

**MIGRANT CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN NEW ZEALAND:
OBSERVATIONS AND MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS**

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Introduction

This paper contributes to research we are currently undertaking on what we've called 'migrant theologies' in Aotearoa-New Zealand. We are exploring the role, nature and form of the Christianity that that Asian migrants to New Zealand express, adopt or adapt. Over the next year we intend to undertake case studies of various Asian migrant Christian communities (Indian, Vietnamese, Hong Kong, China, Japanese, and Korean) in a variety of contexts including a mono-cultural migrant church and an assimilated congregation.

¹ Some of the material in this paper has appeared in earlier versions in the following publications: Andrew Butcher and George Wieland, 'Immigration', a Vision Network New Zealand position paper, 2009 <
http://www.visionnetwork.org.nz/attachments/555_Immigration%20position%20paper.pdf>; Andrew Butcher and George Wieland, "The Stranger in our Midst", *Daystar* (Sep-Oct 2009): 24-26; and Andrew Butcher, 'Not a Western Story: The Christian Faith and Migrant Communities in New Zealand', *AEN Journal Special Issue: Faith for all: New Zealand's growing religious diversity*, 2:2 (2007): 33-37.

Our focus questions will include:

- How do they interpret their experience of migration and presence in New Zealand in terms of their religious faith?
- How does experience of migration and existence in New Zealand affect understanding and practice of their Christian faith?
- How do they relate to established New Zealand forms/expressions of Christianity?
- How is/might be character of New Zealand Christianity affected by arrival of Asian Christianities?

We will be looking for commonalities and differences, implications for the study of Christianity generally and in Aotearoa New Zealand specifically, and learning for migrant studies. In our study, we will go broad and shallow rather than narrow and deep. This work will be largely descriptive, raising awareness of phenomenon of Asian Christianities in New Zealand, now part of the mix of New Zealand Christianity. We expect that this will give us a broader picture of the various expressions of Asian Christianities in New Zealand, will be more useful to churches and mission agencies, and will also provide a platform from which further study in this area can be launched.

Those are the longer term goals of the project. The purpose of this paper is more modest. We begin by briefly considering contemporary debates and migration and religion, looking at literature in migration studies, religious studies and theology. We then provide an overview of migrants and migration to New Zealand, noting changes across time and recent Census data. In this section we also note the various responses to migrants in New Zealand, particularly those that see migrants as a threat to a 'New Zealand way of life. From there, we turn to the debate about migrants and the "decline" of Christianity in New Zealand and consider whether the debate has merit. Again, we draw on recent Census data to provide a statistical overview of migrants to New Zealand and their religious affiliations, while also noting that these data only give a partial reading at best of religious affiliation and expression. In this section we also consider the role that churches have played and continue to play in assisting toward the settlement of migrants in New Zealand. The next section of this paper turns our attention toward migration in Scripture. Having considered the reality of the ethnic diversification of New Zealand society, how might Christians respond in light of Scripture? We note that the movement of people and peoples run like a thread through the Bible; the emigration experience is a common story for the people of God. Moreover, the Biblical injunction toward paying special attention to the sojourner, widow and orphan illustrates that the migration experience in Scripture is more than moving from one place to another, but also extends to caring and supporting those who have migrated. Taking into account the ethnic diversification of New Zealand, migrants and their religious experiences, and migration in Scripture, the final section of our paper considers the implications for Christian attitudes and actions.

Asian migrants

Our focus in this paper is on Asian migrants to New Zealand, rather than migrants from other regions of the world. Our reasons for this are three-fold:

- Asian migrants represent the fastest growing *migrant* population in New Zealand
- New Zealand's ethnically Asian population is the fastest growing ethnic population in New Zealand²
- New Zealand's Asian migrants are often perceived to be bringing with them to New Zealand their own religions (Buddhism, Islam etc.) in a way that other migrant groups are not, reflecting in part that these other migrant populations often come from Christian countries.

Asian migration to New Zealand began in the mid 19th century but it has accelerated and diversified in recent decades. Among Asian immigrants are many whose religion is Christianity. Asian Christianities, having taken root in contexts shaped by Asian cultural, religious and socio-economic realities, thus find themselves transplanted into the soil of a westernized culture that may be nominally Christian but is now often characterised as post-Christian. The study, of which this paper forms a part, aims to identify and describe the presence and range of expressions of Christianity among the Asian diasporas in New Zealand and to open up a field of research about Asian Christianities in both migration studies and religious studies.

Definitions

Some definitional clarifications are needed up-front. While in this paper we (and we would suggest, the public at large, New Zealand media and some politicians) generally use 'migrant' as a synonym for 'Asian', the majority of immigrants to New Zealand are still coming from the United Kingdom and that there remains a significant amount of movement between Australia and New Zealand. So when we talk of migrants to New Zealand, we need to remember to include New Zealand's nearest neighbour and New Zealand's colonial 'Mother Country'. The Pacific communities in New Zealand have also had strong ties with the church: 80% of Pacific peoples in New Zealand are Christian, according to the 2006 Census, and the church plays a central role in Pacific culture and life.³

² Richard Bedford and Elsie Ho, *Asians in New Zealand: Implications of a Changing Demography*, (Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2008) <[http://www.asiaNew Zealand.org.New Zealand/files/AsiaNew Zealand%20Outlook%207.pdf](http://www.asiaNewZealand.org>NewZealand/files/AsiaNewZealand%20Outlook%207.pdf)> (1 November, 2009). There is an important distinction to be made between Asians in New Zealand whose birthplace is in Asia and those who identify as ethnically Asian, but who may be born in New Zealand (or elsewhere). Data distinguishes between these two categories in the Census.

³ For discussion on Pacific peoples and Christianity in New Zealand, see Feiloaiga Taule'ale'asumai, 'New Religions, New Identities: The Changing Contours of Religious Commitment' in *Tangata O Te Moana Nui: The Evolving Identities of Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Cluny Macpherson, Paul Spoonley and Melanie Anae, (Palmerston North: Dunmore

With Pacific peoples being such an integral part of New Zealand culture now, we forget that thirty years ago *they* were the new migrants bringing their styles and culture to New Zealand.

"Migrant theologies" and "Asian Christianities"

In referring to "migrant theologies" and "Asian Christianities", we are concerned with both the form and substance of Christian experience. When Asian migrants arrive in New Zealand, they bring with them not only their particular religious practices: these may reflect cultural norms and practices as much as they may reflect denominational traditions. But they also bring with them particular theological beliefs that may differ from host country populations. These may be on areas as diverse as the use and role of sacraments, the role of women, Sabbath practices, the role and purpose of the Holy Spirit, the role and centrality of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, ethics, the importance of family, the role and authority of tradition, food and customs, and so on. While host community Christian populations also share a diversity of theological viewpoints and religious practices, and while this diversity may likewise reflect cultural norms as much as denominational traditions, these host community practices and beliefs are often not critiqued in the same way as migrant expressions of Christianity are or can be. Indeed, the lack of critical self-reflection of host community practices and beliefs may be one reason as to the resistance toward migrant populations' expressions of Christianity. However, we would also want to emphasise that there is no simple dichotomy between "migrant theologies"/"Asian Christianities" and "non-migrant theologies"/"non-Asian Christianities". Theological belief and practice does not divide neatly along this or any other line. The term is useful as a distinctive marker; it should not be read as constituting anything more than that.

Contemporary debates about migration and religion

The extent to which minority populations can have and exercise rights, practices and values dominates recent scholarship on migration and political theory.⁴ Much of the impetus behind this scholarship has been driven by the twin realities of the ubiquity of international migration (and the attendant increased ethnic diversity of populations) and

Press, 2001), 181-197; and Cluny Macpherson, 'From Pacific Islanders to Pacific People and Beyond' in, *Tangata, Tangata: The Changing Ethnic Contours of New Zealand*, ed. Paul Spoonley, Cluny Macpherson and David Pearson (Melbourne: Thomson, 2004), 136-156.

⁴ E.g. Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig (eds.), *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity*, (Ontario: Queen's School of Policy Studies and Metropolis, 2009); David Bromell, *Ethnicity, Identity and Public Policy: Critical Perspectives on Multiculturalism*, (Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, 2008); Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

the risks perceived in this movement of people, for example on the threat may pose to the nation-state and its values.

Demographic changes in New Zealand, alongside other countries like the United Kingdom, France, Canada and the United States, all provoke a myriad of questions relating to the impact of migrants on host country institutions and ideals. In many of these countries, with respect to religion, the focus has been on Muslim migrants.⁵ In particular, many studies of immigration have focused on the problematic integration of Muslim communities and therefore government strategies for improving integration policies of these same communities. In these contexts, "good citizenship" is often seen as a measure of "Europeanization", which, in popular debate "is often understood as assimilation into a Judeo-Christian culture or, at the least, the abandonment of public signifiers associated with Islam".⁶ In many European countries, the integration of Muslim communities is the central problematic. The reasons for this are manifold, though the association with Islam and terrorism is a prevalent reason (particularly following the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September, 2001). Beyond that, many Muslim practices are "often seen as antithetical to European values of gender equality and emblematic of the perceived anti-liberal, anti-democratic influence of Islam".⁷ The rise in "right-wing" parties in the United Kingdom and in the European Parliament may be seen as one response to these challenges.⁸

In the United Kingdom, for example, the role of migration, migrants and asylum seekers has concerned Christian writers and others both because of the pastoral care challenges these new populations bring to Christian communities and practice. (For example, the significant increase of Polish migrants in Catholic churches in the UK, following the ascension of Poland into the European Union.) These migrant populations challenges to notions of nationality and the practice of Christianity.⁹

In New Zealand, practical issues around the establishing and use of Muslim prayer rooms in universities, for example, is a salient and controversial issue. The University of Otago spent at least two years deciding where, how and when to create a prayer space for Muslim students, which they have done by converting two small rooms (one for men and the other for women) in the basement of one of the university's older buildings. Other universities

⁵ Paul Bramadat, 'Religious Diversity and International Migration: National and Global Dimensions' in, *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity*, ed. Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig (Ontario: Queen's School of Policy Studies and Metropolis, 2009), 1-26

⁶ Irene Bloemraad, Anna Kortewag and Gokce Yurdakul, 'Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation and Challenges to the Nation-State', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34 (2008): 169

⁷ Bloemraad *et al*, 'Citizenship and Immigration', 163.

⁸ Bramadat, 'Religious Diversity and International Migration'.

⁹ See, for example, Nick Spencer, *Asylum and Immigration: A Christian Perspective on a Polarised Debate*, (Cambridge: Jubilee Centre, 2004); Andrew Bradstock and Arlington Trotman, *Asylum voices: Experiences of people seeking asylum in the United Kingdom*, (London: Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2003).

and educational institutions face similarly challenging issues.¹⁰ These challenges also extend across to the development of public policy.¹¹

Migrants and migration in New Zealand

New Zealand has not been immune from these debates and, if anything, faces them more starkly than other countries. Immigrants have arrived to live in New Zealand since the 1700s, from Europe, Great Britain, and Australia and, from the 1800s, small numbers from South Asia and China (the latter dominating the history of Dunedin)¹². These immigrants joined New Zealand's indigenous Maori population, who itself immigrated to New Zealand in the fourteenth century. Traditionally, New Zealand sourced immigrants from English-speaking Anglo-Celtic countries, notably Great Britain. Alongside this, there were smaller numbers of Germans, Greek, Yugoslavian, Dutch, and Dalmatians and, from the 1960s, a growing number of migrants from the Pacific Islands.

In 1987, following a major immigration policy change, New Zealand diversified its source countries and an increasing number of migrants came to New Zealand from Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Southeast Asia and later the People's Republic of China. Between March 1986 and March 2006, New Zealand's resident population that had been born in countries in Asia increased almost sevenfold, from 32,685 to 248,364. The Chinese and Indian components of the Asia-born population increased even more – by more than 800 percent during the 20 years. The population that identified with Asian ethnicities (including the New Zealand-born) increased by 550 percent in the twenty years between 1986 and 2006.¹³ At the 2006 census, nearly 20 percent of the Chinese and Indian populations in New Zealand were born in New Zealand (these percentages were much higher in the early 1990s), reflecting their longstanding presence in New Zealand, in some cases going back to the 19th century. In fact, a fifth of all Asians in the 2006 census (70,650) had been born in New Zealand. New Zealand's major metropolitan and migrant-receiving city, Auckland, saw the most substantial change, to the extent that the Asian "face" of Auckland could be seen to foreshadow the changing demographic realities of New Zealand in the twenty-first century. About two-thirds of all Asian migrants settle in Auckland and at the 2006 census, one quarter of Aucklanders had been born overseas.¹⁴

¹⁰ We are grateful to Greg Hughson, Chaplain, University of Otago, for helpful conversations about this.

¹¹ Bromell, *Ethnicity, Identity and Public Policy*; Jonathan Boston, Paul Callister and Amanda Wolf, *The Policy Implications of Diversity*, (Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, 2006).

¹² Ward Friesen, *Asians in Dunedin: Not a New Story*, (Wellington: Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2009) <<http://www.asianz.org.nz/files/AsiaNZ%20Outlook%209.pdf>> (1 November, 2009); James Ng, 'The Sojourner Experience: The Cantonese Gold-seekers in New Zealand, 1865-1901' in, *Unfolding History, Evolving Identity: The Chinese in New Zealand*, ed. Manying Ip, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 5-30

¹³ Bedford and Ho, *Asians in New Zealand*.

¹⁴ Friesen, *Diverse Auckland*.

A combination of a number of factors, including immigration, growth in the number of New Zealanders' who identify with more than one ethnicity (for example, children born to parents of two different ethnicities), and the age structures of New Zealand's different ethnic populations, mean that New Zealand society will become even more ethnically diverse in the next twenty years. Using projections based on the 2006 census results, Statistics New Zealand estimated that, in the years between 2006 and 2026, New Zealand's Pacific population will increase by around 60 percent, the Maori population by 31 percent, the European or Other population by 7 percent and the Asian population by 95 percent. These projections will mean that by 2026, there will be almost as many people in the Asian ethnic population as there will be in the Maori population and that between 1986 and 2026, the Asian share of New Zealand's population will have increased from 1.7 percent of New Zealand's total population in 1986 to 16 percent in 2026.¹⁵

The reception of immigrants to New Zealand has been very mixed. Anglo-Celtic migrants have tended to be more readily accepted than migrants from non-English speaking countries, especially those in Asia. There is a long history of discrimination against Asian, especially Chinese, migrants to New Zealand.¹⁶ While New Zealanders' are warming towards Asian peoples, there is a significant body of literature that demonstrates that discrimination and social exclusion against migrants and refugees to New Zealand is wide and deep. The diversification of immigrant flows and its attendant diversification of social spaces have frequently engendered negative responses from host communities. These negative responses have been manifest in a variety of ways, from mild complaints about 'hardworking' Dutch, to criticisms of Pacific migrants as over-stayers and contributors to urban decline to descriptions of Auckland's growing Asian populations as an "Inv-Asian".¹⁷

In New Zealand, populist politician and leader of the New Zealand First Party (in Parliament from 1995 until 2008), Winston Peters was speaking for a number of his constituents and others when he noted that New Zealand's immigration policy was "sowing the seeds of sectarianism" and that Asian immigrants in particular threatened to turn New Zealand into a 'hell-hole of ethnic and religious conflict' and 'communal

¹⁵ Bedford and Ho, *Asians in New Zealand*.

¹⁶ See Nigel Murphy, 'Joe Lum v. The Attorney General: The Politics of Exclusion' in *Unfolding History, Evolving Identity: The Chinese in New Zealand*, ed. Manying Ip. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 48-68; Brian Moloughney and John Stenhouse, "'Drug-besotten, sin-begotten fiends of filth": New Zealand and the Oriental Other', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 33, 1, (1999): 43-64.

¹⁷ For discussion on these social surveys and public attitudes, see Andrew Butcher, 'Well, they're very good citizens: New Zealand's Perceptions of Asians in New Zealand' in *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Social Issues – Special Issue: Asia and Aotearoa in New Zealand*, ed. J. Leckie, 5, 2, (2008):5-30; Paul Spoonley, Philip Gendall and Andrew Trlin, *Welcome to our World: The Attitudes of New Zealanders to Immigrants and Immigration*, New Settlers Programme Occasional Publication No.14, (Palmerston North: New Settlers Programme, Massey University, 2007).

violence... like Kosovo, Sri Lanka or Northern Ireland'¹⁸ Similar statements were made by other public commentators, including conservative (with a small 'c') *New Zealand Herald* columnist Garth George and leader of the mega-church Destiny Church, Bishop Brian Tamaki, respectively:

If I am a racist because I prefer New Zealand to be populated principally by Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Islanders, I'll wear the epithet like a rosette. Because that's the bottom line, isn't it? We are New Zealanders and we want our population mix and our society to stay pretty much the way it is. We don't want to have to assimilate alien cultures, many of which obviously don't want to be assimilated. I am careful whom I invite into my home. Because it is my home I am entitled to be choosy. And New Zealand is as much my home as the house I live in. The Government, on my behalf and not before time, has decided to go back to being choosy about who gets invited to come to stay. Manying Ip [Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Auckland] says migrants from Asia have options other than New Zealand. Good. Other countries are welcome to them.¹⁹

Ironically, we need only look to our motherland for an example of a nation that has compromised its Christian heritage and opened its borders in pursuit of religious diversity. Today, Londoners live in constant fear of terrorism.... Of course, immigrants who come to New Zealand have every right to pursue their religion of choice. But they should come understanding that New Zealand is a Christian nation and that as such, it is their responsibility to respect our nation's Christian founding values. Many other countries are perfectly secure and have no problems stating their religious allegiance.²⁰

Admittedly, these quotes come from two of the more vocal and one could argue extremist elements of the public commentary, but they express what is revealed in social surveys: that there is a significant disquiet about New Zealand's immigrant Asian populations.²¹ Relevant to this paper, and demonstrated by the Tamaki quote, much of that disquiet relates to the threat to New Zealand's perceived Christian heritage and values. Tamaki is not alone in his views. Joris de Bres, the Race Relations Commissioner, mentioned to one of us (Butcher) that the level that he and co-author Professor Paul Morris received regarding

¹⁸ Cited in John Stenhouse, 'Introduction' in *Christianity, modernity and culture: New perspectives on New Zealand history*, ed. John Stenhouse and GA Wood, (Hindmarsh: ATF Press, 2005), 9

¹⁹ Garth George, 'Breathtaking hypocrisy in Labour's immigration U-turn', *New Zealand Herald* – Thursday 21 November, 2002 <http://www.NewZealandherald.co.NewZealand/NewZealand/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=3005336> (1 November, 2009)

²⁰ Bishop Brian Tamaki, *Destiny Church Perspectives Column*, 26 February 2007 <<http://www.destinychurch.org.NewZealand/content/view/58/75/>> (1 November, 2009)

²¹ For discussion on the relationship between media in New Zealand and attitudes to immigrants and immigration, see Paul Spoonley and Andrew Butcher, 'Reporting superdiversity: The mass media and immigration in New Zealand', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 30, 4, (2009): 355-372

New Zealand's National Statement on Religious Diversity²² was particularly vitriolic from Christians in particular.²³

Migrants and the "decline" of Christianity in New Zealand

We want to set the scene by noting these quotes and the social context in which they were said because we would suggest that these views, albeit differently expressed, are widely held. Certainly, in a city like Auckland, the various and obvious religious "ethnoscapes"²⁴ (e.g. mosques, temples) clearly identify that the religious landscape in New Zealand is changing.

Debates surrounding social cohesion are often in response to these changes. The measuring of social integration of migrants is characterised in various ways. One example in New Zealand is from its Ministry of Social Development, which developed social indicators for the social cohesion of migrants.²⁵ This model of measuring social integration and cohesion is also used elsewhere in the world.²⁶ However, the question of what sort of 'social cohesion' is required for contemporary society remains unresolved: to what extent does social cohesion depend on the social exclusion of particular groups of people or practices? Where does the dividing line lie between "them" and "us", "we" and "you"?²⁷

²² For the full text, see <http://www.hrc.co.nz/new_zealand/home/hrc/racerelations/tengiratheNewZealanddiversityactionprogramme/statementonreligiousdiversity/statementonreligiousdiversity.php> (1 November, 2009)

²³ For an example of one Christian response, see Simon Collins, 'Denying state religion like treason, says Brian Tamaki', *New Zealand Herald*, February 17, 2007 <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/religion-and-beliefs/news/article.cfm?c_id=301&objectid=10424395> (1 November, 2009). For a summary by Professor Morris of all responses see <http://www.hrc.co.nz/new_zealand/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/21-May-2007_14-09-44_19-Mar-2007_10-15-11_21_Feb_2007_Paul_Morris_Hamilton_Speech.doc> (1 November, 2009)

²⁴ As Ward Friesen (*Diverse Auckland*, 14) notes, "The term 'ethnoscape' has been used in the social sciences literature to describe the impacts that new migrant populations make in a host society. These range from things visible in the landscapes such as people, housing, shops, restaurants and temples through to the less visible aspects such as language and changing attitudes, with the latter often being represented by media coverage. In between are the visible but transitory phenomena such as festivals and markets. Paralleling the increase in Asian populations in Auckland have been rapidly changing ethnoscapes."

²⁵ Paul Spoonley, Robin Peace, Andrew Butcher and Damian O'Neill, 'Social cohesion: A policy and indicator framework for assessing immigrant and host outcomes', *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 24 (2005): 85-110; Paul Spoonley, Robin Peace, Andrew Butcher and Damian O'Neill, *Immigration and social cohesion: developing an indicator framework for measuring the impact of settlement policies in New Zealand*, Ministry of Social Development Working Paper 01/05 (Wellington: Ministry of Social Development, 2005).

²⁶ J. Jupp, J. Nieuwenhuysen and E. Dawson (eds.), *Social Cohesion in Australia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); J. Jenson, *Mapping Social Cohesion: The State of Canadian Research*, CPRN Study F03, (Ottawa: CPRN, 1998); Bloemaad *et al*, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 161

²⁷ Bloemraad *et al*, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 156

Aspiring for, or developing indicators to measure, a socially cohesive society is irrelevant when there is an assumption that everyone who lives in a population generally adheres to the same values and aims. While much of the debate in New Zealand regarding social cohesion has taken place within policy and academia, there are also reasons for churches and church leaders to be interested in these areas. Often this interest takes the form of anxiety around the extent to which increased immigration, diversification of ethnic populations and decline in church attendance are all contributing to the “death” of Christianity in many Western countries or, at the very least, the decline of Christian congregations.

Asian migrants are easy and obvious causes for what is seen as a decline in Christian New Zealand, though the reasons for this apparent decline and the lack of attention paid to Christianity in New Zealand historiography (and, we would suggest, related disciplines), reflect as much upon the intellectual currents of the time as they do upon the intellectuals writing the scholarship.²⁸ Moreover, the reasons for the decline in Christian New Zealand could echo what Callum Brown in his provocative book *The Death of Christian Britain* suggests:

Indeed, one of the hallmarks of Britain in the year 2000 is the recent growth of ethnic diversity, largely through immigration, and the rise of a multi-faith society, in which Christianity has been joined by Islam, Hinduism and the Sikh religion, amongst others. However, what has been noticeable to all observers is that the strength of attachment to other religions has not, in the main, suffered the collapse that has afflicted the bulk of the Christian churches. In the black and Asian communities of Britain, non-Christian religions in general are thriving. Moreover, one of the few sections in our society where Christian churches are thriving is in the predominantly black communities. Yet, it must be emphasised that the hemorrhage of British Christianity has not come about as a result of competition from or conversion to other churches. No new religion, no new credo, not even a state-sponsored secularism, has been there to displace it.²⁹

That religious experience, expression and adaptation is such a neglected aspect of migration studies in New Zealand suggests perhaps that those scholars undertaking this research do not recognise the importance of religion and religious belief to many of the Asian migrants who come to New Zealand.³⁰ While for many New Zealanders, religious belief is an ‘add-on’ to one’s life, for many Asian migrants, religion and religious belief are integral to their daily existence, even their sense of self and community.

²⁸ Stenhouse, Introduction

²⁹ Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), 2-3

³⁰ See with reference to scholarship on this topic generally: Bramadat, Religious Diversity and International Migration

A further assumption behind some of the criticisms of Asian migrants *vis-à-vis* New Zealand's Christianity is that Christianity is somehow a Western religion, expressed in English by people who share a broadly common Anglo-Saxon ethnic heritage. As Philip Jenkins has persuasively shown in his recent book *The Lost History of Christianity*³¹, Christianity's roots were, in fact, in places like Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East, now dominated by Muslim populations. It is a recent phenomenon in historical terms for Christianity to be associated with the 'West'. A country like the Republic of Korea (South Korea), for example, sees itself as a mission-sending country, a reason why a disproportionate number of Korean migrants in New Zealand (compared to the population of Korea generally) are Christian.³²

The role that religion, in particular religious communities, plays in the settlement experiences of migrants is well canvassed in international and New Zealand literature.³³ In other Western countries, as in New Zealand, Christian churches, for example, are often non-denominational and are often open to migrants from many different social backgrounds and places of origin. Joining a faith community provides an immediate social network for many migrants and frequently gives migrants a place to belong and a new sense of 'family' and 'home', particularly where they have left those two things behind in another country. Research has shown that churches play a very significant role in the pastoral care of international students in New Zealand³⁴. Religious beliefs, like migrants' experiences, are transnational: they cross borders, are easily transportable and often access international as well as local and national networks.³⁵

While there is recent significant growth in churches that cater specifically for migrant groups (though these have always existed in one form or other; the Anglican Chinese Church in Wellington began in 1979³⁶), "European" churches also have significant ministries to particular migrant populations. Auckland Baptist Tabernacle, for example,

³¹ Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa and Asia*, (London: Lion, 2009)

³² Friesen, *Diverse Auckland*, 2009

³³ For example, see, Frank Pieke, *Community and Identity in the New Chinese Migration Order*, Centre of Migration, Policy and Society, University of Oxford, Working Paper No, 24, (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2005).

<<http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/Working%20papers/Frank%20Pieke%20WP0524.pdf>> (1 November, 2009);

³⁴ Andrew Butcher, Lian-Hong Lim, Terry McGrath, and Lorna Revis, *Nga Tangata: Partnership in Providing Services to International Students*. (Auckland, Asia Pacific Migration Research Network, 2002); Terry McGrath and Andrew Butcher, *Campus-Community Linkages in the Pastoral Care of International Students with specific reference to Palmerston North, Wellington and Christchurch*, (Wellington: Ministry of Education and Education New Zealand, 2004).

³⁵ see Pieke, *Community and Identity*

³⁶ Stephen Young, 'Politics and Culture'

<<http://www.stevemyoung.co.NewZealand/chinesevoice/politics/politicsandculture.htm>> (1 November, 2009)

has a large and highly successful ministry to international students.³⁷ Christian groups in New Zealand have often seen the provision of support to migrant communities as part of their mission. Specific Christian ministries to migrant communities and international students have existed for many years in New Zealand. For example, OMF (Overseas Missionary Fellowship, formerly the China Inland Mission), which began in New Zealand the early 1890s, has a ministry to Chinese and Japanese diaspora in New Zealand; TSCF (Tertiary Students' Christian Fellowship),³⁸ which began in 1937 in New Zealand, has a large ministry to international students at universities, while ISM (International Student Ministries)³⁹ provides pastoral care to international students, works closely with education providers, particularly through university chaplaincies, and gives input into government research and policy.

Data on Christian affiliations in New Zealand

In many respects, then, the Christian church plays a significant social role in the settlement of migrants. Though is this role any different to a role that might be played by a mosque or a synagogue for Jewish and Muslim populations respectively? Is Christianity in New Zealand and amongst migrant communities more than just a social support network?

So to what extent can these changes in New Zealand's religious landscape be attributed to the ethnic diversification of New Zealand's population? A look at some figures is instructive here. The latest (2006) Census data illustrate an overall decline in the number of people identifying themselves as Christian, from 60.6 percent in 2001 to fewer than 50 percent in 2006. While the traditional Christian denominations decreased (Anglican and Presbyterian) or grew only slightly (Catholics and Methodists), there were significant increases for those affiliating with 'Orthodox'; 'Evangelical', 'Born Again' and 'Fundamentalist', and 'Pentecostal' religions.⁴⁰ 'Pentecostals' are estimated about 10 percent of nominal Christians, 30 percent of churchgoers, and 3.5 percent of the total population.⁴¹ By 2011, data suggest, Christians will be a significant minority in New Zealand. Even the current Census figures do not show what percentage of Christians regularly attend church, which can be charitably estimated to be at about 8-10 percent, which does not include those who make an annual church visit at Christmas time.⁴²

³⁷ <www.tabernacle.org.nz> (1 November, 2009)

³⁸ <www.tscf.org.nz> (1 November, 2009)

³⁹ <www.ism.org.nz> (1 November, 2009)

⁴⁰ What the Census refers to as 'religion' in this context might be better described as 'denomination'.

⁴¹ Peter Lineham, 'Wanna be in my gang?' *New Zealand Listener*, 195, 3357, (2004)

<http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3357/features/2554/wanna_be_in_my_gang> (1 November, 2009)

⁴² Dennis Welch, 'Jingle Tills' *New Zealand Listener*, 206, 3476, (2006) <http://www.listener.co.nz/issue/3476/features/7758/jingle_tills.html;jsessionid=4597DCC68AA6BC57B40B35522E9C11AB> (1 November, 2009).

The Census data go on to show that there has also been an increase in other religions, which is attributed to the increase in migrants from Asia. Notably Chinese migrants identify as having 'no religion' though are often inclined to find religion in New Zealand. There were significant increases in the Sikh religion, Hinduism and Islam, with the vast majority of those who identified themselves in one of these categories born overseas and in Asia. Of Hindus and Muslims, almost half arrived in New Zealand in the last five years. 'European New Zealanders' and 'New Zealanders'⁴³ were most likely to state they had no religion at 37.7 percent and 37.6 percent each.⁴⁴ Of those who identified themselves as Asian, there was an increase of those who identified themselves as Christian from 66,390 in 2001 to 97,809 in 2006.⁴⁵ Proportionately, Asians were 4.8% of total Christians in 2006, which was an increase from 3.2% of total Christians in 2001. Compare that to an overall decrease in the number of Christians from 2001 to 2006.⁴⁶

So while the overall Christian population in New Zealand is decreasing, that cannot be attributed entirely to new migrant populations. While the new migrant populations are clearly responsible for the increases in other religions, the decrease in Christianity in New Zealand may also be the result of problems of attrition and/or retention amongst New Zealand's non-migrant Christian communities and an increasing number of skeptical European New Zealanders who would state they belong to no religion. We could also infer that the growth in the 'Orthodox', 'Evangelical' and 'Pentecostal' denominations is the result of new migrant populations inasmuch as it can be attributed to 'natural' growth or changing denominations amongst non-migrant Christians.

The statistics then would suggest that the reading of migration threatening Christianity in New Zealand is not that simple. Furthermore, these statistics are not unique. Other Western countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom and Germany, are all facing declining church attendance (albeit to different degrees), while in other parts of the world, including the Republic of Korea and China, the Christian church is growing, though is far from a majority religion in these or similar countries. It is worth noting, however, that

⁴³ 'New Zealanders' was a new (and controversial) categorisation introduced at the 2006 census. For discussion on who categorised themselves in this way, see Statistics New Zealand, *Final Report of a Review of the Official Ethnicity Statistical Standard*, (Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2009) <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/~media/Statistics/Publications/Census/2011-Census/final-report-review-official-ethnicity-statistical-standard-2009.ashx>> (1 November, 2009).

⁴⁴ Statistics New Zealand, *Quick Stats about Culture and Identity*, 2006 Census <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand/NR/rdonlyres/5F1F873C-5D36-4E54-9405-34503A2C0AF6/0/quickstatsaboutcultureandidentity.pdf>> (1 November, 2009)

⁴⁵ Tables on culture and identity from the 2006 Census, <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand/NR/rdonlyres/F1A5AEF5-198F-4F42-8B86-51419FBA82E3/18595/2006CensusQSCI.xls>> (1 November, 2009)

⁴⁶ Tables on culture and identity from the 2001 Census, <<http://www.stats.govt.nz/New Zealand/NR/rdonlyres/226BAFE2-4B1C-4A84-A2E9-B6D2E3FDB4AA/0/CulturalTable16.xls>> (1 November, 2009)

inconsistency in recording data on religious belief and practice from one country to another makes drawing comparisons on the basis of data alone very problematic.

Even using Census data remains a very rough guide to measuring Christianity in New Zealand. Statistics are very limiting when trying to gauge the everyday experiences of believers and for that reason we need to be careful that we interpret these data with great care. By the same token, we have to be careful that we do not take the 'public' faces of Christianity in New Zealand and make them representative of all New Zealand Christians. Christians, while confessing the same beliefs, nevertheless practice their faith in very different ways, depending on their context and their culture. The practice of Christianity in many Western churches is far removed from how it was practiced in the first century world amongst its first believers, who themselves practiced it within their particular contexts.

For that reason, any discussion about the Christian faith in New Zealand needs to do more than just sociological analysis; recognition of the Christian theology that underpins the work of the Christian church is also warranted. In particular, the Christian faith makes claims about its uniqueness so that while it may be practiced within a pluralist society, it would not extend to saying that other faith traditions or religious beliefs outside Christian theology are equally efficacious in spiritual or theological terms. Christian theology confesses particular things about the God who created the world, became incarnate in Jesus Christ, who died, was raised and ascended into heaven, and continues to work in the world in redeeming and restoring it.

There is no doubt that New Zealand's increasingly diverse society is changing *how* Christianity in New Zealand is practiced. It is this diverse culture, with its bi-cultural foundations; its strong Pacific elements, particularly demonstrated in Pacific people's dedication to their church; and New Zealand's growing Asian population, which makes Christianity in New Zealand unique. A journey New Zealand religious historian Peter Lineham takes down Chapel Road in Auckland conveys this well:

Flatbush has suddenly sprung up in the last five years as an overflow from the huge growth of new housing in the Howick area, primarily accommodating Asian people. The little chapel [that gave Chapel Road its name] still stands, now a joint Anglican-Methodist church half way down the road that takes its name from it, but at the other end is the exotic Botany Downs shopping centre, a Truman-Show like phenomenon, looking like it has dropped as a unit from the sky, a whole plastic town centre modeled on traditional towns. The central focus of Chapel Road is the enormous, almost completed Buddhist Temple. On the other side of the road is a new co-educational Catholic School, reflecting a huge boom in Catholic education and in baptisms into the Catholic Church by Asians concerned at the violent tone of New Zealand. Other sites down the road have been purchased by Baptist churches, and doubtless the fine facilities of the new secular high school are rented out to a Pentecostal Church group on

Sundays. It is boom time in Flat Bush and religion is booming there as well, but not in the little chapel. There is a plan for Anglicans and Methodists to build a big new church, but they are struggling to find the money. Meanwhile the Presbyterians have made a separate move. Their old Pakuranga congregation, famous for its evangelical and conservative tradition, has rebuilt just around the corner from Chapel Street and have attracted a large congregation including many Asian people with a formula that has something of the Pentecostal flavour mixed in.⁴⁷

Having considered migrants to New Zealand, their religious affiliations and their impact on Christianity in New Zealand, we now turn our attention to considering migration in Scripture.

Migration in the Bible

The movement of people and peoples runs like a thread through the Bible. A call to emigrate features early in the story of the people of God: *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you."* (Gen 12:1). Jacob and his family migrate to Egypt because of economic pressures and experience life as "aliens in the land" (Gen 47:1-6); the people of Israel are rescued by God after suffering oppression and an attempted ethnic cleansing (Exod 1:8-22); for a generation they are a people in transit (Deut 29:1-6), then, having been established in their own land for centuries, they suffer the upheaval of military conquest and forced relocation to a new existence as vulnerable outsiders in other countries (2 Kings 17:5-6; 25:1-21). For some there is, later, the mixed experience of a return to the land of their or their parents' memories (Ezra, Nehemiah).

A recurring theme in the Old Testament's instructions for the life of the people of God is just and generous treatment of immigrants who have come to live among them. Their own experience of having once been aliens should give them empathy for others in that situation (Exod 23:9; Lev 19:34). They must not misuse their power to oppress a vulnerable immigrant (Exod 22:21; Lev 19:33). On the contrary they should show generosity towards them, recognizing their needs (Lev 19:10; 23:22). Immigrants are to have the same rights to justice as native residents (Deut 1:16; 24:17; 27:19). They are to enjoy a break from work on the Sabbath (Exod 23:12; Deut 5:14) and share in times of celebration and feasting with the rest of the community (Deut 26:11). Should they wish to participate in the worship of God immigrants may do so on the same basis as Israelites (Num 15:14-16). The obverse is that those behaviours that are forbidden to members of the community of Israel are also to be refrained from by immigrants who have come to share in the life of that community (Lev 18:26). Ultimately the attitude of Israel to immigrants is to be a reflection of the character of

⁴⁷ Peter Lineham, 'Among the believers', *Massey News*, April 2005, <http://masseynews.massey.ac.nz/New_Zealand/magazine/2005_Apr/stories/thoughts-1.html> (1 November, 2009)

the God whom they worship: *The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.* (Lev 19:34).

To the people of God in their own experience as aliens, through the forced migration of the exile, there comes a remarkable set of instructions through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 29:4-9). They are to recognize the purpose of God in their being where they now are, enter into normal economic and social life there, and seek the good of their new location and its people. Nehemiah and Daniel are prominent examples of migrants making significant contributions to their host communities.

In the Gospels, Jesus is born after a journey demanded by an occupying power (Luke 2:1-7), and his early life is that of a refugee fleeing political violence, seeking asylum in a foreign country (Matt 2:13-15). Those who come to believe in him respond to a call to follow (Matt 4:18-22) and a command to go (Matt 28:19-20). As the Good News of salvation through the risen Christ is unleashed on the world the miracle of Pentecost ensures that it is heard by migrants, people of the Jewish diaspora who have made their homes all over the Mediterranean world (Acts 2:5-11). Issues arise out of the coming together of people from different social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, and are dealt with by receiving members of the "outsider" community into the leadership group (Acts 6:1-6). When the Gospel reaches beyond the Jewish world, the church resolves not to make ethnicity an obstacle to membership of the community of faith, but, like Israel in the Old Testament, requests some accommodation on the part of the incomers to enable shared life to be realised within one community (Acts 15:19-20, 28-29). Soon, the believers in Jesus are themselves a diaspora, scattered by religious persecution (Acts 8:1-3; 11:19-20), living as "aliens and exiles" (1 Pet 1:1-2; 2:11). But in their scattering they are sustained by the vision of the gathering in of people from every ethnicity, tribe, people group and language, worshipping God and sharing together in the gift of salvation through Christ (Rev 7:9-12; Rom 15:6). The reality of life on the move is reflected in the New Testament requirement to show hospitality, including to strangers (e.g. Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2; 1 Pet 4:9). Christians are to *Welcome one another . . . just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God* (Rom 15:7).

A challenge to the New Zealand Christian community

From this brief survey of the place of migration in the Biblical story a number of observations may be made that have implications for the New Zealand Christian community. We cannot assume that instructions given by God to Israel for their life as his people should translate directly into law for Aotearoa New Zealand. We do, however, find in those instructions indications of attitudes and behaviours that express God's values and should therefore be characteristic of the Christian community that seeks to live authentically as God's people in our context. By extension, as salt and light in our wider communities, local, national and international, Christians will want to work for conditions shaped by those values that we have learned from God. There is an obligation of care for those who undergo migration, whether drawn by hope or aspiration or driven by need or oppression. How may this care be expressed so that through the actions of New Zealand's

Christian community people arriving in New Zealand might experience the love and generosity of God? Immigrants, without the knowledge, facility with language, and the networks of support that many in the host community enjoy, are particularly vulnerable to injustice. How may Christians, as agents of God's justice, work at national, local and personal levels to ensure justice for migrants?

God directed his people to give opportunities for immigrants to participate fully as members of the community. How may Christians facilitate the inclusion of immigrants into New Zealand communities? Both exiled Israel in the Old Testament and the persecuted church in the New Testament were told to live responsibly in the communities among whom they went to live and to seek their good. How may New Zealand Christians assist Christian immigrants to enter into the life of and contribute to the good of their adopted home? In particular, believers in Christ are one family with all other believers, and are instructed to welcome each other on that basis. Here, surely, New Zealand's Christian community should be a model of inclusion. For some, now as in New Testament times, migration has been forced by religious persecution. How may their Christian family receive them with hospitality, encouragement and help?

Migrations of people and peoples play a significant part in the Biblical story of salvation. In what ways may we see the saving purpose of God in the mobility of people today? On the Day of Pentecost the presence in Jerusalem of diaspora Jews "from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5) proved strategic for mission to the world, as those who had heard the gospel in Jerusalem carried it with them to their places of origin. A similar phenomenon is taking place today as immigrants come to faith in Christ in their adopted countries and, whether through their continuing contact with their places of origin or as circular migration takes them back, they become carriers of the gospel to the communities from which they migrated. How may the New Zealand Christian community partner more intentionally and effectively with God in this contemporary mission movement?⁴⁸

New Zealand Christians also stand to receive much through immigration. The centre of global Christianity has shifted from the North and the West to the South and the East. Many immigrants bring fresh experiences and expressions of Christian faith that have the potential to reinvigorate New Zealand churches demoralised by long years of decline. Some immigrants come with a specific sense of missionary call to New Zealand. How might established New Zealand churches and mission agencies recognize and build fruitful partnership with those who bring mission and ministry gifts to the Body of Christ here?

⁴⁸ OMF has a significant Diasporas ministry.

http://www.omf.org/omf/us/get_involved_1/welcoming_ministry_diaspora. See also Paul Woods, "God Does Not Play Dice, but Does He Play Mahjong?" *Encounters Mission Ezine* 20 (2007), at http://www.redcliffe.org/uploads/documents/God_Does_Not_Play_Dice_20.pdf

Learning from Paul

These issues are not altogether new. In the first Christian generation Paul the apostle wrote to Christian believers in the multi-ethnic city of Rome. From the greetings that accompany his letter it seems that he envisaged not one large congregation but several groups of believers, probably meeting in homes.⁴⁹ Prisca and Aquila had experienced circular migration, forced to move from Rome to Greece when the emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from the capital (Acts 18:1-4), and travelling with Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-19, 24-26), before evidently returning to Rome (Rom 16:3-5). Epaphroditus had moved to Rome from Asia (Rom 16:5). A woman named Persis ("Persian woman") is mentioned (Rom 16:12). If Rufus (Rom 16:13) is to be identified with the Rufus mentioned by Mark as a son of Simon who was compelled to carry Jesus' cross (Mark 15:21), it gives us a glimpse of a family whose migration had taken them from Cyrene in North Africa to Jerusalem and then to Rome. Study of other names in the list suggests considerable diversity in ethnicity and socio-economic status, as well as indicating that both women and men were valued as participants in the ministry and mission of the church.⁵⁰ It is clear from Romans ch. 14 that this mixed set of people did not experience unity. They were divided over diet and aspects of their religious practice, matters that had at least as much to do with assumptions brought from their cultural backgrounds as with theological conviction derived from their understanding of Christian faith. Difference, mutual suspicion and criticism impeded the realisation of genuine community.

Paul's approach to this situation is missiological. Most of the letter to the Romans is an exposition of the gospel, which is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." (Rom 1:16) This salvation is from God, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, and is for Jew and Gentile alike on the same basis, that of faith. The culmination of Paul's argument might at first sight seem unremarkable, but in the context of a diverse and even divided Christian community it is both profound and urgent: "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Rom 15:7) Attainment of the goal, "that the nations should glorify God for his mercy" (Rom 15:9, and in the chain of OT citations in vv. 9-12), is understood by Paul to be the fulfilment of God's purpose, expressed in the ancient promises to the patriarchs of Israel, and the outcome of Christ's work (Rom 15:8). He appeals to the various groups of Christian believers in Rome to refocus on this grand vision and participate eagerly in its realisation. They will do so as they receive one another as members together of Christ's family (Rom 14:1; 15:7), and as out of their shared life in Christ flows united worship (Rom

⁴⁹ The church in the home of Prisca and Aquila is mentioned (Rom 16:5a). Other house-churches may be in view in the lists of named individuals in 16:14 and 15, along with general greetings to "the brothers and sisters with them" (v. 14) and "all the saints with them" (v. 15). Possibly other groups may be detected in connection with Aristobulus (v. 10) and Narcissus (v. 11).

⁵⁰ A classic study is that of Peter Lampe, "The Romans Christians of Romans 16", pp. 216-30 in Karl P. Donfried (ed.), *The Romans Debate* (Rev. ed.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991). For a recent thorough discussion of the social setting of the Christian communities in Rome see Robert Jewett, *Romans* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2007), 46-74.

15:5-6). This will require clarity about the central convictions of their faith (Rom 14:17) and a determination not to allow cultural and behavioural differences to impede genuine relating (Rom 14:1-15:4). It will take effort and intentionality to “pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding” (Rom 14:19).

Paul does not stop there. Not only does he envisage the realising of Christian community among the ethnically and culturally diverse peoples of Rome but he looks beyond to the regions and peoples yet to be included in “the offering of the nations . . . sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:16). His hope is that the united worshipping community in the city of Rome will share his desire for the good news to be proclaimed across the world and will become partners with him in his planned mission to the West (Rom 15:22-29).

A similar missional challenge confronts the ethnically and culturally diverse Christian groups in today’s cities, including those of New Zealand. What must be done for genuine community to be realised across the boundaries of difference in language, style and practice? How might those groups become effective partners in the wider work of mission both in New Zealand and across the world? A good starting point might be where Paul finishes in this letter to the Romans. As we have noted, Romans ch. 16 opens a window on the great diversity of the people who comprised the young Christian movement. What is remarkable is that these people, despite their ethnic, cultural and social differences, are known to Paul and to each other, and are valued as sharers together in the service and mission of Christ. Perhaps a practical and necessary first step towards the realisation of shared life and partnership in mission in our multi-ethnic cities and in a world shaped increasingly by migration is for Christian believers simply to get to know one another. As Paul recognized, that is itself a challenge that exposes priorities that need to be realigned and prejudices that must be overcome, but for that very reason it is a participation in the power of the gospel and a demonstration of God’s saving purpose for the world.

Conclusion

The ethnic reality of twenty-first century New Zealand is marked by diversity. The ethnically homogenous churches that characterized much of the twentieth century for much of New Zealand will not continue. Christian leaders, their ministries and congregations need to respond both appropriately and effectively to New Zealand’s changing demography. This is a missiological task, and we have been grateful for the opportunity at this ANZAMS colloquium to invite missiological thinking and missional action to embrace the potential for mission of this multi-ethnic reality. A brief survey of the Biblical narrative illustrates the significance of migrations of peoples in the faith and life of Israel and of the Christian movement. In the letter of Paul to the Romans, addressing the multi-ethnic urban context of Rome in the first century CE, the apostle sets out the goal of all nations together in Christ, and urges believers of diverse ethnicity to work at genuine community and effective partnership in the gospel. Here is a vision and a practical challenge for the diverse Christian groups in Aotearoa New Zealand today.

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