

20 May 2025

Kia ora e te whanau

Forum 2025

We're definitely on the home stretch – there's still time to sign up!

How exciting! What is different from this Forum is that we don't know what's going to happen. Normally we'd have a raft of interesting, inspiring, and hopefully useful 'inputs' - all tightly scheduled to fill up the allotted time. We have very little of that. We have an agenda - we have a significant opportunity to engage together. And, a little scarily, we don't know where it's all going to land. My hope and prayer is that we might come to a time and place where we can all say together: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us....."

If you're still to register - Click on the link <https://www.ucanz.org.nz/forum-2025/>, scroll down and on the left hand side of the page are the categories that need to be filled in to give us the details we need.

Accommodation - We still have a couple of spaces at the Friary - \$225 all up for 3 nights accommodation and breakfast. Contact robyn at teacoop1@gmail.com

Leadership & Personal Development Resources

1. 5 Key Leadership Principles That Drive Real Results

These may be business related, but apply equally to Church leadership – focussing on the importance of authenticity, being present, and, ultimately, loving your people. It can be accessed here:

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/5-key-leadership-principles-that-drive-real-results/490082>

2. You don't have a culture, you have a clique. 5 ways to work with people who aren't like you

Wouldn't it be amazing if the church was full of people who weren't like us? Definitely uncomfortable. Yet an opportunity for innovation and growth – to learn to see and think differently. Yet cliques, is what most of our churches are, mostly filled with people like us – who look like us, think like us, share the same basic world view and values as we do – those we confidently imagine that to be 'Christian'. This article is not written for church, yet offers ways of being that allow us to walk alongside others who are different. Not with the intent that we can recreate them in our image, but so that we might learn from them. The article can be accessed here:

<https://www.fastcompany.com/91327753/5-ways-to-work-with-people-who-arent-like-you>

3. Think You Can Spot Fake News? This Scientifically Verified Quiz Will Tell You

In this day of high polarisation, where most of us gravitate to our favourite 'News' sites, while scorning those that reflect the 'enemy's' 'fake news', or 'alternative facts', this article offers some simple and effective strategies for testing out the truthfulness of what we're reading or hearing – irrespective of which side of the ideological spectrum we find ourselves. But wait there's more – there's also a link to a quick test coming out of Cambridge University which, alarmingly, helps us to discern how susceptible we are to being misled. It's only for the brave! The article can be accessed here: <https://www.inc.com/jessica-stillman/think-you-can-spot-fake-news-this-scientifically-verified-quiz-will-tell-you/91185411>

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Homilies & Preaching Resources

My response to the 2nd of the offered Gospel lectionary for the 25th of May - John 5 vs 1-9, reflects on the tragedy of the man who has waited 38 years for the waters of the pool of Bethesda to move, so that he can be healed. The homily is titled 'Unwasting Life' and can be engaged with here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmlpZu-8YK4>

Trevor Hoggard continues using the 2nd set of readings from the Common Lectionary. For Sunday the 25th of May the readings Trevor focusses on are Zephaniah 3 vs 14-20, Psalm 126, and Matthew 28 vs 1-10, 16-20. Trevor recognises the tension of the tug to reach for the latest bright shiny object as a cure for what ails the church, versus a return to the trusted and true. His sermon can be engaged with here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dymq3qzKkLs&t=4s>

Gospel Conversations - out of the Dunedin Anglican Diocese. They host a conversation of (this time) 4 Theologians and Practitioners around the Gospel lectionary text for the coming Sunday. The site with all its options can be accessed here: <https://www.calledsouth.org.nz/gospel-conversations/> . The reflection for this coming Sunday the 25th of May focusses on the Gospel text of John 14 vs 23-29. It can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rG1wU74bO5A>

Again, it will help broaden all our reach if you 'subscribe' and 'like'.

Once again, use the videos as you will.

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UCANZ Standing Committee Membership

No, It's not too late – and yes, we're still looking for a fresh body of people to help lead us into future. One of the things that will happen at our Kings Birthday Forum is we'll elect a new Standing Committee. The 'rules' determine that each of the Partners are able to appoint two representatives – a total of six. The number that can then be elected is six plus one – seven.

Standing Committee meets monthly for up to 1½ hours by zoom, and normally with one 'in-person' meeting each year – usually in Auckland. It's a great team to be part of! Don't just wait to be shoulder tapped – consider what skills, gifts, and graces you might have to offer. And consider those in your orbit whom you recognise might make a difference.

We're calling on Parishes and Forums for nominations for elected members. Please include a brief resume of church experience. Please do it soon. Nominations can be sent to Rev Stephanie Wells, at rev.stephanie.wells@gmail.com .

Finally.

As always, if you find you'd prefer not to receive this weekly newsletter, please let me know and your address will be removed.

Ngā manaakitanga

Andrew Doubleday

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Uniting Congregations
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