**INAUGURAL LECTURE 2013**

**Ko Te Amorangi Ki Mua, Ko Te Hapai O Ki Muri**

E ngā mana e ngā reo, e rau rangatira ma, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

**Takoto Korero: *Introduction:***

Firstly I would like to express my gratitude to those who have made it possible to be here today to deliver the Inaugural lecture for 2013. To the staff and students and supporters of KCML may you all have a blessed and successful year, may you all survive another year of Jason’s jokes, of course with your socks on, after all according to my learned and esteemed collegue you are simply Methodist who can read and they are simply Presbyterians with their socks on !

At some stage this year we look forward to hosting you at Ohope marae and giving you a glimse into ministry in a Māori context.

The title of this Inaugural lecture is: **Ko te Amorangi ki mua ko te hapai o ki muri**. This is an ancient Māori proverbial saying that is often associated with Amorangi ministry. It is losely translated as meaning ‘The emblem of God first while the enhancement will follow’. The late vernable Arch-Deacon, Sir Kingi Matutaera Ihaka intrepreted it as:

*The emblem of the God in front (first), the food bearers to the rear (last)[[1]](#endnote-1).*

Sir Kingi explained in Te Ao hou magazine that:

*When Christianity was first introduced into this country and until recent times, this proverb as appertaining to God was strictly observed. The elders did all their manual work during the week on Saturdays; the meals for Sundays were cooked in order that Sundays could be kept holy. In recent times, however, the order has been reversed—Food first, and God after—well after[[2]](#endnote-2)!*

Today I will present to you the story of Amorangi ministry within Te Aka Puaho, its Genesis, its thirty two year history and development, its challenges and highlights, some of its personalities and its possible future within the life of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. During this inaugural lecture I will define what is *Amorangi* and how does this understanding shape and inform our praxis of ministry.

**Dedication:**

I wish to also dedicate this inaugural lecture to the Rev Te Hiko o te Rangi Ngatai Riini whom many of you will have known and worked with as Sonny Riini. Uncle Sonny was one of the first ordained Amorangi ministers in 1981, born and raised in the community of Ruatoki, a farmer and bus driver by trade. He married Mrs Mona Riini who went on to become Moderator of Te Aka Puaho after his sudden death. Uncle Sonny became the social worker for Te Aka Puaho in Auckland replacing his uncle, Sir John Turei. He went onto become Senior Lecturer in the School of Social Work at Auckland University and also played a significant role within the Auckland College of Education before taking up an appointment as Māori Culture Teacher to the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. It was as Culture Teacher to the Church that he spent six months of the year at Knox Theological Hall becoming the first Māori appointed to the staff of Knox Theological Hall until his retirement. In his ministry he was described by the Secretary General of the World Council of Churches as the world’s leading lay theologian[[3]](#endnote-3). Quite an achievement. Some of you who have a few more grey hairs then I do will have had the pleasure to have known him and to have worked alongside him in these hallowed halls of knowledge and spiritual enlightenment. Looking back at those days with Uncle Sonny he and I would never have thought that I would be standing here today delivering this Inaugural lecture.

***Moe mai e te rangatira– sleep peacefully my friend*.**

**Ko te Amorangi ki mua: *The Word of God First:***

In the history of the Knox Centre for Leadership and Ministry there have only being 12 known people from Te Aka Puaho who have studied and graduated from Knox. The list includes the Rev Hemi Potatau who graduated in 1932. Hemi was a person of many first’s, he was the first Māori to attend Scots College in Wellington, and the first Māori to attend and graduate from these hallowed halls and the first Māori to become a fully ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. He was one of the first Māori to attend Otago University. He was fluent in Māori, English, French, Mandarin and Arabic. He was one of our few ministers to achieve the milestone of fifty years since his ordination. After his retirement he gained his BA from University at the age of seventy and in his nineties he authored his book ‘He Hokinga Mahara’ written in classical Māori. Hemi became ‘the’ role model for all Māori ministers who followed in his footsteps. Hemi was a pastoral minister, a linguist, an interpreter, an academic, a writer and author, an actor sometimes appearing in television productions, a Moderator and leader in Church and society.

Following this Hemi was Hemi Nikora from Opape marae in Opotiki. Hemi was originally ordained as a Home missionary then came to Knox for a year and graduated in 1944. The other Māori ministers were Timutimu Tioke and Kihoro Te Puawhe who were trained as Home missionaries within the Māori missions. Following hemi Potatau and Hemi Nikora there was a twenty three year gap when there was no Māori coming forward to Knox due largely to the establishment of the Wananga a Rangi.

When the current principal of KCML was Moderator of PCANZ the Very Rev Dr Graham Reading adopted as his Theme: *Reformed and Reforming.* As he explained during his Moderators address we stand in the Reformed tradition of Church and one of the principles of being a Reformed church is that we are not static, we are constantly reforming as a Church.

This would be a fair description of the 1945 to 1953 period as in this timeframe the Māori mission which consisted of mission stations, developed largely through the unselfish work of the Deaconesses moved to a Presbytery and then in 1953 to a Synod complete with its own Pastorates with male ministers in charge. Moreover the Synod came complete with its own field training centre called Te Wananga a Rangi: *The School of Heaven Leaning.* This reformation came about due to the Round Table Conference on Māori Affairs being held in 1952.

The Round Table Conference on Māori Affairs was perhaps the most important moment in the life of the Church as they were seized with the consciousness that it had been called of God to face vital and urgent issues relative to the future of the Māori people and to the direction that the work of the Church should take in relation to Pākehā and Māori in the common citizenship of Aotearoa New Zealand[[4]](#endnote-4). The Conference made a number of visionary statements for its day believing that the Kingdom of God is never securely established among any people until it has been made indigenous by handing over its leadership to the native Church[[5]](#endnote-5). The Conference found that in spite of the two Hemi, Māori were not coming forward into positions of leadership and none were willing to offer themselves to ministry due to three factors:

1. Separation from home:

Māori society was undergoing a transformation from being a largely rural base society living within one’s own tribal territory. Various government legislations forced many of their remaining tribal lands into cities and towns creating a cheap labour force. Integrating into another context was still a challenge for many.

1. Isolation from their language:

For many, the Māori language was the only language and their fluency in English was rather limited. None of the staff and students at Knox Theological Hall were fluent in the Māori language unlike the staff of KCML today who I understand are all fluent in te reo Māori and also multi-linguistic !

1. The lack of academic achievement:

Most Māori had at best if they were lucky a primary education. Very few graduated to a secondary education and even fewer attended University.

To meet the needs of the Churches mission to Māori something needed to change in how they did Church. The Conference recommended that the best way to proclaim the Gospel to Māori people is through a Māori ministry. In preparation for ministry they found that the training in the Theological Hall would not be suitable for the needs of the Maori ministry[[6]](#endnote-6). A training centre for Māori by Māori in a Māori context was recommended and accepted by the whole Church in 1953 thus Te Wananga a Rangi was officially created.

Underpinning these changes of how we are to be and do Church were the missionary thinking of Rolland Allen who was an advocate of establishing Churches which would be self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing, adapted to local conditions and not merely imitations of Western Christianity. His approach to mission is based upon the Apostle Paul’s missionary methods where he entrusted the local church to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He believed that Churches suffered from a dependency syndrome of devolved authority that made people in particular indigenous peoples dependent upon western missionaries for financial support, evangelism, leadership, and buildings. The Apostle Paul did not establish a Church and over a long period of time devolve authority, on the contrary when Paul established a Church he immediately devolved all necessary power and authority to them as it arose from the working of the Holy Spirit. Nowhere do we read that Paul continued to go back to them time and again devolving some sort of responsibility or authority to them that he possessed[[7]](#endnote-7).

The Conference also took note of trends in overseas missions. In China, the Chinese took over the running of their mission, while in India a Union Church had been created under the guidance of the United Church in South India who selected a number of elders and commissioned them as ministers. In the New Hebrides changes had taken place and New Hebrides people were studying towards ministry. The shackles of colonialism were being broken and indigenous peoples in former mission countries were indigenizing the Church its mission and ministry. The Foreign Missions Committee of this Church stated in its 1952 report to General Assembly that, when the Church is confronted with the obligation of World missions it is thrown back on the meaning of its own existence, in this sense the committee is attempting to hold up the mirror of the Gospel to the Church at home so that the Church may see itself truly in the purpose of God[[8]](#endnote-8). It seemed a sensible conclusion that the Presbyterian Church in Aotearoa New Zealand would follow the trend in world missions to indigenous peoples.

During its lifetime Te Wananga a Rangi successfully trained twenty eight Māori men and one Māori woman to fulltime ministry. A guiding light of the Wananga a Rangi was the Rev Helmut Rex, Professor of Church History at Knox Theological Hall. Rex attended a meeting of the Hinota Māori and delivered two challenging lectures on race relations. He said in his lectures that the problem in race relations is not about race but it is primarily a question of relations[[9]](#endnote-9). He advocated that Māori and Pākehā should learn to see each other through each other’s eyes as there could be no equality until there was social equality between Māori and Pākehā.

The Wananga a Rangi was never a standalone entity it was a field training centre of Knox Theological Hall. Finances, resources and knowledge were a shared matter between the two institutions. They were trained in their own environment amongst their own people; their language was the accepted medium of communication, teaching and expression while the curriculum reflected their situation where they could study their own church history and pastoral and theological practices equipping them for lifelong ministry to their own people. As opposed to coming to the Theological Hall where they looked different, the language was not their language and they struggled to express themselves in their own acceptable ways and you were trained to minister or fit another context when others around them could stay in their familiar comfort zones. Uncle Sonny Riini reflected on the difference between Knox and the Wananga a Rangi remarking to me that when other people come into our context we are charged with keeping them culturally safe but when we come here no one keeps us culturally safe. He viewed that as his primary responsibility when he was here to be a voice for those he represented and to keep us safe.

Eventually all good things must come to an end and for one reason or another Te Wananga a Rangi ended that part of its life in the early 1970s. During the remainder of the 1970s there was only one person from Te Aka Puaho who attended and graduated from Knox Theological Hall the Rev George Heta in 1973 and sadly only eight others have followed.

**Te Hapai o ki muri: *The Enhancement:***

History may unkindly judge this time as a time of depravity but when we do that we ignore the activity and work of the Holy Spirit. Looking at this time ecumenically, both St John’s and Trinity College in Auckland were in the same situation, few Māori had graduated from St John’s and even fewer from Trinity. But this was a time of great activity, conversations were happening, ideas were being spawned, theologies were being challenged, ways of being and doing Church and how we minister were being reviewed and new theologies, plans and strategies were being developed.

One of the problems that Te Aka Puaho was experiencing was that their Pastorates were geographically huge and the ministers had difficulty getting around their areas. In Auckland for example there was one minister to a population of 200,000 Māori. The boundaries of the Auckland Pastorate are from Meremere in the south to Wellsford in the north. In Wellington there was also one minister to a population of 50,000 Māori.

In 1979 the Rt Rev Paul Reeves the Bishop of Waiapu attended one of our Synod meetings and spoke about an exciting development taking place in the Pihopatanga o Aotearoa, the Māori Bishopric. This new way of ministry was called Minita a Iwi. Sir Paul encouraged us to do something similar. The Minita a Iwi concept resonated with Te Aka Puaho and within a year of Sir Paul’s visit the Amorangi ministry was born based upon the Minita a Iwi concept.

If you examine the theology of ministry, when your call to ministry is acknowledged by the Church you are set free to belong to Christ. Normally you would attend a seminary for study, theological formation and reflection and after licensing and ordination you are posted to wherever the Church decides or you can apply for ministry positions around the world. Not only are you set free to belong to Christ but who are also set apart. Amorangi ministry challenges that somewhat in that while you may belong to Christ, you first and foremost belong to your Iwi. There is a well-known saying that you are born into your Iwi, you may traverse the well-worn paths of this world but when you die it is your Iwi who come for you. A well-known Māori proverbial saying best explains this belief:

*E kore ahau e ngaro, he kakano ahau i ruia mai i Raiatea*

*I can never be lost in this world as I am a seed sown long ago in Raiatea.*

**In Tuhoe our world begins on the slopes of the sacred mountain Maungapohatu, and our world ends there as well.**

Instead of attending a Seminary for study, formation and reflection the locus of your studies is in the community that you come from, you are never separated from your people as it is our understanding that when you do become separated from your Iwi in the words of another Māori proverbial saying:

*He whare i roto i te Pa tuwatawata he tohu o te rangatira,*

*he whare kei waho, kai na te kuri.*

*A house that stands within a palisade village is a sign of strength,*

*a house that stands alone outside the safety of the village is food for the dogs.*

You are born into your Iwi, it is your Iwi who must support your call to ministry alongside your local parish, in fact it would be fair to say that your Iwi is your local Church and not a separate or different community of individual believers within a wider community who gather on a Sunday for a one hour worship service and a cup of tea, the Church is the glue that holds your Iwi together. Without the recognition of the Iwi there is no Church and you cannot proceed to ministry.

Two further requirements of Amorangi ministry is your status within the Iwi and your proficiency in Te Reo Māori. Ministry in a Māori context requires that you must have achieved a certain level and standard of leadership. You must be an acknowledged orator, knowledgeable in kinship relationships, in karanga, moteatea and waiata, in tikanga and kawa, customs and ways of being and practice. The medium for all these requirements is te reo Māori. Without the language the culture dies and our Church is a Church that has committed itself to the survival of the Māori language as John Laughton says[[10]](#endnote-10):

*The language is the essence of the people,*

*its arts and crafts, its protocols, its values towards the land*

*and its language is what fashions the Māori Soul.*

The final stipulation is that there is no financial gain; they would be financially self-supporting ministers. Like the members of their congregations they would work for a living alongside those they ministered too and not set apart from those they ministered too. In many ways Amorangi arises from the people, to the people for the people. It was the Iwi taking responsibility for being Church, for its mission and ministry.

Our first Amorangi ministers fitted these descriptions perfectly; all were acknowledged rangatira, senior chiefs of their Iwi proficient in every aspect of Māori life, they were the authors and experts of the texts book that we study today. They were the teachers on the marae of oratory, arts and crafts, genealogy, history, customs and language. They were also proficient in biblical knowledge and had built up many years of service as Elders of the Church. Our earlier ministers from Hemi Potatau to the Wananga a Rangi ministers had set the standard and there was no way that they were going to relent on those lofty standards.

**The term Amorangi is not a Māorification of western theological concepts and abstracts but has its roots deep within Māori spiritualism and its definition, eloboration and expression are as different as is the theology that informs then.**

According to the Wananga o Aotearoa, Amorangi are the custodians for the prestigious and spiritual realm of Te Ao Māori[[11]](#endnote-11). The University of Waikato attaches the word Amorangi to Academic excellence and hosts the annual Te Amorangi National Māori Academic Awards which acknowledges those who have earnt a Doctrate. Today there are over 500 Māori with Doctrates. The Williams dictionary defines Amorangi as priest, leader, emblem of an Atua (God) that is carried by a Tohunga who is the spiritual leader while other dictionaries define Amorangi also in the same light as a leader, headmast, an emblem resembling something or someone of importance. The Tertiary Education Commission links Amorangi to Mataurangā Māori, Māori knowledge which Professor Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal descibes as the continuum of knowledge with Polynesian origins that include scientific, mytholical, relgious and imaginative rational with a variety of applications in material culture, activities and behavious[[12]](#endnote-12). It would be fair to say that Amorangi ministry reflects excellence in the practice of ministry based upon biblical knowledge and its interaction with the Māori world that is ever changing and being redefined with each generation.

**The Amorangi ministry is now thirty two years old and into its third generation. The sons and daugthers and grandsons and granddaugthers of former Amorangi ministers have followed in the footsteps of the grandparents and parents. It is one of our success stories but there have been challenges along the way.**

In the early days Amorangi ministers were only assistant ministers to the fulltime ministers and this created tensions between the two classes of ministers. Often the Amorangi ministers would be refered to as second class ministers or glorified Elders. However this criticism disapated when the fulltime ministers retired or died and by 2003 there was only one fulltime minister left...me ! Because of the lack of fulltime ministers the Amorangi took on the status as ministers in charge of their Pastorates and the assistant minister status was withdrawn.

Having to work and minister has sometimes created difficulties. At time employers have complained that they are taking too much time off work to attend to their ministry duties. On some occassions Employers have given the ultimatum, your job or your ministry. Some Amorangi have chosen their ministry above their employment and have moved from job to job or applied for the unemployment benefit.

The original course of Amorangi study was six months in duration consisting of three weekend live inns and the curriculum focussed upon worship, the sacraments and sermon development. Today the course of study is 18 months in duration consisting of nine weekend live inns totalling two hundred hours of taught classes and another two hundred hours of self directed learning and assigments and at least two hundred hours of practicals. From the beginning of Amorangi studies in 1980, the Theological Hall and KCML have been integral to the Amorangi studies with most of the teachers have taught different components in the Amorangi curriculm.

There have been some highlights as well as challenges. In 2005 our ministry ranks were reduced to one fulltime minister and six Amorangi ministers of whom two were quite sickly ministering within eleven Pastorates. Today we have thirty six active Amorangi ministers in fifteen Pastorates and one now based in Melbourne, Australia.

I often tell people that as the Director of Amorangi studies I have the greatest job in the world as I can to walk besides people and watch them grow into wonderful people. The academic calibre of our Amorangi has grown over the years. Many of them came from non-academic backgrounds, carpenters, truck drivers, a grease monkey as one described himself, pensioners, unemployed, solo mothers, factory workers.

The Rev Tom Hawea gave me some of the best advice ever when I aired my frustrations to him about the academic quality of some of the students. He said to me that Jesus didn’t exactly call the cream of the crop in calling his disciples. He called a couple of fishermen down on their luck, a tax collector and a couple of mummy’s boys in John and James. Jesus chose a couple of rough stones and turned into polished and valuable gems. That is the task of Amorangi, to take ordinary people and polish them from rough stones to polished gems.

The possible highlight for me in the nine years that I have been Director of Amorangi studies is sitting one night with the son of our very first Amorangi minister. This person could barely read or write and had never studied the Bible in public. I sat with him in a group and witnessed the joy in his whole being as he discovered the beauty of reading the Bible aloud in a group of people for the first time. Watching someone discover the Word of God for himself in a way that they could never have imagined is indeed a highlight.

We have since moved on since those days and we now have Amorangi ministers with University Degrees ranging from Bachelors to Masters in Law, Education and teaching, Business management, theology. We have Amorangi ministers who are principals and deputy principals of School’s, some working in curriculum development for tertiary institutions while others working as Prison, school and hospital chaplains. A number of Amorangi ministers have been integral to Treaty of Waitangi Settlements with the Government and have taken part in negotiating over $60 million dollars in cash and assets.

No longer do our people consider National Ordained Ministry the centre of ministry, instead Amorangi has moved to the centre and is considered the pinnacle of achievement. Our biggest challenge today is to focus upon the future and ensure that Amorangi ministry continues for at least the next three generations. Our present focus for the next two years is on the 20 to 30 year age group and preparing them for Amorangi ministry. This comes about due to challenges from this age group requesting that we prepare them for ministry not in the future but today. Who better to take the Word of God to young people then young people themselves, who better to minister to young people then young people themselves? At least seven young people have expressed an interest in training for ministry during the next two years.

**Conclusion:**

Let me finally acknowledge the Very Rev Dr Graham Reading for having the foresight and vision in purposing a Covenant relationship between KCML and Te Wananga a Rangi in terms of the sharing of finances and knowledge. Throughout the history of Amorangi ministry KCML and its former entities the School of Ministry and the Theological Hall have been great supporters of Amorangi studies from former principal Rev Dr Simon Rae and Nevile Emslie, to Sarah Mitchell, Milton Coleman, Joe Bush, Mary Huie-Jolly, Kevin Ward, Susan Weinstein, Jason Goronchy. All have contributed greatly to the success that Amorangi ministry is.

I began by quoting the Māori proverb pertaining to Amorangi ministry: Ko te Amorangi ki mua ko te hapai o ki muri. The Word of God comes first, the enhancement will follow. The Amorangi ministry is to the forefront of ministry within Te Aka Puaho to its communities nationwide and internationally. Our future ministry is in their hands, it has stood the test of time, it has been defined and redefined and no doubt will be developed even further by future generations who are now lining up to take responsibility for ministry. They will no doubt develop this taonga or treasure in ways that we have not yet imagined. When Sir Paul Reeves sowed the seeds of Amorangi ministry amongst us I doubt that he knew that it would take root and grow in the way it has grown today.

Ko te Amorangi ki mua ko te hapai o ki muri.

In all things the emblem of God which is the

Word of God must go first

Mauriora ki a tatou katoa

**Rev Wayne Te Kaawa**

Moderator, Te Aka Puaho

Te Ahorangi o Te Wananga a Rangi

Director of Amorangi Studies

**Footnotes**

1. Te Ao Hou: Issue 26, March 1959. National Library of New Zealand. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Rob Cooper: Secretary Runanga whakawhanaungatanga i ngā Hāhi o Aotearoa. Parua Haranui marae, Rotorua. 1991. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Laughton J: From Forest Trail to City Street. *The Story of the Presbtrian Church among the Maori People.* Presbyterian Bookroom, Christchurch. 1961. Pg 48. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid pg 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid pg 50 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. World Dominion 5 (1927): 278. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. General Assembly Report: 1952:88 [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Irwin J: 1994: 281 [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Te Ao Hou. No 8 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Te Wananga o Aotearoa website [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. <http://www.authorstream.com>. Professor Royal is the Director of Nga pae of te Maramatanga. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)