their* patterns, in *their* shoes, help them with *their* journey. But most of all they want honesty, integrity and real genuine authentic spirituality.

The biggest shock in the story of the Lost Son, is not his wasting of money, or his cheekiness in asking for his inheritance early, (effectively proclaiming his father dead already). The shocking heart of this story is the parental welcome he received on his return. An eastern patriarch expected everyone to come to him – just like Christendom church opens its doors and expects that to be enough encouragement for people to come in, ("Well," we reason, "they *would* come if they were more committed!). But *this* patriarch waits and watches for the moment of opportunity, and then, seeing it, *runs* to embrace the home-coming child. Kenneth Bailey tells us that in Jesus' day when a prodigal returned, it was not only their family they had to face but also an angry village. The walk of shame from the edge of the village to their home could attract catcalls, spitting, even stoning. The parent runs to kiss his boy on the cheek to signal his acceptance quickly before the village can reject this young whippersnapper. Are we still a faith community when we are out in the village street? Can we show people the welcome waiting for them at God's gate to home when we have gone from the building? Can we talk as eloquently about faith in the marketplace as we do in any particular sanctuary?

The Israelites, desolate in Babylon thousands of miles from home, wondered if they could sing the Lord's songs in a strange land. The history of God's people is littered with moments of needing to reinvent themselves, to regroup, reorganise, recommit. What a privilege it is to be called to do the same in this particular moment in time! We do not do justice to the legacy of our forebears who built and maintained Chalmers if we crumple when life changes around us and we are forced to re-evaluate. And what a legacy our forebears *have* left us. We give thanks for the community connections made, for groups begun, vision expressed through the Friendship Centre Committee, for wonderful music organised and played, for voices raised in song, words eloquently preached. We remember the times when fallible humans clashed over matters large and small and those other moments when harmony reigned as markets were organised and working bees progressed. We remember the *people* – those who inspired and impressed us with their abilities, their spirituality and their kindness. We think of those who taught and mentored, those practical people who did the organisation and maintenance, for those who dreamed dreams and carried the vision. We remember the parents, children and wider family members who worshipped with us, who were baptised and confirmed, and whose wedding ceremonies and funeral services were held in Chalmers' space. We look to God in this moment, for grace to forgive those who hurt us and to seek forgiveness for the times we hurt others, intentionally or accidentally.

Finally, Presbyterians do not consecrate buildings, so we have not *deconsecrated* Chalmers' today. I'm glad about that. I like to think that all the praying, singing, worshipping, meditation and human interaction carried out in the name of God in that building remains there, that it inheres now in the very fabric of the building, that though we're told the bricks of Chalmers' are not stuck together now very tightly, they have nevertheless been brought alive by the spirituality brought to them by people seeking God within its walls. Does our God or our faith depend on a building? I don't believe so. But I believe faithful spiritual practice does enhance a building. That is the legacy we leave in our turn to the community. Let's carry on from this point, creating yet another new legacy. Let us be known for living out our ancient faith in the new ways which the future needs. Susan Jones



## Appendix Four    God and the miry pit – a paper    September 2014

From before the beginning of Christianity, change has been a given. “The Only Thing That Is Constant Is Change -” Heraclitus (c. 535 – c. 475 BCE)<sup>15</sup>. Greater *rate* of technological change in the last two centuries has left church gasping. Like other institutions, the Church has inflexible change mechanisms, if any at all. So, like other institutions, it gets left behind, puffing and panting, on the road to the future.

Christendom’s no longer a good route. Intellectual assent to this is almost complete, but behavioural response limps behind. Yet ‘God’, ‘love’, ‘spirituality’ even ‘organised church’ benefit society in measureable *and* intangible ways. The way those gifts to society are packaged however, requires, as Mark Johnston might put it ‘renovation’. Brian McLaren puts it this way: “If you have a new world, you need a new church. You have a new world.”

Response to membership decline includes facelifts, cooperation, makeovers (usually longer than 60 minutes), amalgamation, closure, renovation and renewal. It’s not change *per se* which interests me. It’s the process - how we measure success in that process, where God is located by us in relation to it and what will happen on the other side of the transition. So let’s look at transition in the local parish as a micro-example, briefly at transition in the Church Universal as a macro example, then at the importance of liminal space and finally, at Fresh Expressions, UK, and Church of the Saviour, Washington DC., which give intimations of principles for the new.

### 1. *Letting-go the Old*

- a. micro-change – the local parish
- b. macro change – Church Universal

### 2. *It all hinges on the liminal moment*

### 3. *Two ‘new beginnings’ offering three intimations of principles to follow.*

- a. Fresh Expressions, UK,
- b. Church of the Saviour, Washington DC.,

### 1. *Letting-go the Old* a. micro-change – the local parish

All change involves transition from old to new through an in-between zone. How are stages negotiated successfully? Where is God in each? Different change models are proposed by sociologists, psychologists, management consultants and scientists. Church needs a theology of godly transition. Good transition requires imagining and encountering God at *each* step. Where is God as we teeter on the brink of much-needed change? How was God with the four former parishes of Timaru for example, prior to amalgamation in November 2009? How can dying moments of any church be “successful”? Is the palliative care offered by denominations effective - or would euthanasia be a more godly solution? Did South Canterbury Presbytery make a godly decision to amalgamate four churches which had declined, on average, 47% in the previous decade? Within those churches, was the struggle to recognise the need to change what we could call a God-moment or a God-forsaken moment? Are churches which face the inevitable in the throes of a holy restlessness? Or, are they wholly recalcitrant in resisting what seems to

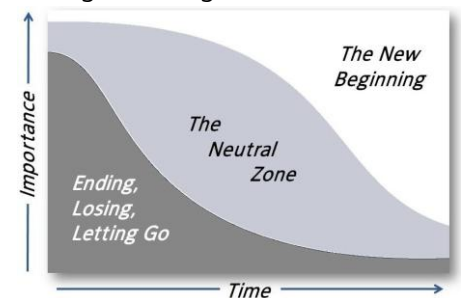
<sup>15</sup> Heraclitus was a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, and native of Ephesus

clearly be God's call into the twenty first century – at least seen clearly as God's call by those looking on? What is the most successful solution – recovery, surgery, therapy or death?

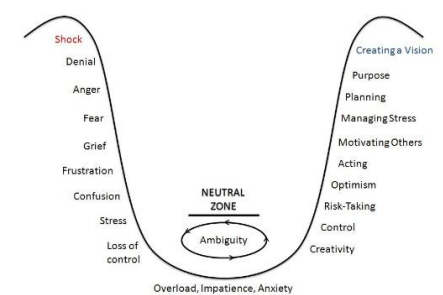
In Timaru, the idea of change was finally chosen by older church members worrying about fixed pensions not funding ministerial stipends or increased maintenance. They thought they'd be better off joining other struggling churches than closing the doors. Presbyteries and Church Property Trustees concur, envisaging that fewer buildings will mean more mission and vitality. In the rhetoric employed to persuade churches to change and adapt, it may be taken for granted that the path from the old to the new will be like an engineering feat, like the building of a bridge high over the rocky stream below. 'Go straight to the new thing. Do not pass GO, do not collect \$200.' NZ engineers are good at building such high bridges which avoid the valleys. The way through, however, is always down into the stream bed and back up again. New skills will be needed as well as a new theology of God.

You know change comprises three stages, farewelling the old, (ending, losing, letting go), welcoming the new (the new beginning) and the space in-between, what William Bridges calls the neutral zone and what anthropologist Victor Turner calls a liminal space. Sometimes that that there *are* three steps is a surprise to those entering the transition. They were a surprise to Timaru Presbyterians!

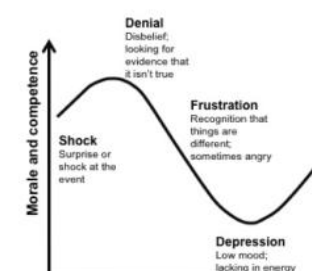
That change is not that simple can be seen by the continuation of the ending zone right across this graph, well into the time when new beginning is almost the whole reality. Even as the new thing begins, grief for the old is still real for the very people who eventually exclaim about the convenience of the new. At any one time, a snapshot of what's happening, shows old and new overlapping with the neutral zone where paralysis and numbness are frequent reactions.



This diagram separates the three zones as if they operate sequentially in a more tidy fashion. The first stage resembles Kubler Ross's grief process - familiar to anyone who has had a loved one die. The 'Oh no!' of our shock, the "It can't be" of our denial, our anger, fear of life without them, grief leaking in tears, frustration at the littlest thing, confusion over what's next. We get stressed, especially at the discomfort of knowing we cannot control this event to our satisfaction.



## The Kübler-Ross



Christian rhetoric has us believing people go to church simply to worship God which can be done anywhere at all. Anyone who believes that hasn't led an actual amalgamation or an exile into Babylon! Loss of a worship space involves multiple griefs: changes to rostered routines; of the ability to walk to church; beautiful windows one gazed at during the sermon; regularly meeting friends; continuity as you worship where you were baptised, confirmed and married; the sheer identity which is St Paul's or Chalmers. Family ties are broken too - one woman in her 90s virtually deserted her family when earthquakes meant Chalmers had to be emptied; her family's memorial window was in the south corner of the church, her young husband's name etched on the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war brass plaque on the north.

We might also believe a local faith community is a close-knit group of people. In Timaru I discovered in fact "the parish" actually exists only for a couple of hours on a Sunday morning. When the building is lost, that community is lost as well and grief compounds. On the other hand, the people of Trinity whose membership had dwindled most, (66% in 10 years) imagined they wanted more people. All were surprised they felt suffocated and invaded by incomers from the other four churches when post-earthquake rules closed half of the new parish's real estate.

As the new thing begins, different customs jostle for place. Each church, of course, thought their location was the best for the new parish's centre! While each worship service externally looked similar, each former church had its own socio economic mix, historical baggage, theological brand and distinctive culture.

What does 'success' look like when you are letting go? What is good grief? What makes a good leave-taking? Happy (though sad) people? A unified front despite grief? Overwhelming agreement on which buildings, groupings, locations to give up? Dignity in the face of loss? Silence regarding decisions to be made? High voting percentages? Trust in God? A clear feeling of God's presence? A charismatic leader convincing his or her way is best? All or none of the above?

Well-crafted decommissioning services farewelling buildings and processing symbols out help as much as a funeral service helps when your spouse dies. Celebration of the past can bring people near to God, but it's still like that funeral of a dearly loved one. We may believe they're in a happy place, but still grieve they're no longer here – however ill they were before death cut short the agony.

Real choices are seldom clear. Whatever metaphors we mine from Scripture – perhaps a post-Christendom call to move out of slavery in Egypt – they do not help all of the people all of the time. God's role can be seen as the one who calls us out of bondage into the promised land. God may provide a cloud by day and a pillar by night.

No one goes very near the question however, of why God could not have been clearer earlier about the decisions needed. Could God have helped us let go more easily? Was God with the church in any real way during the period of decline? Why, ask people from simpler stages of faith, does God allow church decline to happen at all?

So our theology slides into a positivism which soothes our pain. God, it seems, was in the good parts of the old which we are encouraged to celebrate in our closing rituals. God is seen as calling us into the

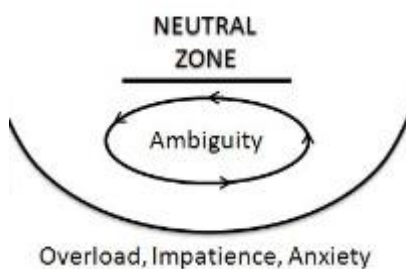
new thing, helping us as Moses and Aaron were helped to get the people let go. Or more practically, God helps by getting a miraculously good sale in the present market conditions. Or even, some say, God provided an earthquake to make decisions easier!

God tends to be seen as pro-new because new is still seen as positive in our not-quite-yet postmodern world. New is easy to identify as success. New location, new building, new programme,— mean, we hope, new consensus, new faith, new conversions. God is credited with bringing us through the transition: Psalm 40: 2 *He brought me up also out of an horrible **pit**, out of the **miry** clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*"

Our "goings" being established is comforting. We feel on familiar ground, glimpsing ahead a re-established church in what has come to be called the 'new normal' in Canterbury. Look at the words on the right of the diagram. We have 'purpose', we can 'plan', we are 'motivated' and 'stress is managed'. We can act with 'optimism' and take 'risks' more safely now. "God must be in this", we might say to each other. "God has brought us through." And we dedicate the building to the glory of God. This is the kind of success we know and love, but - we may not be transformed at all. For is this not building a bridge over the top of the dip; a bridge which will whisk us magically from grief to purpose?



In the transition diagrams however, there is the other stage: Bridge's neutral zone or Turner's liminal space. Its words aren't so encouraging, "ambiguity, overload, impatience, anxiety." We sense that hollow-pit-of-the-stomach feeling as we reach for the next firm hold. But more of the liminal space later....



## 1. *Letting-go the Old*. b. macro change – Church Universal

On the macro level, the Universal Church's task at present is to also let go the old. From a depth psychology angle Edinger terms it a loss of religious consensus. From a church history slant, Phyllis Tickle calls this space *The Great Emergence*. She cites Anglican bishop Mark Dyer to back her division of church history into half millennial periods: "about every five hundred years the Church feels compelled to hold a giant rummage sale." Whether Tickle's historical selections are accurate, a standing wave of spring-cleaning and sorting of clutter fits our particular moment metaphorically and literally.

Canadian theologian Douglas John Hall uses the terms disillusionment and disestablishment and, writing in the 1990s, called for the church to take its own disestablishment seriously. He believed in the moment of disillusionment, when the modern project is finally acknowledged as untrustworthy, there is much to be gained, depending on how that moment is handled.

The state of disillusionment ... signifies a condition of crisis and at the same time, of a reflective sensitivity to reality. The crisis is serious because that upon which life has been based (the foundational "illusion") has been shaken.... Whether this susceptibility to reality will become the occasion for a new wrestling... and a new search for meaning and hope, or whether on the other hand the crisis will simply deepen into catastrophic forms depends in large measure upon how the disillusionment is dealt with.<sup>16</sup>

We find ourselves at some point at the bottom of the valley, in the place the psalmist knew intimately, the pit. It is not a pleasant place, one out of which travellers like to move as quickly as possible. Yet it is the moment when one learns the most, if there is enough patience to wait for learning, enough faith it will come, and enough trust that God can be known in the pit as well as in highlights of the journey. Hall writes: "...it seems to me, that we are given a little time, a certain period of grace, during which we may enter meditatively into our experience as disillusioned followers of the modern illusion, and attempt to come to terms with our failure creatively."<sup>17</sup>

Hall sees "disillusionment as even more provocative *as a religious concept*". He notes the way Saul, Justin Martyr, Augustine of Hippo and Martin Luther experience of disillusionment with their existing situation led them to a new worldview. In fact, says Hall, theology *begins* with the experience of disillusionment and "...consists in considerable measure of reasoned reflection upon that experience, the causes of it, the meaning in it, the thrust beyond it." If the church stopped supporting the modern illusion, he argues, and used its "considerable powers of analysis" to understand society's dilemma, "then, I believe, a truly creative theology could occur in our context and in a way that is sorely needed." This, he says, is what "the invitation to theology means in North America today." He argues the church "has the vocation of exploring the failure of the illusion that is passing, and of articulating a new

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<sup>16</sup> *Thinking about the Faith* Douglas John Hall p.193

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.194



expression of the faith which can absorb this failure and point towards a new symbolic transcendence of it.”<sup>18</sup> I’m not sure whether 20 years later we have yet done the job Hall called us to.

Humans inhabit the liminal space or neutral zone for as short a time as possible. We’ve seen in Christchurch transitions drawn out by multiple shocks and red tape. The liminal space has stretched sometimes past human endurance. William Bridges advocates a reflective space he calls a renewal retreat. The secret in finding the point of change, he believes, is in stillness. “Such retreats have much to offer us whenever we come to the end of a chapter in our lives or find ourselves sensing the presence somewhere in the darkness ahead of something that is meaningful.”

What the renewal retreat might be for the individual, a theological moment of stillness might be for the Church. Twice, citing Hall, the word ‘failure’ occurred. In seeking reasons for present church decline, we commonly comfort ourselves by the strength of societal forces swirling round us for centuries and particularly the last five decades. But how *did* the bulk of the church fail to read the signs of the times? How *did* the bulk of the church fail to act earlier? Some pioneers and early adopters saw the problem, acting and writing in New Zealand from the 1980s. Was it institutional inertia which meant their lead was only followed slowly and did that cause more grief than necessary?

When we have invested so much energy in the modern project and have a theology of God which colludes with that project, we are all the more vulnerable when the project fails. The first part of the present transition is to give up a view of God as ever-positive, always progressing, always moving ahead, forward, upward, onward. That modern God falls with the bricks of the demolished church building, shatters with the stained glass, topples with our falling steeples. As the symbols leave the building does the modern view of God leave with them? Or, are we attempting to carry the exact same view of God with us, like an ark of the covenant, through the wilderness of the liminal space? Or are we seeking and finding new facets of God there which we hadn’t noticed before? Are we brave enough to look for the God who meets us in the liminal desert?

## 2. *It all hinges on the liminal moment*

Charles La Shure writes that “Viewed in a positive light, liminality provides freedom of movement, but the flip side of that coin is a lack of stability. Being betwixt and between means that you don’t belong anywhere. As social animals, few humans can survive for long without belonging somewhere, at least to some extent.”<sup>19</sup> Having, in our institutional and ancestral memory, belonged to Christendom for millennia, to belong nowhere, even for a short while, is destabilising. Where has the God of

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.195.

<sup>19</sup> “What is Liminality?” Charles La Shure 18 October, 2005 (first version) URL: <http://www.liminality.org/about/whatisliminality/>

Christendom gone in the pain and instability of the liminal moment? Moving from establishment to disestablishment, has God disappeared?

Scripture contains many liminal moments. Hagar twice meets the angel of the Lord in the desert as she swings from favour, out of favour and back again. In the darkness of liminal night Jacob dreams of a numinous ladder as he flees from his angry brother whom he has cheated. Elijah hides in a cave, anxious for his life, immediately after his triumph over Baal. Tamar, daughter in law of Judah, spends time in the liminal space of her father's house, acts as prostitute and is 'discovered' as an adulterer yet emerges as heroine – ambiguity if ever we see it. Covered with boils, Job impatiently searches for God in *his* nasty liminal experience.

Our faith centres around the most famous transition of all: the letting go of Jesus' death and his rising to new life, through the liminal space of the tomb. But how many here have heard a sermon on the theology of Easter Saturday? How many have preached one? As individuals or faith communities, we go from old to new, hitting the low spot in the middle of our transitions time and time again. We must take this low point seriously. In the inbetween zone, like a metamorphosing caterpillar, transformation is required. If God cannot work with us in that space, we will not be transformed sufficiently for the new thing being created in those moments, days, months, even years.

Elijah heard God speaking in a still small voice at the mouth of his liminal cave. The newly baptised Jesus, divine affirmation ringing in his ears, immediately encounters gut wrenching testing by the Spirit. He emerges a different person from his liminal wilderness.

Great change was wrought that first Easter between the crucified man and risen Lord. What happened within the divine economy in the dark Saturday tomb? What generative forces acted in the darkness to achieve the shocking change of resurrection? In the quietness of the tomb was there "the presence somewhere in the darkness ahead of something that is meaningful"<sup>20</sup>? In our liminal moments of change our task is to look for that same "presence somewhere in the darkness ahead of something that is meaningful." Just as the early disciples had no insight into what happened in the tomb, we have no maps for this liminal moment in the life of the church. What lies beyond us is virtually unimaginable, just as Easter Sunday was inconceivable for Mary, Peter and John.

Taking time to help people face ultimate questions and increase consciousness within the religious system is a key desirable outcome of living patiently and intentionally in the liminal space. Otherwise, the religious community simply looks for a similar religious consensus to replace the old as closely as possible. They seek a religious structure which will provide similar stability to what Christendom offered. The unstable inbetween space is fertile soil for desirable growth. Sometimes, however, the impatience of the players in the system mitigates against using the stillness and time required for transformation.

Also taking sufficient time in this liminal space does not look "successful" to those watching as well as

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<sup>20</sup> RETREAT AND RENEWAL, William Bridges, [http://www.wmbridges.com/articles/article-retreat\\_renewal.html](http://www.wmbridges.com/articles/article-retreat_renewal.html) accessed 20 August 2014.

not feeling comfortable for the main travellers. Mainstream Presbyterians have not been trained in the modern period to wait through ambiguity. Sitting with lack of resolution, living with one's anxiety rather than rushing to fill the vacuum with familiar comfort literally requires the patience of a saint.

Looking at a transition, cutting it open to assess its success during the process especially during the liminal space is rather like taking a cake out of the oven before it is properly cooked. Well might you wonder why it flows out to meet you as you sink in the knife! Or to take another food analogy, like cheese, good transitions take time.

Fortunately, like any good TV chef....I have something I prepared earlier!

### *3. Intimations of three principles for the other side from Fresh Expressions, UK, and Church of the Saviour, Washington DC*

*(i) a new kind of leadership*

*(ii) a new kind of membership*

*(iii) a new locus of missional power*

In April, May & June of 2013 I spent three months in the United Kingdom on study leave, focusing on Fresh Expressions. We also spent time in the US visiting the Church of the Saviour(COS) in Washington DC. It would be crass to claim these different ways of doing northern hemisphere church fit our context exactly. It's still too early yet to know exactly what church format fits best the emerging situation in which we find ourselves. However, both FX and the COS offer intimations of three principles which could apply in the new world on the other side of the valley of the liminal space. Some of those principles were also outlined by Canon Phil Potter, newly appointed as Archbishop's Missioner and team leader of Fresh Expressions whom I heard speak last month at the Fresh Horizons conference in Tauranga organised by Rev Donald Hegan and others.

These three principles relate to what leadership might look like, what membership might be like and where the locus of missional power resides. Most will have heard of FX so I won't spend time describing it in detail. The best way to learn about it is to access their website and watch video of different fresh expressions. As Phil Potter argued, FX requires a paradigm shift as great as the difference between the flat ocean surface compared with the underwater world which lies beneath. Just a small turn of the head accesses a completely different worldview.

One aspect of the paradigm shift is a multi layered church. Archbishop Rowan Williams employed 'mixed economy' to describe the mix of inherited church with fresh expressions of church. Phil Potter uses the term 'blended economy' to better describe two types of church co-existing; a "both/and" church rather than an "either/or" church. An archbishop even without mitre, talking with a dreadlocked young curate suggests something of what that juxtaposition looks like! Phil Potter uses the terms lake and river to describe the relationship of inherited and emerging church. The lake is the inherited church, settled in geography; in one place; the source. The emerging church is more like a river, flowing perhaps out of the lake, but able to move across the landscape, exploring new differences in the terrain and responding to context.

So what might leadership of such a blended church look like? FX describes itself as being primarily for

those who are not yet members of any church. So the dreadlocked curate is more likely to appeal as a leader to them than an elderly archbishop perhaps, - at least by hairstyle! Leaders of FX have found that successful pioneer ministers selected for FX work have to have a proven track record of entrepreneurial experimentation – hardly Rowan Williams' background. Yet, as Archbishop, Williams played a pivotal role in spreading reception of FX beyond a narrowly evangelical church-sector simply by being a champion, mentor and patron of the concept. This is more like the role of the ordained parish minister in FX - the minister plays roles of mentor, bridge builder, coach or encourager. FX reminds enquirers that listening is key to these emerging churches. So Phil taught us that leadership of an actual FX is less like conducting an orchestra than like playing in a jazz band, where each member listens to the other; where everyone contributes and each individual's skills make up the whole.

A unique approach within the FX concept is that these emerging groups are seen to have the potential to become mature expressions of church. It is recognised individuals joining them will regard the FX itself as their church and may never join inherited church. They may stay in the river, rather than swim in the lake. This means too that leadership of these fresh takes on church need to be less like a general leading an army and more like the poet who listens to the culture and community and then draws together their ethos in a succinctly. Or, they need to be like the gardener who notices the tiniest of seedlings peeping through the soil and nurtures its growth.

Since FX expressions work mainly with people who don't attend church, fit their context, making disciples right where they are, then the best leaders of FX might be most often lay people – mothers beginning playgroups, cyclists starting cycling groups, nurses beginning free clinics, or surfers while ordained clergy encourage and support. Clergy are the ones who interpret the needs of the emerging church to the inherited church. They explain the river to the lake because lake dwellers can't always grasp what it costs to constantly be rafting through white water.

If leadership is different on the other side, what about membership? One aspect of FX which worried away at the back of my mind was how it would develop an recognisable but flexible system of membership commitment. If FX were so 'fresh', how did you know who was in there for the long haul or who was just visiting to sample a few dishes on the ecclesiastical smorgasbord? Increasingly as parish minister I've found it more and more difficult to explain joining the church. Especially tricky was confirmation for teenagers. Also professions of faith for adults whose faith had undergone a seachange at midlife yet were being drawn spiritually back into a faith community often through their children. I was delighted therefore to discover neo monastic or new monastic communities within FX. This of course has medieval roots. In World War II Bonhoeffer too saw a new monasticism solving the loss of faith in religion he assumed would be a byproduct of that war.

Actual neo-monastic FX communities are not gathered in a new kind of monastery usually living independently. Their answer to my commitment issues is through their rules or rhythms of life. These have three main layers – the first is merely to join – the person simply turns up and hangs around, belonging often well before any believing begins at all. Then the rule includes a level of spiritual practice which the person selects for themselves from an offering by the community. These are Christian, so as the newcomer begins to practice them individually, they are becoming Christian, in fact *need* to become Christian in order to maintain spiritual practice in a disciplined way. Then the participant moves to the Posture level where their whole life becomes worship. They become life-long disciples - aiming for their potential in Christ, though never quite reaching it in this life, of course.

Reconnect is a FX in Poole on England's south coast. Paul Bradbury is a pioneer minister well supported by his diocese. Originally, he prayed his way down Poole Old High St, wondering how and where he should begin. He found offices above this cafe and their first event, I understand, was a felting class because that was a skill one of the original group could offer. That felting class grew into 'Space for Life'. They now run a book club and a meditation half-hour on Fridays. The cafe came available and after much prayer they now manage it. A new event is The Sunday Papers.

Reconnect's Rhythm of Life has a beginning sentence: "In our life as a community we seek to recognise Jesus as Lord, therefore...." and five different areas are named: - growth in worship and prayer; living life simply, living life accountably; living for others and seeking justice for all creation.

In the Victorian Gothic church of St Mary's Aldermay just blocks south of St Paul's Cathedral, the neo-monastic community Moot is based. They describe themselves as "a... community of spiritual travellers who seek to live in a way that is honest to God and honest to now." They've more recently opened a simple cafe, HOST, serving only hot drinks and maybe some soup. Bring lunch and your laptop and, if you've time, you can join the meditation group meeting further into the church. The community has an annual recommitment service. Ian Mobsby and Aaron Kennedy have thought through their Rhythm of Life in a more intellectually sophisticated way than the one at Poole. They describe the elements as: Aspirations.... Spiritual Practice.... Postures.... Their final comment in their paper (available on the MOOT website) answers my questions about how to combine flexible inclusiveness with commitment: "We believe that the combination of a serious framework for spiritual health and growth, and the ability to apply it personally, is optimum, providing the *maximum level of inclusiveness without sacrificing the potential benefit of discipline*."<sup>21</sup>

I said to Ian Mobsby who was clearly delighted to see so many at the re-commitment service. "Everyone seems to enjoy being together". He looked at me and said quietly "This has taken 10 years." Maybe the MOOT Rhythm of Life works because it is seen modelled in the lives of its leaders.

A third principle which might help on the other side is what I've called a shift in the locus of missional power. I'd known about the Church of the Saviour (COS) for over forty years and was very excited to visit at last. In the process, I realised COS is essentially a mature FX even though its beginning had nothing to do with that particular brand. COS is \* non denominational, \*began with nine people in 1947, \*does not own a church building, \*has employed only one minister throughout its life so far, \* has almost forty ministries and nine congregations (of approx seventy people each).

One ministry dating from 1960 is the Potter's House coffee shop and bookshop. Alongside it is the Columbia Rd Medical Centre, another ministry with a mobile clinic. The Festival Center is fronted by a sculpture of Christ completed by a church member. Here classes are held which each member takes as part of their membership commitment – their rule of life, if you like.

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## Our Mission

The mission of the Servant Leadership School is to prepare called individuals and

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<sup>21</sup> [www.moot.org.uk](http://www.moot.org.uk)



communities to come out of empire and into God's realm, abiding in Christ to sustain them on the way.

## Our Program

Rooted in the inward/outward tradition of The Church of the Saviour, the Servant Leadership School offers a unique approach to theological education that emphasizes an integrated process of personal and social transformation. Spiritual practices are paired with serious study; intentional relationships across cultural divides come alongside immersion in movements for justice. Located in the diverse Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC, it empowers people from all walks of life for their next step in our shared exodus journey.

Developed in partnership with faith communities and organizations on a similar path, the School's programming is organized around six themes: call in community, prayer and contemplation, Scripture and the Christian tradition, economic and earth justice, liberation from oppression, and peace and reconciliation. Each term of the School these themes are woven together to trace the movement named in our mission: *out of empire within and without, into God's realm in the here and now, abiding in Christ to sustain us on the way.*

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Christ House offers healing and accommodation to homeless people referred from clinics, hospitals and social workers. 200 volunteers from many churches help staff the House each month. "Just because you're poor doesn't mean you deserve poor medicine" is the motto of one organiser. A statue of Christ washing the disciples' feet is in the front yard. Factors behind the success of COS, I believe, are their emphasis on the complementarity of the outward and inward journeys; their training/teaching of members, including teaching members to have "difficult conversations"; their hefty membership commitment; keeping themselves too small and too poor to own a church and particularly their mission groups which grow out of the passion and recognition of call by their members.

This is the principle I believe could help us on the other side: Mission groups following their passion and God's call within that passion are the locus of missional power. 1. One person with a passion finds two others, (one needs to be a full member). 2. They talk and pray the idea through 3. The idea/need/vision is put out to the congregation. 4. 6-9 people begin a ministry, meeting weekly for prayer, study, work.

One early mission group began the Potter's House in 1960. It includes a bookshop, cafe, art for sale, musical events all run by volunteers. On Sunday two congregations meet for worship. We joined the Eighth Day congregation, Sunday morning. It was a regular service, lay led, including communion where the congregation served each other. Potter's House closed a month after we were there, planning a reinvention and renovation after consultation with the community. It has also embarked on a readjustment of attitudes. Early members created the cafe *for* poor blacks of the Adams Morgan District. Now educated black members are inviting those members, some in their 80s, to see the black/white relationship differently.

Even earlier than the Potters' House, acres of land were purchased, then outside Washington, for a

retreat centre. Within three years a lodge was built and silent retreats began. The Dayspring congregation meets for worship here each Sunday.

We saw two mission groups in process at the Eighth Day worship service. One was a report from the new Potter's House group – explaining plans to close for renovation and rejuvenation. It was good to see six people in their 40s and 50s taking the project into a new phase.

We also saw the possible beginnings of a new mission group – or not! A single woman who described herself as a newcomer to the church, said she'd suggested a couple of weeks ago beginning a COS singles group! It was obvious people had spoken to her about the idea because it had morphed a little since – into a group to help all people negotiate relationships – not only singles, but married and divorced people as well as gay couples. I don't know if the idea will take. She needed a full member to come on board. But, you could see how once the idea was named and described, how others interacted in ways which meant the idea took on depth and greater significance. It was exciting to see the discernment process in action and get an idea of how call, passion and need were all weighed together.

FX and COS offer us these three intimations of principles which would work for *our* other side, whatever shape it will take: A new kind of leadership, more like poets and gardeners, more lay than ordained; a new kind of membership which follows rhythms of life; a new locus of missional power where members are encouraged to recognise and act on their call.

We have been gifted the discomfort of a liminal space. Will we take the time to use the crucible of the pit to discern whether principles such as these suit our context?

Susan Jones

## Appendix Five

### A narrative of rolls and numbers at Timaru Presbyterian Parish before, after and during amalgamation. (prepared November 2015)

#### BEFORE AMALGAMATION

**Previous decline:** Prior to amalgamation in November 2009 worship attendance at the four former parishes had declined over the previous decade by an average of 47% across the four churches, (Trinity, Chalmers, St Pauls, & St Stephen's). Trinity declined the most, (66%), from 1999-2009. Chalmers declined least at 19%. The other two parishes' decline percentages were around the 30-40% mark. Such decline leads to reluctance to regularly prune rolls.

#### AMALGAMATION

**Entry numbers:** Therefore at the point of amalgamation, Advent Sunday, late November 2009, roll numbers were as below.

Former Churches	Date of Roll report	Members	%	Associates	%	Pastoral	%	Total Roll
Chalmers	Nov 2010	123	63.7	20	10.3	50	25.9	193
St Paul's	8.9.2010	136	51.9	22	8.4	104	39.7	262
St Stephen's	July 2010	140	51.4	66	24.3	66	24.3	272
Trinity	April 2010	87	28.0	26	8.0	200	64.0	313
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>1040</b>

**Members and associates.** The new Timaru Presbyterian Parish inherited a situation where the parish roll had only 59.6% of its total roll as members and associates eligible to vote at a congregational meeting. The PCANZ does not allow postal or proxy voting. We have a mobile congregation with a high number of retired members able to travel (especially overseas in July for the northern summer). We are often told by people highly involved in the parish that they cannot attend a specific voting meeting. There is dissatisfaction among these people that they cannot vote by postal methods, but we abide by Assembly regulations.

**The Pastoral Roll (40.4%) consists of:** Children, spouses of members who are not associates or members themselves, 'shut-ins'/rest home residents, historical funeral contacts, historical baptismal family contacts, in some cases, former youth group members and their families. This group not being members/associates are ineligible to vote.

#### AT THE PRESENT STAGE OF AMALGAMATION – TPP database at November 2014

	Members		Associates		Total Voting Roll	Pastoral Roll (non members)	Total roll
<b>Nov 2014</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>76% of voting roll</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>24% of voting roll</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>815</b>

A check figure is that we distribute monthly newsletters to 480 households.

#### a. Worshipping congregation

**The average total number worshipping on a Sunday morning in June 2014 was 158** = 33% of the total present member/associate roll. In the first few years of the combined parish, worship attendance was constant, i.e. decline was arrested. From the beginning of the amalgamation, attendance has never been the same as the number of members & associates. The 2013 Church Life Survey reported 75% of our worshipping congregation was over 65.

In November 2014 the member/associate roll was scrutinised by a group drawn from the TPP pastoral ministry group (representing the four former parishes) with the following results:

Regular attendees	187
Non-attendees over a very long term	111
Non-attendees since the amalgamation	23
Frail/poor health affecting attendance	68
Occasional attendees, loosely connected to the faith community	62
Unknown to the group scrutinising the rolls	30
Total members/associate roll	481

- 1. It is obvious that a careful and thorough roll revision is needed.**
- 2. To re-engage with people who have left since the amalgamation is possible.** This is a hoped-for outcome of the new building. Several people have indicated they are holding a watching brief and might return when “things have settled down.” Some of these are worshipping elsewhere and some worshipping nowhere, but still attending some church groups (community club, winter lunches, APW, birthday lunches). Other non attendees retain friendships with church members.
- 3. To significantly re-engage with people who were already disengaged at the point of amalgamation** is more difficult, something other churches are also finding.
- Given the above factors we believe it would be difficult to significantly increase the percentage of people voting at meetings, especially in the short term, even if the number voting increased slightly.

**b. Congregational meeting July 6<sup>th</sup>**

Attendance at meeting	Worshipping June statistics	Regular attendees on roll
131	158	187
	82.9%	70%
Attendance plus apologies		
141	89%	75.4%

This table shows the high percentage of regular worship attendees who came to the July meeting. These are people engaged with the parish direction who know what the building project signifies in the life of TPP. These are the members and associates who are in the best position to make a decision since they are the ones who have put time and effort into our faith community's life since the amalgamation.