

# NELSON RECOGNISED MEETING NEWSLETTER

Quakers - the Religious Society of Friends – Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hahi Tuhauwiri

9 October 2024

## Spiritual Thought

"Again, you have heard that it was said to the ancients, 'Do not break your oath, but fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I tell you not to swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is His footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor should you swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' Anything more comes from the evil one."

— Matt. 5:33-37 BSB

Today's Invitation from the Daily Quaker

When a "yes" or "no" is required of you today, take a breath before responding.  
Consider whether you are able to answer with integrity.

## News of Friends

**Christine** has returned from eight weeks with family in London and an enjoyable visit to Lisbon for a conference.

**Jan** has had a very pleasant week with Saradha and family in Melbourne.

**Phillida** and **Lizi** have been busy introducing colourful touches to the Meeting House to make it more welcoming.

**Lawrence's** work on bringing new signage to the Meeting House is progressing.

**John D** is planning to do some exterior cleaning of the Meeting House.

He may call for a working bee to finish to tasks of sprucing everything up. This is usually a fun way to spend a Saturday morning so watch out for the invitation.

**Jo and Chris Appleton** have returned from the UK and are house-sitting while they look for their new home in Nelson. It's lovely to see them again.

## A Concern led by Peter

### Treaty Principles Bill : Update

A home discussion on this topic was held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Sept at 7pm in the Meeting House.

The session began with a video viewing of an address given by Dr Alistair Reese to an audience in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland on May 24. Peter introduced this address because it highlights that the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 occurred amidst a period of intense Christianisation of Maori, alongside intense lawlessness amongst the existing settler population, and growing unscrupulousness on the part of the New Zealand Company. [Here is a link to the video.](#)

Dr. Reese is an engaging orator, historian, and theologian. He emphasises the role of the missionaries in conferring a covenantal nature to the Treaty alongside Maori, thereby convincing a large number of Rangatira to agree to it. The missionaries mediated the Treaty to Rangatira, both orally and by translation of the text, leaning on the trust they had built over 25 years of missionary activity.

This aspect of the signing has implications for the role of the Church at the present time, in promoting the covenantal nature of the Treaty, and preventing it from becoming reduced to a set of

legalistic principles defined by Parliament.

The video had quite an impact on us, if the silence that followed watching it is anything to go by.

Out of the discussion that followed several points emerged.

- 1) That the Treaty Principles Bill may well fizzle out without much intervention.
- 2) Even so, loud voices such as those of Hobson's Pledge, in favour of the Bill, will be raised, and will need antidote voices.
- 3) That the Bill will almost certainly go to Select Committee stage and return to Parliament for a second reading. The National Party has not promised to support it beyond the first reading, which will happen in a few months time.
- 4) That the Open Letter to MPs signed by 440 Church leaders was signed by one Quaker as an individual.
- 5) That Yearly Meeting may be taking action in regard to the Bill ... we need to find out
- 6) That the Treaty is an agreement between two sovereign nations, and exists on the international stage under international law .... it may be illegal for one party to the Treaty to meddle with it unilaterally.
- 7) Dr. Reese's beautiful little book, called *He Tatau Pounamu*, is a written form of his talk, and well worth having. If you'd like to order a copy for \$25, Peter will put in a bulk order in about two week's time from Venn publishers, or you can order one yourself [here](#).
- 7) That we are unsure of where to take this from here on.

Since the Home Discussion evening,

- 1) Peter has been in touch with Yearly Meeting Clerks Ann and Alistair Hall, who write:

*"On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> we were in Auckland attending a meeting of the National Church Leaders of Aotearoa New Zealand. The topic of the Treaty Principles Bill was raised at the National Church Leaders meeting. A number of the church leaders present had signed the letter. Unfortunately, it was not circulated to all church leaders in time for the deadline for a listing of names to go with the letter. We did not know about the letter until after the deadline but have since signed it on behalf of Quakers in Aotearoa New Zealand as it fits with previous statements that Quakers in Aotearoa New Zealand have made on Crown and tangata whenua relationships. While Church Leaders and individuals are still being encouraged to sign the letter now, but we're not sure how or whether our "late" signing of the letter will be made public."*

*There was some discussion at the National Church leaders meeting about a possible follow up letter. It was felt that it would be better to be targeted to get media coverage and perhaps something around the time of the introduction of the Bill would have more impact. We anticipate there will be something from Church leaders at this time and hopefully the distribution system will work better than for the first letter, so Quakers can be part of this.*

So that's good!

Ann and Alistair also sent some background information about Quakers and Treaty issues:

- Previous statements by Quakers in Aotearoa New Zealand can be found in the Quaker Handbook, Appendices ( you may have a 2024 printed Quaker Handbook plus it is also on the website at [Appendices | Quakers Aotearoa](#) – scroll down for statements made in 1989, 1995, and 2008 on Treaty issues). The 2008 statement specifically talks about constitutional arrangements.
- There is also also considerable information at [Treaty Relationships & Constitutional Change | Quakers Aotearoa](#), including
  - A 5 minute video guide to te Tiriti o Waitangi (from David James, who worked in this field for many years), which you might like to share with Friends
  - a submission made by Quakers to the Government's Constitutional Advisory Panel in 2013, regarding Crown-Maori relationships. In the summary it says "The fundamental issue in Crown-Māori relationships in our view is the need to build a

constitutional relationship between hapū and iwi and the Crown based on the guarantee of the continuance of tino rangatiratanga and self-determination in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.”

- There were clearly many other submissions to government during the period 2009-2018, but unfortunately these are not available on the website. Hopefully the Treaty Relationships Group will have kept copies.
- Earlier this year Northern Monthly Meeting sent a letter to MPs north of the Bombay Hills reaffirming their commitment to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi – see [Quakers in Auckland and north write to Party Leaders reaffirming their commitment to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Quakers Aotearoa](#)

So that's good too!

2) Gwen has pointed out that the Quaker Statement on Constitutional Change pamphlet has some ambiguous wording, and needs editing.

3) Peter and Lizi have talked, and it transpires that Lizi is on the Treaty Relationships Group for Yearly Meeting. The group has been inactive for some time now, and there is a proposal (undecided) before Yearly Meeting, to abandon the Group, and appoint a Treaty Correspondent in its place.

Before becoming aware that Lizi is on the Group, Ann and Alistair had asked Peter whether he would like Christchurch Monthly Meeting at its October 1st meeting, to put his name forward to Yearly Meeting to serve either in a rejuvenated Treaty Relationships Group, or as Treaty Correspondent.

4) Rosemary Tredgold of the Christchurch Monthly Meeting had asked Peter whether he'd like to facilitate a Home Discussion on this topic in Christchurch!

5) Peter has talked with Alistair Reese on the phone, asking him what he thought would be good actions to take before the first reading of the Bill. He thought that a letter to Prime Minister Luxon would be good, as well as working at grass roots level for greater understanding of the underpinnings of the Treaty in the collective mind.

6) Further reforms have been proposed by the Government in line with the Libertarian approach to government that it is pursuing, many of which will impact Treaty issues.

Peter, Lizi and Phillida have put their names forward to be on the Treaty Relationships Group of Yearly Meeting.

## Coming Events

### Interfaith Meeting Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November

You are cordially invited to **Interfaith Gathering** at **Chandrakirti Meditation Centre**. The theme for this special event is **World Peace through Inner Peace**. We will gather for a prayer session together on **Saturday November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00am** followed by potluck lunch. Please kindly **RSVP** at [meditate@chandrakirti.co.nz](mailto:meditate@chandrakirti.co.nz).

There is also a Zoom opportunity:

**We invite you to the  
Trans-Tasman Interfaith Gathering Call  
Marking 50 years of WPWP**

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> of October 8 PM Wellington/6 PM Sydney/3 PM Perth

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85831495272?pwd=NEXEyNi0VyX1QJefwGssMc2qir2JyN.1>

Meeting ID: 858 3149 5272 Passcode: 978683

***Organised by WPWP***

***Dr. Pushpa Wood, Paddy Payne, and Lachlan Mackay***

### Parihaka Day 5<sup>th</sup> November

We will host the breakfast after the dawn blessing as we have done in the past. There will be a range of tasks which we can take part in. Watch out for John D's call for volunteers.

### Home Discussion Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November in the Meeting House on the Principles of te Tiriti

Peter proposes a second Home Discussion on this topic on the third Wednesday of November (20th). Meantime, please feel free to forward Peter and Lizi any relevant information you come across, and especially, any and all creative ideas about how to go about addressing this issue.

Additional information: Attached to the email for this newsletter will be further information on this subject, and also the Climate Correspondent's newsletter.

### Poem

Turbulent water reflects nothing.  
Still water reflects the sky.  
Into still water, as movement returns, come ripples. Let them be.

Gemma Mason 2023 in *On these Islands I runga I ngā motu nei QF&P in Aotearoa New Zealand* 6.14

### Our Programme:

Here is a reminder of the different activities each month:

All Sundays: Meeting for Worship, 10 – 11am, 30 Nile St. Nelson

3rd Sunday: Meeting for Worship, 10am, Family Service Centre, Talbot St. Motueka

3rd Wednesday: Home Discussion Group, 7pm – 8.45pm. Topic & venue tba

Children are welcome at all Meetings for Worship and activities will be provided for them.

### Online Resources:

visit our own website [quakers-in-nelson.org.nz](http://quakers-in-nelson.org.nz), the national website [quakers.nz](http://quakers.nz) and our Face Book page @Nelson Quakers.

### **Deadline for next Newsletter**

Our Newsletter is a way to share our lives – to help build our Quaker community. Thanks to everyone who has sent contributions. Please consider sending in your news, a book review, a quote that speaks to you. Please send newsletter items for the November letter to Christine Gillespie [c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz](mailto:c.gillespie@xtra.co.nz) by the end of October.