



NEWS, ARTICLES AND STORIES
FROM
BAPTIST NZ
APP & WEBSITE

MARCH -
APRIL
2024

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CHRISTINE STRIDE

The dreams of Baptist Māori: Hui 2023

Christine Stride is Executive Assistant to the National Leader and works at the Baptist National Support Centre in Auckland. She is part of Titirangi Baptist Church.

The Iriiri Māori session of our 2023 Hui last November was called He Koronga Maatou – We have a dream. Led by Te Pouarataki mō te Hīkoi, our Treaty Guide, Luke Kaa-Morgan, the session started with a waiata whose lyrics tell of the challenges and the hope involved in reclaiming te reo Māori, reclaiming identity. The session's 12-strong panel shared their dreams for Iriiri Māori. Below is a summary of what was on their hearts.

There was an ongoing call for Pākehā to recognise and acknowledge the good things Māori culture could bring to our churches, to our country and to the world, and be willing to adopt them.

The church working with and learning from Māori would help reveal the richness of God's character in Aotearoa.

Hui delegates were reminded of the welcoming and intimate connections made at the previous day's pōwhiri – a uniquely and beautifully Māori protocol of welcome.

Our Baptist whānau still has a way to go before we find our place and feel authentically supported as Māori. There is a new and challenging kōrero coming; Baptist Māori and our wider Baptist whānau need courage for this conversation.

There was a call for the Baptist church to acknowledge its history in Aotearoa as a settler church. Doing that would more successfully build, and sustain, good relationships with Māori.

Several panellists called on church leaders to improve their

engagement with te reo Māori, to help them begin to understand the Māori world and culture.

One panellist's dream was for the real story of what Tangata Whenua lost to be known and acknowledged.

"[My dream is] That we would truly understand the history and look at our own lives and ask how we can help reconcile the trauma that has transgressed the generations."

Another panellist's dream was to see Māori streaming into the church.

The panel of Iriiri Māori were excited that they could dream, said Luke Kaa-Morgan. He reminded Hui delegates of the strategy of the former Labour government and key Māori leadership to have one million capable Māori speakers by 2040, and wondered if Haahi Iriiri could participate in helping to fulfil that. Kaa-Morgan said other Iriiri Māori aspirations were for the word of God to go out in English and te reo Māori, that one day te Pāti Māori and other influential Māori spaces would ask to wānanga with the Baptist whānau because of our strategic leadership, and for more Iriiri Māori leaders and theologians to emerge.

As the session ended, Baptist National Leader Charles Hewlett summed up what he'd heard from the panel and looked forward to the future:

"I want us to be able to say together, 'your dreams are our dreams, your aspirations are our aspirations'. We need your help. We want to be good covenantal partners with you in seeing these things come to fruition...To see gospel renewal come to Māori people and Māori places. I firmly believe that the Baptist churches can be used by God to bring healing to our nation. That the name of Jesus Christ might be glorified in this land and beyond."

Photo: The Iriiri Māori session at the Baptist National Hui 2023. Taken by Morgan Dews.

ERIN WHITE

30 Around 30

Erin White is the Communications Manager South West Baptist Church, Christchurch.

"30 Around 30" was an event for Baptist gospel leaders, focused on gospel renewal. Around 30 thirty-year olds (or close enough) gathered in



South Auckland midweek in February to dream, discern and listen together. We were inspired by the change of focus that Charles Hewlett, National Leader of the Baptist Union has been talking about for the Baptist movement.

This change would see the movement pivot in its strategic focus, from foundational and structural issues to an even greater focus on ministry and mission. We'd put greater effort into gospel renewal through our communities of faith.

We were a mixed bunch of senior pastors, youth pastors, non-pastors and a cohort from Arotahi.

We wanted to answer these questions:

1. What does gospel renewal look like?
2. What do our priorities need to be so that this gospel renewal might occur?

From the beginning there was an atmosphere of anticipation in the room. This was the first opportunity to engage with the national Baptist movement for many of us, and the first time our voices and ideas were heard and considered on a national level. It was also a strong reminder that there are others like us, thirty-year olds on similar journeys with faith communities across the country. It was encouraging from the get-go.

We began with a check in on the state of the Baptist Union. What were we seeing across the motu?

Things looked pretty bleak at first - the list of negatives was longer than the positives and neutrals combined. But as space was created to discuss perceived issues, there was a significant shift in the room. Being given permission to talk about hard things allows you to press into hope a lot more quickly.

Permission-giving was a theme for the whole event. Space was given to share, to be honest, and to be heard. It wasn't token listening; we weren't met with pre-prepared plans and priorities. We were genuinely consulted and humbly listened to.

The hope in the room led to excitement about gospel renewal. And how can you not be excited about gospel renewal? It's God's kingdom breaking through here on earth! Here's a glimpse of what thirty around thirty think gospel renewal looks like in our communities:

- > A joyous place!
- > Sacrificial and others focussed, with people making costly decisions
- > Sitting with brokenness and the tension of mess
- > Vulnerable
- > Being captivated by Jesus and having confidence in Him
- > Transformed communities
- > Reconciliation
- > Diversity
- > Power systems broken
- > 24/7 church – a church without walls
- > Unity
- > Soaking ourselves in Scripture

Then we went further. We grounded the dreaming with strategic priorities:

- > Encourage and resource our Baptist whānau to spend time in spaces outside our normal context, whether locally or globally. In a new place, what new things is Jesus teaching us? Does the voice of Jesus sound different there? What are we hearing?
- > Intentional identification and training of leaders, both for church and local leadership
- > Provide resources around discernment for local churches
- > A prayer walk the length of Aotearoa
- > Connect local church to iwi
- > Consolidate our assets
- > Pruning – clearing away what has finished its season, to make space for new life
- > Engage people with the reality of who Jesus is by providing learning opportunities e.g. camps, CareyLocal

As part of the overnighter, we also spent an evening with Derek Wenmoth (Chair of the Upper South Regional Association), who shared about giving people agency. The following morning, we were joined by Luke Kaa-Morgan (Te Pouarataki mō te hikoi Treaty Guide). We sensed him challenging us to think about how our movement and communities could journey with Māori without allowing that relationship to be driven by a

desire to improve 'our' (i.e. our predominantly Pākehā) feelings, image or even the health of our churches. What would it look like to humbly partner with Jesus in the gospel renewal that is occurring as Māori reclaim their God-given reo, tikanga and whakapapa? What would it look like to do that expecting only that His kingdom would come amongst our whānau, hapū and iwi?

It was a beautiful time together. In our poroporoaki we shared that we so appreciated being asked for our input, having our dreams listened to and valued, and gathering with a room full of peers. While we had been invited to contribute, we were also able to take a lot away: sense of hope, a sense of movement, a sense of following Jesus together, a sense of gospel renewal.

Photo: Supplied

SUSAN OSBORNE

From the President: Madness in March



The President of the Baptist Churches of New Zealand is formally an Officer of the Baptist Union and takes on the voluntary role for a year. Susan Osborne was elected in November 2023 and is a member of Trinity Baptist Church, Titahi Bay, Wellington.

Well, I won't complain about not having enough to do for a while. March has been busy. Not that I can blame anyone – it is all of my own making.

When I embarked on my year as President, I decided that one of the contributions I could make was to visit as many churches and leaders as possible. Perhaps if I had known just what that entailed, I might have made a different decision.

Apart from the two churches visited in January, I began with the churches and pastors in the Wellington area in February. That also took me

into March, and I wonder if I overestimated my energy levels!! Certainly, I did for one of those weeks – I met with nine pastors in six days while organising and running the meeting of retired Baptist pastors and missionaries in the Wellington area and speaking in a church on the Sunday. No need to say I was exhausted at the end of that week.

Then, we were off to Auckland for a Mission Council meeting. It was a good time of discussions and decisions, led so capably by Ruby Duncan as Chair. On the Sunday, I spoke at Eastview, the church we used to attend when we lived and worked in Auckland. It was so good to catch up with so many good friends there.

On the Tuesday afternoon, I attended my first Carey Baptist College board meeting – a time spent mostly listening and learning.

The next day, we headed for Hawkes Bay and my meetings with the pastors there – such diversity in context and theology. I continue to be amazed at the diversity of the churches in our Baptist whānau. I met one of my heroes, Andrew Reyngoud, who is serving God in Flaxmere. What challenges he faces every day as he works faithfully where God has called him. I shared that Sunday at Village Baptist Church, a church with local and overseas missions at the heart of its community. An inspiring afternoon with Greg and Leonie Motu in Dannevirke completed our time in Hawkes Bay.

I was back home for two days, then off to the churches of Manawatu for five days. We based ourselves in Palmerston North, attending the Manawatu pastors' cluster before visiting most of them individually over the next couple of days. Again, I was impressed by the commitment of each of these pastors to serve faithfully where God has called them. And I was challenged to appreciate those who hold different views than I do.

The Sunday was spent with Geoff and Sonja at Hokowhitu Baptist Church and Tha Bo Kyaw at the Grace Baptist Church – a church of refugees from Myanmar. Wow! What a service! I came away so encouraged by their enthusiastic expression of their love for Jesus and their culture. Again, I enjoyed worshipping God in another language. We have much to learn from the other cultures in our churches.

Yesterday was Palm Sunday, and how I missed singing my favourite Bengali hymn on that day. I came home and sang along with a YouTube recording of it, “Hosanna, hosanna, welcome to the King of Peace”. I am much more comfortable celebrating Easter – and Christmas – in the Bengali culture than in New Zealand. The King of Peace and His suffering, death and resurrection get buried in the chocolate bunnies, Easter eggs, and even the delicious hot cross buns.

As we celebrate this special time as a Christian community, may we give time and effort to appreciating all that Jesus has done for us and showing the same sacrifice and love to our neighbours, near and far.

Photo: Supplied by Susan Osborne from her time with Grace Baptist Church in Hokowhitu – shown with pastor Tha Bo Kyaw.

STEPH WOOD

Upper South's new Children & Family Ministry Coach



Get to know Steph Wood, the new Children & Family Ministry Coach for the Upper South Baptist Association. Steph is part of Ilam Baptist Church, Christchurch, and is in her final year of the Pastoral Leadership Track at Carey Baptist College.

Kia Ora! I grew up on a farm in the Dome Valley, North of Auckland, where my parents still live. The mountain I climbed with my Grandma, my parents, & later with my own children is Tohitohi o Rei (the Dome). The river that my three younger siblings and I swam and rafted in as teenagers is the Mahurangi river. I am married to Murray, who works as a structural engineer, and we have three children. Hannah (17) is in her last year of high school, Hosea is 14 and Adelaide (turning 11) is starting intermediate school.

My work experience has been as a primary school teacher and later as a Playcentre supervisor and holiday programme coordinator. I have also worked in children & families ministry for churches, firstly in Australia and currently at Ilam Baptist church in Christchurch. I recently completed a Graduate Diploma in Applied Theology at Carey Baptist College, and I'm currently in my final year of the pastoral leadership track there.

I am excited to step into this new role, encouraging and resourcing Children & Families leaders in the Upper South region. I'm looking forward to working collaboratively with people within our region and with the national team. When I'm not in work mode, you can find me on a bushwalk, burying my nose in a book, enjoying a quiet coffee, or camping with family and friends.

Photo: Supplied by Steph Wood

JONAN CASTILLON

Lessons from the 1880 Arrowtown Chinese settlement mission



Jonan Castillon is Pastor of Oamaru Baptist Church and part of the Baptist NZ Editorial Advisory Group. This article is revised from the Multicultural Response Ministry blog where lessons from the multicultural ministry from the 1880 Arrowtown Chinese Settlement mission are considered as well as their relevance for today.

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

We had the chance to revisit Arrowtown in October 2021. We toured the historic Chinese Settlement this time.

"The Arrowtown Chinese Settlement is a

heritage-listed, historic village in Arrowtown, New Zealand, set up by Chinese people during the Otago Gold Rush of the 1860s. The Settlement is sometimes called a village restored and is now a popular tourist attraction. It is close to Arrowtown on the banks of Bush Creek, a tributary of the Arrow River".

(Source: Wikipedia).

Let me briefly share the story of these Chinese migrants of the 1860s based on the information boards installed in the Village. In sharing, I have no intention of highlighting the mistakes made in the past or passing judgment on any ethnic group. Instead, I want to emphasise their resilience and perseverance in the face of adversity, which is truly admirable.

I aim to glean lessons from history and develop another example of using faith-wisdom as a powerful tool. Yes, we are all God's work in progress, and through faith, we can gain profound insights into our past.

It is important to note that the 1860s was quite a different time. Information could have been more extensive. There was no digital technology then that we now have that could have enabled the early New Zealand settlers to know more about one another's ethnicity and culture.

I commend the Department of Conservation for reconstructing and restoring the hut ruins at the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement and providing information boards narrating their stories. I took the time to read some of them. We can only imagine the hardships and challenges these Chinese migrants went through during that "golden" era.

The restored and reconstructed dwelling remains serve as a grim but hollow reminder of New Zealand life once upon a time, which, for me, is a precious treasure, much more precious than the gold they mined.



Visiting the site and reading the stories of the Arrowtown Chinese gold miners gave us a sad feeling of knowing and understanding what they all went through.

Posting the narratives on this hallowed place shows New Zealand is on its journey to come to terms with its past.

I see the information boards' desire to inform and educate the present generation on the right thing to do, especially in the context of justice and the eyes of the Almighty God.

Nevertheless, their story presents valuable lessons for a church that wants a robust, meaningful, and growing multicultural ministry.

As Filipino migrants, we faced many challenges, but they paled in comparison to those of these early Chinese migrants.

Learning about them makes me think they were New Zealand's multicultural trailblazers. In the 1860s, they presented a multicultural ministry challenge to the European settlers and, most of all, the church people.

For those who have yet to go to the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement, please allow me to mention some narratives written on the information boards.

Peasant farmers seeking wealth and honour

"Almost every Chinese gold seeker came from the Cantonese province of Guangdong in South China. Here, life for small farmers was a struggle for survival against over-population, unemployment, disease, and political turmoil.

Gold-seeking offered an escape from poverty. Those who could help finance another to leave gave the most precious gift of "li shung" (to give life). From the mid-19th century, a steady stream of migrants headed for goldfields in the United States, Australia, Canada and, from 1865, New Zealand".

Invited but unwelcome – the harsh reality of goldfield life

"Physical and emotional challenges extended beyond the search for gold. After Guangdong's near-tropical climate, the newcomers would have been shocked by Otago's brutally cold winters and made anxious by local hostility towards them".

A desperate invitation

"By 1865, Otago's first gold rush was already over, and thousands of European gold miners were leaving for new West Coast goldfields.

Fear that the province's economy would collapse persuaded the Provincial Council to invite Chinese miners to Otago from the Australian goldfields. Opposition was countered by the argument that an "increase in population, even were it in the shape of chimpanzees, would be preferable to no population at all" (Otago Witness, 1867)".

Now, I could continue presenting what I have read from the information boards, which describe the lives of the early Chinese settlers, their living condition, and the travails they went through when they got older, and the gold rush was over.

However, for the sake of brevity and focusing more on the lessons learned from history and how we of the present will not repeat past mistakes, I am presenting two challenging but straightforward learning points.

If your church is struggling on the multicultural front, the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement presents many faith-wisdom lessons we can use.

As we went through the Chinese Village's story, two things on the information boards caught my attention because they can profoundly affect how we conduct our multicultural ministry in the church.

1. The migrants do not need to keep among themselves

The Chinese did their best to avoid trouble. They kept to themselves, living mainly outside the European Community and depending on each other for support.

Why did they have to...?

- do their best to keep out of trouble?
- keep to themselves?
- to live primarily outside the European community?
- to depend on each other for support?

In addition to the reasons I mentioned earlier, one information board at the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement site says:

- They faced increasing resentment as their numbers swelled and their business interest expanded.
- European prejudice fed eagerly on vicious rumours of Chinese debauchery and disease.
- European prejudice fuelled the fear that New Zealand could be colonised by an "inferior race."

So, how can this be a multicultural ministry

lesson we can apply in the church?

We can apply this lesson by asking ourselves our church's or some church members' sentiments towards present-day migrants.

Have you heard of this thought or sentiment about multicultural ministry that says, "It's good that you're doing multicultural ministry because the migrants are comfortable being among themselves"?

When we started the multicultural response ministry in 2013, I heard that statement from a few church leaders who expressed appreciation for the ministry we were beginning.

I cannot blame them or judge them for having such a sentiment or idea, for the arrival of migrants in a European majority congregation can cause discomfort at the onset.

However, now is the time to realise that the idea of "being comfortable amongst themselves" is not good because it could mean segregating the multi-ethnic congregation and the majority ethnic group, pushing the minority to the margin.

Thinking and saying the "migrants are comfortable amongst themselves" could mean that we, who have been together in the church for many years and generations, do not want to be inconvenienced by the migrant's presence.

Interestingly, the organisation of mono-ethnic churches by migrants around New Zealand is also reflective of many migrants' desires to be "comfortable among themselves". This puts them in a situation where they are isolated from the mainstream and prefer their exclusivity.

What practical steps does our church need to take?

The Arrowtown Chinese Settlement teaches us that the migrants do not need to keep among themselves if, as a church or individual believer, we will...

- get rid of all our prejudices,
- establish genuine friendly relationships with people from different cultures,
- welcome people from other cultures into our church community and
- be a dependable support in times of need.

Psalm 68:5-6 reminds us:
*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
 is God in his holy dwelling.*

*God sets the lonely in families,
 he leads out the prisoners with singing;
 but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.*

2. The 1880s mission to the Chinese gold miners is still relevant today

Yes, the ministry with the Chinese gold miners 140 years ago is relevant today.

One of the information boards mentioned that a missionary named Alexander Don ministered with the Chinese gold miners.

Alexander Don – more than a missionary

"Between 1886 and 1906, the Reverend Don trudged throughout Otago Southland, visiting Chinese miners on the most isolated goldfields. Thanks to his fluent Cantonese, detailed observations, and photography, we know much about these men".

That statement on the information board caught my attention, and I searched about the Reverend Alexander Don and the mission with the Chinese.

Applying the faith-wisdom tool can help us develop vital historical mission lessons that we can use in our present ministry. For brevity, I will only mention some segments about Alexander Don.

Who is Alexander Don? Alexander Don (22 January 1857 – 2 November 1934) was a New Zealand Presbyterian minister, missionary, and writer (Wikipedia).

James Ng (1993) writes:

"Alexander Don was born in a tent at Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, on 22 January 1857, the eldest of the ten children of John Don, a gold miner, and his wife, Janet Nicol. Both parents came from Scotland, where his father was a stonemason who contracted for bridges and culverts.

Don expressed a wish to become a missionary and was advised to seek the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) post offered by the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland. Arriving in Dunedin, New Zealand, in January 1879, Don found the post filled but accepted the alternative position of Presbyterian missionary to the region's Chinese gold-seekers. He was sent to Canton (Guangzhou), where he learnt Cantonese in close co-operation with the American Presbyterian mission".

I delved into the Presbyterian Research Centre archives to learn more about their mission to the Chinese gold miners.

Here is what I learned:

- The Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland had aimed to start a Christian Mission to the local Chinese in 1867.
- In 1871, the Synod appointed Paul Ah Chin, a Chinese evangelist, to share the Gospel with the Chinese. Between 1872 and 1873, 11 Chinese were baptised. Later, Mr. Chin resigned.
- In 1879, the Presbyterian Synod appointed the Rev. Alexander Don as a Missionary to the NZ Chinese, numbering around 900.
- Rev. Don went to Canton for 18 months to study the language. He started work in 1881 at Round Hill in Southland with a Chinese settlement of 150 huts covering five acres.
- Later, in 1886, he started the well-publicized but gruelling “Annual Tour” of the Chinese communities in Otago and Southland. He travelled on foot as far as 2000 miles over half-done roads.
- He visited large and small settlements, even going out of his way for only one or two men. He offered Christian fellowship and preached the Gospel in Cantonese.
- Rev. Don used religious tracts. He used coloured posters illustrating Scripture stories with relevant Cantonese text in large characters when he preached. In later years, he had a box camera that he carried to document his ministry.
- In 1896, the Synod of Otago in Southland sent Rev. Don to Canton to investigate opening a Chinese Mission in South China because of the trust fostered with the NZ Chinese and gaining new Christian converts.
- Rev. Don used his relationship with the Chinese in Otago and Southland to introduce himself to their families back in China. He noted that four of every five NZ Chinese came from villages near Canton.
- He created a “Roll of the Chinese,” which he used to remember the names, faces, and other information of the Chinese he met and ministered to.

The University of Otago created an electronic version of Alexander Don’s ‘Roll’ of the Chinese, based on James Ng’s *Windows on a Chinese Past* (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1993).

The University of Otago (n.d.) introduces: *“The Roll consists of entries for some 3,682 Chinese present within New Zealand between 1896 and 1913.*

In it, Don recorded the person’s name (in Chinese characters), their age in 1896, the number of years they had been away from China, the number of times they had returned, and the number of years of schooling they had received. This information is followed by columns listing the district (or county) in China that the person came from, the nearest market town to their family home, and the town or village in which that home was located.

The opposing page of the Roll was divided into two. The first column listed the location in New Zealand where the person was living in 1896, then the final column, by far the largest, was used to add a range of miscellaneous information that Don was able to collect about each individual. Here, we find details about the person’s movements, about Poll Tax requirements, family relationships, personal health, debts, run-ins with the law, bequests and remittances”.

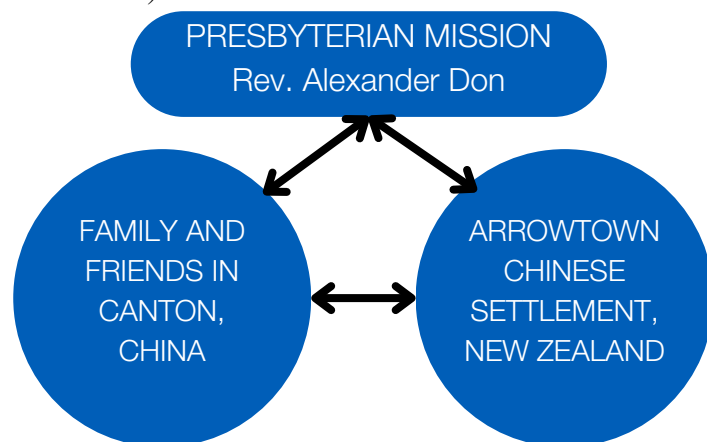
What makes the 1880s Chinese Mission relevant today?

As mentioned earlier in the article, the 1880s mission to the Chinese gold miners and other Chinese settlements is still relevant today.

This relevance is essential learning for our multicultural ministry as we welcome people of many different nationalities to New Zealand.

Based on the historical accounts I have read and some snippets I shared earlier, I illustrated Rev. Don’s work through the diagram below.

1880s Local Mission Model (*Adapted for newsletter*)

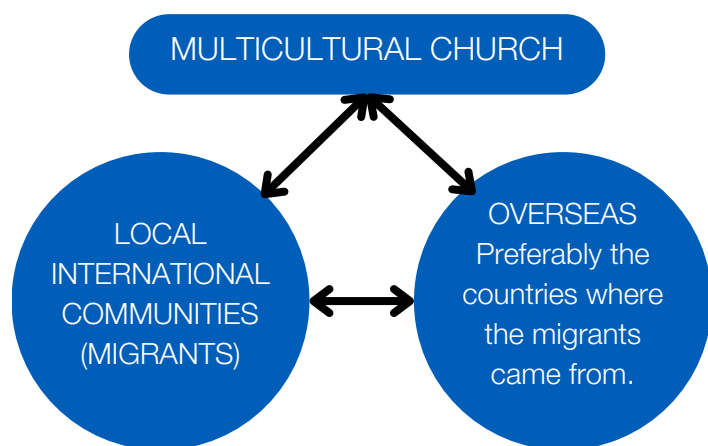


The 2018 Multicultural Church Missions Model NZ

In 2018, I wrote a series of blog posts on New Zealand missions based on my experience, learning, and outlook as a tentmaking missionary in Timaru.

We did the Multicultural Response ministry for five years at that time. In one of the posts, I created a multicultural church mission diagram based on my observations of the local Baptist church, missionary work in South Canterbury, and previous pastoral ministry experiences.

Because I published the blog post series in August 2018, I labelled the diagram below as the “2018 Multicultural Church Mission Model”.



I first published the diagram above in the article “Multicultural Church Doing Missions Together Local and Abroad”. I mentioned that I based it on the history of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches.

In 1898, the Baptist mission in the Philippines started through a Swedish missionary (Eric Lund) doing the mission with a Filipino (Braulio Manikan) in Spain.

Dr. Elmo Familiaran, co-author of the book, “No Greater Love; Triumph and Sacrifice of American Baptist Missionaries During WW II Philippines, and the Martyrdom in Hopevale” shared with me that in his research through the International Ministry archives, he learned that it was not until the turn of the 20th Century, the beginning of the American colonial period, that Protestant missionaries came to the Philippines.

“Eric Lund was the first missionary the ABFMS (American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society) sent to the country in 1900. In 1894, Eric Lund met in Barcelona a young Visayan native of Panay Island named Braulio Manikan. Manikan had gone to Spain to study civil engineering. He was raised a Roman Catholic and became a Baptist under Eric Lund’s tutelage. Together, they went to the Philippines and established the first Baptist mission on Panay Island in 1900. In February

1901, the first Baptist church in Jaro, Iloilo City (Philippines) was organized”. – Elmo Familiaran

The list below corresponds with the 2018 Multicultural Church Missions Model NZ diagram.

– **Multicultural Church** – Swedish Eric Lund and Filipino Braulio Manikan joined a local Baptist church in Spain.

– **Local International Communities** – Braulio Manikan (a migrant in Spain).

– **Overseas** – In Spain, Eric Lund and Braulio Manikan planned and executed bringing the Gospel to Iloilo, Philippines, in 1900.

When I created the diagram in 2018, I had not read about Rev. Alexander Don and his ministry with the Chinese settlements in the Otago and Southland area in the 1880s.

When we visited the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement in October 2021, I learned about Rev. Don through the information board on the historical site.

Please look at the two ministry diagrams to see the similarities. The ministry strategy developed around 140 years ago through Rev. Don and the Presbyterian Mission is relevant today because it is like the mission diagram created in 2018.

The only difference between Don’s diagram and the 2018 version is that the latter was based on a migrant pastor’s observation.

Afterthoughts

Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food, and gladness. Acts 14:17 (GNV)

As the Biblical historical narratives taught us and from what we have learned from the Arrowtown Chinese Settlement (or other Christian mission narratives), the Lord God has never left us without a witness. His handiwork is written and shown everywhere, regardless of how unpleasant or tragic the situation was.

Rather than neglecting and ignoring history’s unpleasant realities, we can also look back and “ask, seek, and knock,” as Matthew 7:7-8 says.

In our query, we can use some tools (e.g., faith-wisdom tool) to see what God teaches us. Once we discover history’s lessons, we also need humility and a servant’s heart to follow God’s

clear guidance.

I am pleased to learn about the Presbyterian Mission amongst the Chinese gold miners, particularly Rev. Alexander Don's ministry in the 1880s because it affirms what I presented in 2018.

Now, I can say that the 2018 multicultural mission model that I created and presented on many occasions to the local and national Baptist church leaders is not something that a Filipino-Kiwi pastor had solely made up.

A Scottish-Australian missionary, Alexander Don, implemented the idea 140 years ago in Otago, Southland, and other New Zealand regions.

Was the mission to the Chinese settlers successful? Let me leave you with this excerpt from Susan Chivers' thesis:

"Despite all the obstacles and failures, the Mission exerted a profound effect. At least its primary aim was accomplished – the Christian gospel had reached Chinese ears. The converts may have been few but they were genuine. Timothy Fae Loie compared the work to that of the miners they were trying to convert: – they would sift through hundreds and hundreds of tons of mud, sand, and stones and when the work was over, all they had to show for it was a handful of yellow dust – but that dust was gold".

I am thankful for the Holy Spirit, who guided me in gleaning faith-wisdom nuggets from the distant past on the lives of the Chinese gold miners and the ministry that Rev. Don undertook with them.

I pray and hope that our local churches will share these golden Arrowtown Chinese Settlement lessons with our present and ever-growing multicultural environment in the church and community.

Photos: By Jonan Castillon

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Chinese gold miners and Reverend Alexander Don at the Kyeburn diggings, Otago. McNeur Collection: Photographs of Chinese gold miners who worked in Otago and Southland goldfields. Ref: 1/2-019156-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22883508

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STEPH WOOD AND SEAN PAWSON

Outdoor worship services



Steph Wood is the Children & Family Ministry Coach for the Upper South Baptist Association and is part of Ilam Baptist Church. She interviews Sean Pawson, Pastor of Ilam Baptist Church, about bringing worship services out into God's creation. This interview is reproduced from the Baptist Children & Family Ministry eConnect newsletter.

What is some of the thinking behind having outdoor services at Ilam Baptist?

The thinking behind outdoor services was not just to be different. It was born out of an awareness that our church congregation has a high proportion of people who love the outdoors and connect with God in nature/creation in a variety of ways. The theological framework is based on a theology of creation, seeing humans as created beings who are connected to creation and other creatures, seeing the Word as the one who sustains our world and seeing all creation as God's temple, so recognising His presence in creation (Genesis 1 & 2, Psalm 139, Acts 17, Psalm 8). Our staff team had conversations and planning around holding one outdoor service per season in various locations/environments that had some familiarity for people. The idea was to create opportunities to gather in the grand outdoor cathedral and engage in a worship service in that space.

Can you tell us a bit about the outdoor services that Ilam Baptist have tried?

For Matariki, we held an early-morning Winter service (prior to sunrise). This was in the Port Hills, with a view of the eastern horizon. There was the opportunity for some star observation before the sun rose. People wrapped up warmly for Winter. There was a recognition of mana whenua, in keeping with our desire to authentically embrace our treaty journey. We shared waiata, karakia and mihi to mana whenua. Afterwards, we shared kai together - a pancake breakfast.

On New Year's Eve, we had an evening gathering at Victoria Park. This was a Summer gathering, with a view of both horizons visible. We had a time of reflection- looking back, giving thanks, and looking forward to the New Year to dream. There was time to share our reflections over a picnic tea.

What did you plan for an Easter morning service this year?

We planned a morning service at a beach location, with a beach barbeque. For some people, the beach is their outdoor happy space, and views of seascapes are a connecting point for people in the outdoor world. This location is a shift of focus from the environments we explored previously.

What do you see as some of the benefits of outdoor services for all age groups?

All of us have certain environments where we have enhanced ability to connect. A high proportion of our congregation experience a sense of connectedness with God, self and others, which is nurtured and strengthened in outdoor environments. Our observation is that people are animated, engaged, present and energised when worshipping in the outdoors.

What are some things to be aware of for other churches wanting to try outdoor services?

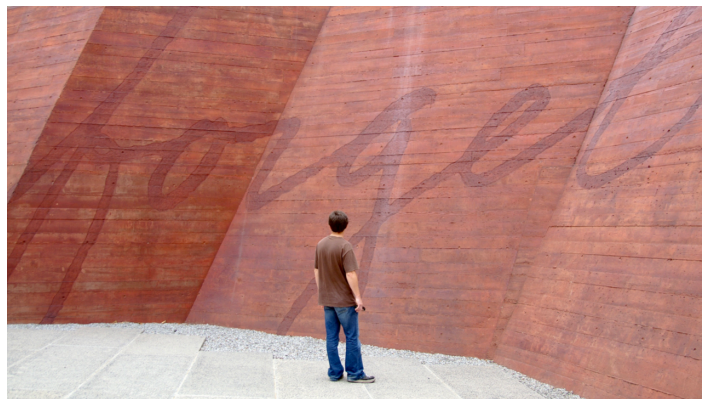
Think about the logistics and choose **accessible environments** so that as many of the congregation as possible can be involved- think of a location that is accessible for the less bodily able. It is important to have **health and safety** planning in place (RAMS forms, first aiders and advising people to wear **appropriate clothing** for the weather). You will also need the **ability to pivot** and embrace variables. For example, have a plan B that still allows people to experience the environment to some degree in the case of wet weather. Try and choose **locations that**

resonate with those in your community. It is good to include **sharing kai**, so consider how you can include this element.

Photos: Supplied by Sean Pawson

SAM SCHUURMAN

Anzac Day reflection



Sam Schuurman is a Baptist chaplain in the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Every Anzac Day service in New Zealand includes the same two sentences. I suspect most of you have heard them before:

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old; age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.”

These words are known as the Ode of Remembrance from the fourth stanza of the 1914 poem For the Fallen by Laurence Binyon. They're a poignant moment – as most elements of an Anzac Day service are. Why? Because we're reflecting on and remembering people who have served, fought, and often died in our world wars and conflicts since. And remembering people, particularly those who have died, is incredibly important.

In fact, isn't there a major world religion that has, arguably at its core, a regular service of remembrance around someone who died...?

When I hear Ode of Remembrance on Anzac Day, I can't help but be reminded of the words of Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians 11, repeated in verses 24 and 25: “do this, in remembrance of me”. As significant as they are, I would not for a moment see the sacrifices of our service people over the years to be on the same scale as the death of Christ. His death (and, of course, his resurrection) has relevance and effect beyond our ability to fully comprehend.

But I think we can notice something in his words – clearly, Jesus knows our tendency toward forgetfulness! The Bible is replete with exhortations to “remember”. Forgetfulness, in fact, seems to be the fundamental disposition of humanity in our fallen state. And when we forget the gospel, we forget to exercise our faith. When we forget the gospel, we forget to fix our eyes on the author and perfecter of our faith. When we forget to remember Christ at the communion table, we’re prone to make all our old mistakes again and again.

I feel it’s important to remember the significant conflicts of our past so we don’t repeat our mistakes. As a movement of Baptist churches, we may have a plethora of views on the nature of war (pacifism, the ‘just war’ theory, etc). However, I think it’s still important that we all ‘remember’ on Anzac Day; that we remember the 2778 Kiwis and 8500 Australians who lost their lives on the shores of Gallipoli during the First World War; that we remember those who have served and died since; that we remember the current conflicts that still rage on today.

But above all, we should remember that Jesus’ death and resurrection make all the difference and that he will be faithful to his word to return and finally bring God’s glorious reign to earth. We clearly need it!

Photo: By Mike Crudge, Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance

Getting to know...Rod Robson

In this column, we discover more about our Baptist whānau, meeting someone in our team of 40,000 each post. Rod is the Chair of the Baptist Assembly Council and Sole Pastor of Opawa Baptist Church, Christchurch.



What is something you think everyone should experience at least once in their life?

Eat BBQed venison back steaks cooked by Blue Bradley of Northern Easter Camp fame.

If you could be a pro at any one thing, what would it be?

A cricket opening batsman.

What is a random interest that has completely nothing to do with your study or work?

World War II, especially the Holocaust.

What is the oddest fact you know?

I am full of odd facts, but here’s one – 10 to the 100th power is called a googol.

What is the most boring thing you’ve ever done?

When I graduated in 1989, an intense recession was underway, so I got whatever work I could until I got a permanent job late in 1990. One of those filler roles was handwriting notes on VUW student records for the typist to type up.

What is your favourite way of connecting with God?

Alone, in the quiet and usually without words.

Can you describe a significant moment when you experienced God’s love?

I was at a church camp when an older guy injured his back. I prayed for him, and he was healed. It blew both of us away, me because I was wondering if God had forgotten about me. I was not in a great space, but the healing was a sign that I was still the beloved of God.

What is your favourite thing about the neighbourhood where you live?

I have just arrived, so it’s early days, but it’s 1 km from my favourite cafe and from church. I’m starting to meet the neighbours.

What do you love most about being Baptist?

In 1985, I stumbled into Remuera Baptist as a brand new believer; I went there because I lived nearby. I had no Baptist heritage. From 1986 to 1991, I went to various churches in Wellington, ending up at Karori Baptist in 1992. I have been in the movement ever since. I love our movement because it’s where I belong; for good or for ill, the Baptists are my people.



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