

The ANGLICAN PACIFIST

of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Newsletter of the New Zealand Branch of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

From the Chairman

The recent events in Napier are tragic. A Police Officer dead, three people seriously wounded and the householder killed by his own hand. It all began as a low key search for cannabis. The violent response, the booby trap explosives and the bursts of gunfire were totally unexpected by the Police and, by present accounts, the neighbours.

At this stage I don't know whether the gunman had a mental illness, or was on drugs, or was, as described by some of his mates, "an average Kiwi bloke". I fervently hope he was not in the latter category. But whatever our questions about his personal situation we cannot doubt that we live in a society that tolerates a surprising amount of violence. This is most blatant in our entertainment. I don't watch much television but many people presumably enjoy the inter-advert mayhem that screens most nights. In the cinema and DVD shops it is films with violence that draw the most viewers though I have high hopes for "Last chance Harvey".

Getting nearer to reality, those top role models, our Rugby players, are far from gentle on the field and not always so gentlemanly when off it. In my far distant days of play the referees would have sent off most contemporary players by half time. Boxing continues to shatter brains and draw big crowds. However netball remains free of punchups and there are long queues for the final days of the Monet exhibition in Wellington. Not everything by a long chalk is all maim and destruction. But even with an active turn off and mute policy we are all pressurised by images and instances of violence which will lurk amongst our neurones for the rest of our lives.

There are other more subtle influences of violence built into our society. The Royals seem to be commanders in chief of every British armed force and Prince Harry, a possible role figure for the young, has chosen the army for his career. At home our National events often have a military presence and this year's ANZAC day has had unprecedented numbers of young people at the dawn services. Each year there

is more in the media about it and there have been suggestions that Gallipoli was the forge in which our nationhood was moulded. We should, of course, remember those victims who took part in that ill-conceived and terrible debacle. Many lost their lives and all who were there showed great fortitude; but should we be trying to build a sense of nationhood around such a violent event in our history?

The Rev. Sande Ramage takes up the ANZAC theme in the sermon Sleepwalking through ANZAC, and I commend it to you. pma@xtra.co.nz

The APF pledge states that we reject war and all preparation for it. Preparation goes far beyond munitions factories and spy bases to all the influences in society that encourage the Cain in us which is never completely eliminated. The resurrection of Jesus gives us the hope that our efforts to encourage and bring peace in our society are never wasted by a God of love.

Would "Napier" have happened in a culture of Peace?

Philippians 4.v 8.

Jonathan.

Annual Retreat and Conference

HOUCHEM HOUSE JULY 24-26.

The AGM will be held on Friday night.

Saturday's programme, led by Meg and Jonaathan Hartfield, will include readings and reflection on peacemaking, followed by a Eucharist at 3 pm. Waikato members may like to invite interested non-members.

On Sunday morning the group will attend a service at Hamilton Cathedral.



WHO IS HE?

(Apologies for not introducing our new Chairman, the Revd Dr Jonathan Hartfield, in the last newsletter. For the benefit of those who have not met him at conferences, here is a potted CV in Jonathan's own words. – Ed.)

Born in England and trained at St. George's Hospital London where he met Meg, a nurse. Married in 1958, they have four children and nine grandchildren. 1961-1971 was spent in a Methodist Hospital in Nigeria, the last years marred by the Biafran war. Emigrated to NZ in 1971 and worked as a specialist Obstetric and Gynaecological surgeon until retraining as a palliative care physician in 1997. Both work for a local hospice. Jonathan was ordained into the self supporting ministry in 1986. They have 10 acres, 3 donkeys, 20 sheep and get to as many classical concerts as possible.

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL AUCKLAND

Peace Sunday, August 9, 9.30 am

The Dean has invited Jonathan to preach, and APF members will be welcomed.

CHRIST AND VIOLENCE

An excerpt

Jesus' death lies at the very heart of our commitment to non-violence. It was because the incarnate one knew that God was loving and merciful, even towards the worst of sinners, that He associated with sinners, that He forgave their sins and completed His mission of dying for the sins of the world.

And it was precisely the same understanding of God that prompted Him to command His followers to love their enemies.

Ron Sider

The Way of Love

*Let us be voices in the wilderness
insistent
proclaiming
that the only way to world peace
is the Kingdom way
In the face of ridicule
opposition
hate
In the face of political power
and military might.
Governments rise and fall
armies kill and are killed
But God's Word
endures for ever.*

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WAR

A boy once asked, "Dad, how do wars begin?"

"Well, take the First World," said his father. "That got started when Germany invaded Belgium."

Immediately his wife interrupted him. "Tell the boy the truth. It began because somebody was murdered."

The husband drew himself up with an air of superiority and snapped back, "Are you answering the question or am I?"

Turning her back on him in a huff, the wife walked out of the room and slammed the door as hard as she could.

When the dishes stopped rattling in the kitchen, an uneasy silence followed, broken by the boy saying quietly, "Dad, you don't have to tell me any more; I know now."

Author unknown

Anglican Pacifist Fellowship New Zealand Branch

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