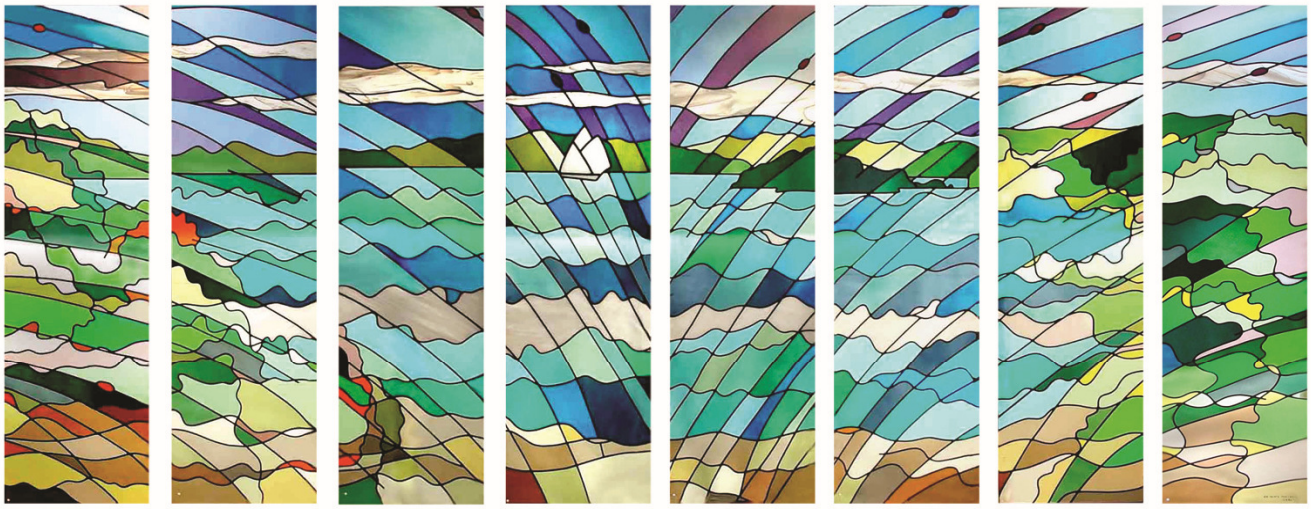

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

Special Edition –The Eastbourne Winter Series
July/August 2017

PRE-ELECTION THINKING – HOPES AND POSSIBILITIES

A series of four lectures hosted by St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne

July 9	**Freshwater - How clean do we want it?**	*Marnie Prickett*
July 23	**Has education lost its way?**	*Drs Deborah Stevens & Lynne Bowyer*
August 6	**What hope is there for peace?**	*Dr Rebecca Dudley*
August 20	**The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media**	*Dr Peter Thompson*

Pre-election thinking – hopes and possibilities…

With this year being a general election, choosing a theme that embraced some of the most pressing issues facing society seemed obvious. The planning group, which first convened in March, quickly identified four possible topics: •the state of our waterways, •education for our young people, •achieving peace in a fractured world and •how to preserve public service media in an environment overwhelmed by digital choice.

Finding presenters is always a challenge. We had our dream list, but as so often happens, these people are not necessarily available. However, as also so very often happens, other recommendations and suggestions soon emerge and, in the end, we put together a team of some top-class people. Not only did they present their material in a fresh and engaging way, but each of them stimulated some lively debate among the 60 or so who attended each of the fortnightly, Sunday-afternoon lectures. Hospitality in the form of afternoon tea afterwards is an important element of what has become an important biennial outreach by St Ronan's Church to the wider Wellington/Hutt community.

Mounting such a series has its challenges and can be very time-consuming for the small group of volunteers, but the feedback received from our audiences certainly made it all worthwhile. Many said they would love the series to run every year, but better to do something well every two years rather than stretch ourselves too thinly and perhaps compromise on quality.

My thanks again to all those who helped out – on the technical side managing sound and powerpoints; as hosts at the church door; and in the kitchen serving food, pouring the tea and coffee, and cleaning up afterwards.

Following are summaries of the four lectures, written by me, with sign-off by the speakers.

Winter Series co-ordinator ***Anne Manchester***

Improving our freshwater – it's up to us…!

This year's *Eastbourne Winter Series* got off to a riveting start with a presentation on freshwater by *Choose Clean Water* spokesperson Marnie Prickett. Her idealism and commitment to the cause of improving the quality of our waterways was a clarion call to all those present.
She presented us with some sobering facts. Only 30 per cent of our rivers are swimmable. Twenty-three per cent of our monitored groundwater sites are now too polluted with pathogens for human consumption. Seventy-four per cent of our native fish are threatened with extinction – they could all be gone by 2040. Forty-four per cent of our monitored lakes are eutrophic or worse.
What has happened to our beautiful place, she asked, when signs like "*Caution – water quality borderline for swimming. Best advice is to stay out of the water and avoid eating lake fish"* or "*Health warning – this waterway is polluted. Swimming is not recommended*" are becoming all too common?
Quoting the Maori whakatauki "*Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au*" (I am the river and the river is me), she said many tangata whenua now thought *they* were dying, along with their rivers.

Government reclassifies what's swimmable

Last year, the Government said swimmable rivers were "impractical". However, following public pressure, they had now set 2040 as a "swimmable" rivers target. To achieve this, all it had done was to lower the bottom line for nitrate toxicity, Marnie said. Its new A standard for swimmable rivers (where the estimated risk of Campylobacter infection is less than 50 cases in every 1000 exposures) was in fact its former C standard. This meant the former "wadeable" category was now classed as swimmable. Marnie described this as "a cynical move".
Many people were not aware that the Government's focus was just on the really big rivers and lakes. This meant 90 per cent of rivers were not covered by the policy. "There is no bottom line at all for most of New Zealand's waterways," Marnie said.
The OECD was also critical about changes to our environment, suggesting our growth model, "*largely based on exporting primary products, has started to show its environment limits, with increased greenhouse gas emissions, diffuse freshwater pollution and threats to biodiversity"*.
Marnie agreed with Environment Minister Nick Smith that water quality issues affected both urban and rural areas.

Finding a way to rescue our waterways

Despite all this bad news, Marnie said we should not feel demoralised. "We can find solutions and we can work together on this."

A Freshwater Rescue Plan, backed by eight organisations, including Forest and Bird, the Tourism Export Council, Choose Clean Water and Greenpeace, offers a seven-step initial plan:

1) Set strict and enforceable water standards
2) Withdraw all public subsidies of irrigation schemes
3) Invest in an agricultural transition fund, ie redirect the $480 million of public money earmarked for irrigation to more environmentally friendly framing methods and the restoring of damaged waterways
4) Implement strategies to decrease cow numbers immediately
5) Instigate polluter-pays systems nationally
6) Regional councils should be expected to produce quarterly reports on improving water quality, to show how they are monitoring breaches
7) Develop a long-term vision for transitioning to a low-carbon, greener economy.

Where we go from here, Marnie said, was up to us all. All of us can choose to speak up about these issues, to write to MPs or newspapers, to get in touch with like-minded groups (eg the Friends of Hutt River) and to stay in touch.

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Has education lost its way…?

According to our speakers at the second of the Eastbourne Winter Series, education *has* lost its way.

The fundamental questions we needed to ask ourselves, said Drs Deborah Stevens (above) and Lynne Bowyer (below), were what we wanted students to learn, why we wanted them to learn, how we wanted them to learn and what the purpose of education was. To answer the last question, Deborah and Lynne said the purpose was to develop the whole person, to foster young people who were knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring and connected.

"In our rapidly changing technological environment, we need young people to live well together. From 2020, the 'digital curriculum' will be mandatory in schools. As a society, we need to consider how we embrace these changes."

Deborah said the planned New Zealand curriculum was a good one – "There is no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but there is a need to refresh the bathwater."

Life is a bowl of noodles

Deborah believes the problem lies with the way the curriculum is being taught, assessed and experienced. "I see life like a bowl of noodles rather than a box of chocolates. And the fact is, there are more noodles in the bowl than ever before. We need to examine what values our young people will embrace when they become citizens. The Greeks knew life was complicated, that a person's psyche and body need to be equally nourished.

"We see young people living primarily in a 'belly' society, a society of hyper-stimulation that provides instant gratification through social media, texting, peer groups. Young people are connected to their peer groups as never before.

"Once a household had only one landline phone and it was usually in the dining room where everyone could overhear conversations. Now young people have their own devices. From these devises, advertising invades their lives, and it is from this advertising that young people's main messages and sources of values are coming."

New Zealand's market-driven society had also given rise to cultures of materialism, individualism and relativism, she said. Relativism meant different points of view of what was desirable or not in society were not being critiqued.

Despite better nutrition, greater opportunities and choices, Deborah and Lynne believe the overall well-being of young people has declined. "We see greater aggression and depression among young people. They tend to externalise

faults and they lack the ability to learn from their mistakes. We see rising rates of binge drinking, earlier sexual behaviour and alarming increases in anti-depressants prescribed for young people. The answer is to get young people to think – about the ethical issues they face and their place in society."

The role of education was to encourage and nurture thinking in young people. "It's not about locating information, not about learning fixed responses to pass endless assessments. Young people learn values from being with each other, from being guided by their elders, by sharing experiences and being exposed to the eternal values expressed in art, music, poetry, literature."

Teachers becoming demoralised

In their contact with teachers around the country, Deborah and Lynne have observed them becoming demoralised, frustrated and overworked - the emphasis on standardised testing is undermining their professional responsibilities.

"Teachers want to provide a fun, challenging and student-focused atmosphere, but instead they are always having to look towards the next assessment."

Through the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, a charitable trust that works in schools and with community groups to discuss ethical and social issues, Deborah and Lynne have the opportunity to work with young people for a whole day, engaging them in a wide range of social, ethical and political issues, e.g. reproductive technology, the Treaty of Waitangi, genetics, the end of life and euthanasia. "We find young people are hungry to engage in these issues, to have the opportunity to express their own values."

For more about the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, go to www.nzcsc.org

What hope is there for peace…?

Hope is a decision – and a defiant decision, if need be.

This was the message of New Zealand Red Cross humanitarian law adviser Dr Rebecca Dudley in an address entitled 'What hope is there for peace?'

Rebecca described the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement as the guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL). She believes visionary, imaginative legal frameworks provide a key to peace-building. These laws seek to ensure that even if we are insane enough to go to war, we are sane enough to set limits on warfare.

It was Rebecca's experience living in Belfast and being part of the Northern Ireland peace process that cemented her decision to make bringing down walls and building peace her vocation. This developed into a belief or personal mantra that 'imaginative law can bring down walls. It can build peace. Imagine'.

Peace, in the sense of "world peace", she said, was a process, rather than an event. "Peace can be strengthened through building democratic institutions, supporting credible and transparent elections, and promoting and upholding human rights and good governance.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, she said, was guided by the fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, neutrality and independence. "Humanitarian advocacy is about persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with respect of humanitarian principles."

Is the world today uniquely terrible?

It was tempting for people to think the world was uniquely terrible in 2017, Rebecca said. But one only had to go back to 1946 to discover another terrible time. One of the most shocking developments of World War II was atomic weapons, used for the first time 72 years ago. Another war could mean the destruction of the human race.

Another shocking development was the holocaust. This saw Germany, a so-called civilised country with a proud philosophical, cultural, intellectual tradition, abuse state power and enshrine discrimination in law to the point where it sponsored and implemented genocide. "The hope for world peace started from the rubble of atomic weapons and the holocaust in Europe."

From this rubble, two kinds of law emerged - human rights law and the law of armed conflict. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an attempt to confront nuclear Armageddon in 1946.
"The birth of the modern human rights movement is what I would call imaginative law. It was about recalibrating with a common purpose, to build

justice so peace would also flourish, within nations and between nations," Rebecca said.
"The declaration of human rights has led to other international protections, for example against torture, for civil and political rights, and for the elimination of racial and gender discrimination. Countries sign these declarations as if they are peace treaties and are held accountable."

The law of armed conflict

The law of armed conflict was about reformulating and strengthening the Geneva Conventions around the means and methods of warfare, and to protect people who are not, or no longer participating in hostilities. This means protecting prisoners of war, those wounded, shipwrecked in conflicts at sea, prisoners of war and civilians.

"The law of armed conflict is born out of the extremes of battlefield experience - the last resort when diplomats have failed. Perhaps the existence of the law of armed conflict itself is a testimony to human creativity that can emerge out of dreadful necessity."

The modern project of humanitarian advocacy, Rebecca said, was a defiant decision to salvage something human from the worst circumstances, even as the survival of the human race was at risk.

However, the continuing danger of nuclear weapons remained one of the greatest challenges to peace.

Climate change versus nuclear weapons

American linguist, social critic and political activist Noam Chomsky suggests two existential challenges face all humanity today: climate change and nuclear war. One difference, identified by UN diplomat on disarmament Ramesh Thakur, is that nuclear weapons will probably kill us quicker. Thakur - a former professor of International Relations at the University of Otago - also says that long-running tensions and territorial disputes (as between China, India and Pakistan) and other features mean the relationships between nuclear powers are now more complex than during the Cold War. There are many fewer nuclear weapons now than at the height of the Cold War, with 65-70,000 in the mid-1980s and about 15,000 now. However, Thakur says there is a higher likelihood of their use, by design, accident, rogue launch or system error. "Do we really want a nuclear war launched by blips on a radar screen?" he asks.

"The first resolution of the new United Nations was to work to eliminate nuclear weapons," Rebecca said. "Even 72 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Red Cross hospitals are still treating the wounded and their children.

"Under IHL, there is no express prohibition for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Rather, the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited if it is likely to cause civilian casualties or environmental impact.

New treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

In July this year in New York, at a conference mandated by the UN General Assembly, 122 States adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - a historic agreement welcomed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. "This newest treaty recognises the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and contains a clear and robust prohibition of nuclear weapons based on IHL. It also sets out pathways for the elimination of nuclear weapons. By prohibiting nuclear weapons and setting a framework for their elimination, the treaty provides a concrete step towards implementing existing international obligations on nuclear disarmament."

Although a major achievement, there was a lot of work to be done to ensure it became a strong global norm, Rebecca said. "The first challenge is to urge states to sign the treaty when it is opened for signatures on September 20 and then we need to start the process to ratify it soon after. The treaty will enter into force after 50 states have ratified it.

"None of the nuclear States participated in the treaty process, but risk reduction is an intermediate step that nuclear-armed States must pursue, pending the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Regardless of their views on a nuclear weapon ban treaty, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) argues that all states should acknowledge that any risk of use of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

"As ICRC Director General Yves Daccord said earlier this year: 'Ultimately, the only way to remove the risk of use of nuclear weapons, and to guarantee they will never again be used, is to prohibit and eliminate them. The current negotiations of a nuclear weapon ban treaty are the best chance for progress towards the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.'

Rebecca continues to be excited about international humanitarian advocacy and its imaginative laws. "These laws try to find a way out of no way. When the door slams shut, humanitarian advocacy tries to find a window. When that window shuts, we try to find another. It's about not giving up.

"Hope is a decision: what decision will you make?"

Can we trust the digital tooth fairy…?

The diet served up by the media should not just be about what people want but should focus on their needs as citizens living in a democratic society.
So argued Dr Peter Thompson, senior lecturer in media studies at Victoria University and chair of the Better Public Media Trust, in an intriguingly entitled lecture – "The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media".
Peter painted a picture of the public service media - particularly news media - being in crisis mode and people turning increasingly to new digital media for their information and entertainment. Despite the huge range of new online services giving the impression of infinite choice, many important forms of content were still under-provided. "The digital cornucopia is a myth," he said. "We can entertain ourselves to death but it is not giving us the public service media that society needs and deserves."
Public service entails serving the public as citizens, not only as consumers and providing high-quality content that informs and educates, not just entertains. It also requires universal access regardless of ability to pay, catering to all members of society, not just majority demographics, and ensuring there is a robust fourth estate to hold those in power to account.
After 1989 TVNZ became a commercial state owned enterprise and competition from private media like TV3 and Sky expanded. However, even with the support of NZ On Air, this increasing commercialisation saw an overall increase in imported content and a decline in some key local genres. The drive for ratings and revenue led to more populist news and current affairs, and a dearth of other quality, locally-made programmes, Peter said.
In 2003, under the Labour-led Government, TVNZ was given a public service charter. However, it remained primarily a commercial entity, with 90 per cent of its income dependent on advertising. This arrangement saw TVNZ paying out more in dividends than it received to deliver the charter. "The government was literally giving TVNZ money with one hand and taking it back with the other," Peter said.
Maori Television was nevertheless established in 2004, with a more specialised public service with a mission to protect te reo. In 2006/2007, TVNZ also started two commercial-free channels, TVNZ 6 and 7, although the subsequent National-led government discontinued these, citing budget constraints.

Investment in ultra-fast broadband

When National returned to office in 2008, its focus was a $2 billion investment in a fibre-optic network for ultra-fast broadband (UFB). "The UFB project is important but it has a different philosophy from public service broadcasting. UFB is about enabling people to select their own media content and information across a range of platforms. National claimed that funding public service

institutions was no longer relevant in the digital media environment. NZ On Air was expected to compensate for commercial market failures by funding quality local content on a platform-neutral basis. However, NZ On Air requires cooperation from broadcasters to air funded content. Without a public service channel, the commercial schedulers have gatekeeping power over NZ On Air. If something looks commercially risky, it will be very hard to find a broadcaster willing to air it," Peter said.

At the same time, new services like Netflix have emerged, creating intensified commercial competition. "But Netflix, though cheaper to subscribe to than Sky, provides no local public service content."

Newspapers are also losing hard copy sales but are failing to maintain online revenue as advertisers increasingly use Facebook and Google. The result has been cuts to news budgets, journalistic redundancies and a stronger focus on populist news driven by online audience metrics.

RNZ's budget was frozen from 2008 to 2017 and was expected, at the same time, to expand online.

All these developments had created an unprecedented crisis in our media ecology, Peter said. "The digital tooth-fairy has proven to be a myth!"

New models for public service in New Zealand

Questioned about what good models of public service broadcasting there were overseas, Peter pointed to RTE in Ireland, which gets half its funding from a license fee, SBS in Australia (a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster), and other models in Scandinavian countries. These all provide useful models which could be adapted to work in the New Zealand context.

Peter sees another way to ensure a quality and diversity of media content is provided. He suggests either a one or 0.5 per cent marginal levy be applied across the whole media value chain, including subscription media revenues (eg Sky, Netlix), commercial advertising (especially Google and Facebook), telecommunication retail services and audio-visual retail. This tax would mostly be passed on to the consumer who would barely notice a one per cent increase on these services. The tax had the potential to raise either $160 million or $80 million a year. A budget of $160 million was worth five times RNZ's current budget.

"This money could then be ring-fenced to provide public service media. RNZ's current services could be expanded, with a free-to-air television channel and an online portal for showcasing local content. Its newsroom could be expanded to take on more investigative reporting and in-depth prime time current affairs. Meanwhile, NZ On Air's contestable funding could be extended to support original local content across all genres, including regional and minority content to be carried on RNZ's platforms."

Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church,
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne 5013

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Email:	reg@thirdage.co.nz

Parish Clerk Sandy Lang

Hall Bookings Sandy Lang

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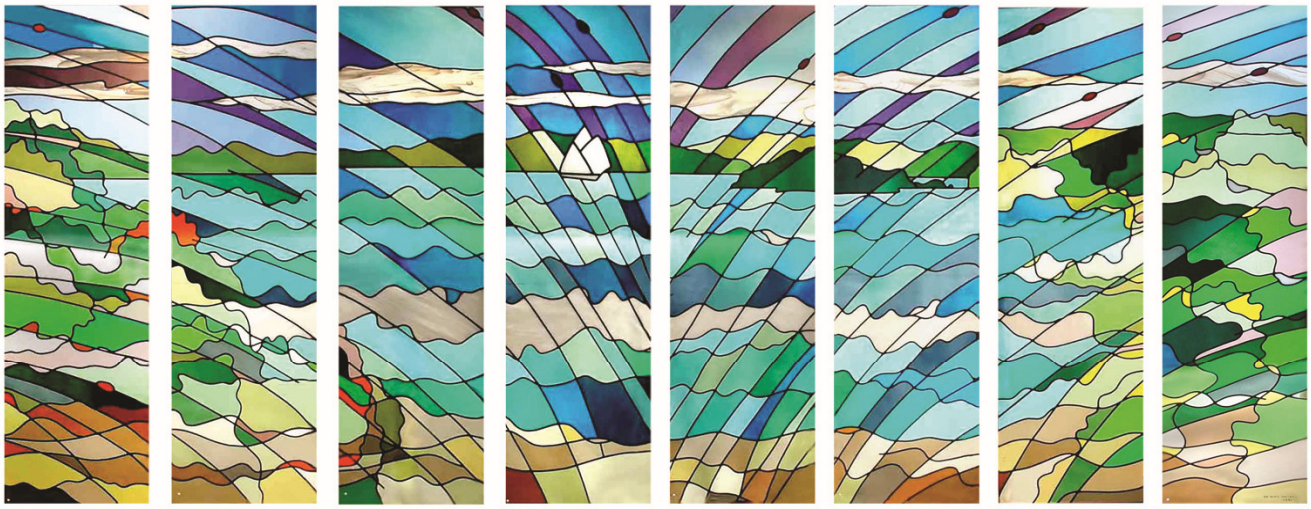
Email:	slang@xtra.co.nz

Church office (Tues mornings)	562 7583
Email:	office@stronans.org.nz
Website:	www.stronans.org.nz



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"The declaration of human rights has led to other international protections, for example against torture, for civil and political rights, and for the elimination of racial and gender discrimination. Countries sign these declarations as if they are peace treaties and are held accountable."

The law of armed conflict

The law of armed conflict was about reformulating and strengthening the Geneva Conventions around the means and methods of warfare, and to protect people who are not, or no longer participating in hostilities. This means protecting prisoners of war, those wounded, shipwrecked in conflicts at sea, prisoners of war and civilians.

"The law of armed conflict is born out of the extremes of battlefield experience - the last resort when diplomats have failed. Perhaps the existence of the law of armed conflict itself is a testimony to human creativity that can emerge out of dreadful necessity."

The modern project of humanitarian advocacy, Rebecca said, was a defiant decision to salvage something human from the worst circumstances, even as the survival of the human race was at risk.

However, the continuing danger of nuclear weapons remained one of the greatest challenges to peace.

Climate change versus nuclear weapons

American linguist, social critic and political activist Noam Chomsky suggests two existential challenges face all humanity today: climate change and nuclear war. One difference, identified by UN diplomat on disarmament Ramesh Thakur, is that nuclear weapons will probably kill us quicker. Thakur - a former professor of International Relations at the University of Otago - also says that long-running tensions and territorial disputes (as between China, India and Pakistan) and other features mean the relationships between nuclear powers are now more complex than during the Cold War. There are many fewer nuclear weapons now than at the height of the Cold War, with 65-70,000 in the mid-1980s and about 15,000 now. However, Thakur says there is a higher likelihood of their use, by design, accident, rogue launch or system error. "Do we really want a nuclear war launched by blips on a radar screen?" he asks.

"The first resolution of the new United Nations was to work to eliminate nuclear weapons," Rebecca said. "Even 72 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Red Cross hospitals are still treating the wounded and their children.

"Under IHL, there is no express prohibition for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Rather, the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited if it is likely to cause civilian casualties or environmental impact.

New treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

In July this year in New York, at a conference mandated by the UN General Assembly, 122 States adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - a historic agreement welcomed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. "This newest treaty recognises the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and contains a clear and robust prohibition of nuclear weapons based on IHL. It also sets out pathways for the elimination of nuclear weapons. By prohibiting nuclear weapons and setting a framework for their elimination, the treaty provides a concrete step towards implementing existing international obligations on nuclear disarmament."

Although a major achievement, there was a lot of work to be done to ensure it became a strong global norm, Rebecca said. "The first challenge is to urge states to sign the treaty when it is opened for signatures on September 20 and then we need to start the process to ratify it soon after. The treaty will enter into force after 50 states have ratified it.

"None of the nuclear States participated in the treaty process, but risk reduction is an intermediate step that nuclear-armed States must pursue, pending the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Regardless of their views on a nuclear weapon ban treaty, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) argues that all states should acknowledge that any risk of use of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

"As ICRC Director General Yves Daccord said earlier this year: 'Ultimately, the only way to remove the risk of use of nuclear weapons, and to guarantee they will never again be used, is to prohibit and eliminate them. The current negotiations of a nuclear weapon ban treaty are the best chance for progress towards the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.'

Rebecca continues to be excited about international humanitarian advocacy and its imaginative laws. "These laws try to find a way out of no way. When the door slams shut, humanitarian advocacy tries to find a window. When that window shuts, we try to find another. It's about not giving up.

"Hope is a decision: what decision will you make?"

Can we trust the digital tooth fairy…?

The diet served up by the media should not just be about what people want but should focus on their needs as citizens living in a democratic society.
So argued Dr Peter Thompson, senior lecturer in media studies at Victoria University and chair of the Better Public Media Trust, in an intriguingly entitled lecture – "The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media".
Peter painted a picture of the public service media - particularly news media - being in crisis mode and people turning increasingly to new digital media for their information and entertainment. Despite the huge range of new online services giving the impression of infinite choice, many important forms of content were still under-provided. "The digital cornucopia is a myth," he said. "We can entertain ourselves to death but it is not giving us the public service media that society needs and deserves."
Public service entails serving the public as citizens, not only as consumers and providing high-quality content that informs and educates, not just entertains. It also requires universal access regardless of ability to pay, catering to all members of society, not just majority demographics, and ensuring there is a robust fourth estate to hold those in power to account.
After 1989 TVNZ became a commercial state owned enterprise and competition from private media like TV3 and Sky expanded. However, even with the support of NZ On Air, this increasing commercialisation saw an overall increase in imported content and a decline in some key local genres. The drive for ratings and revenue led to more populist news and current affairs, and a dearth of other quality, locally-made programmes, Peter said.
In 2003, under the Labour-led Government, TVNZ was given a public service charter. However, it remained primarily a commercial entity, with 90 per cent of its income dependent on advertising. This arrangement saw TVNZ paying out more in dividends than it received to deliver the charter. "The government was literally giving TVNZ money with one hand and taking it back with the other," Peter said.
Maori Television was nevertheless established in 2004, with a more specialised public service with a mission to protect te reo. In 2006/2007, TVNZ also started two commercial-free channels, TVNZ 6 and 7, although the subsequent National-led government discontinued these, citing budget constraints.

Investment in ultra-fast broadband

When National returned to office in 2008, its focus was a $2 billion investment in a fibre-optic network for ultra-fast broadband (UFB). "The UFB project is important but it has a different philosophy from public service broadcasting. UFB is about enabling people to select their own media content and information across a range of platforms. National claimed that funding public service

institutions was no longer relevant in the digital media environment. NZ On Air was expected to compensate for commercial market failures by funding quality local content on a platform-neutral basis. However, NZ On Air requires cooperation from broadcasters to air funded content. Without a public service channel, the commercial schedulers have gatekeeping power over NZ On Air. If something looks commercially risky, it will be very hard to find a broadcaster willing to air it," Peter said.

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Newspapers are also losing hard copy sales but are failing to maintain online revenue as advertisers increasingly use Facebook and Google. The result has been cuts to news budgets, journalistic redundancies and a stronger focus on populist news driven by online audience metrics.

RNZ's budget was frozen from 2008 to 2017 and was expected, at the same time, to expand online.

All these developments had created an unprecedented crisis in our media ecology, Peter said. "The digital tooth-fairy has proven to be a myth!"

New models for public service in New Zealand

Questioned about what good models of public service broadcasting there were overseas, Peter pointed to RTE in Ireland, which gets half its funding from a license fee, SBS in Australia (a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster), and other models in Scandinavian countries. These all provide useful models which could be adapted to work in the New Zealand context.

Peter sees another way to ensure a quality and diversity of media content is provided. He suggests either a one or 0.5 per cent marginal levy be applied across the whole media value chain, including subscription media revenues (eg Sky, Netlix), commercial advertising (especially Google and Facebook), telecommunication retail services and audio-visual retail. This tax would mostly be passed on to the consumer who would barely notice a one per cent increase on these services. The tax had the potential to raise either $160 million or $80 million a year. A budget of $160 million was worth five times RNZ's current budget.

"This money could then be ring-fenced to provide public service media. RNZ's current services could be expanded, with a free-to-air television channel and an online portal for showcasing local content. Its newsroom could be expanded to take on more investigative reporting and in-depth prime time current affairs. Meanwhile, NZ On Air's contestable funding could be extended to support original local content across all genres, including regional and minority content to be carried on RNZ's platforms."

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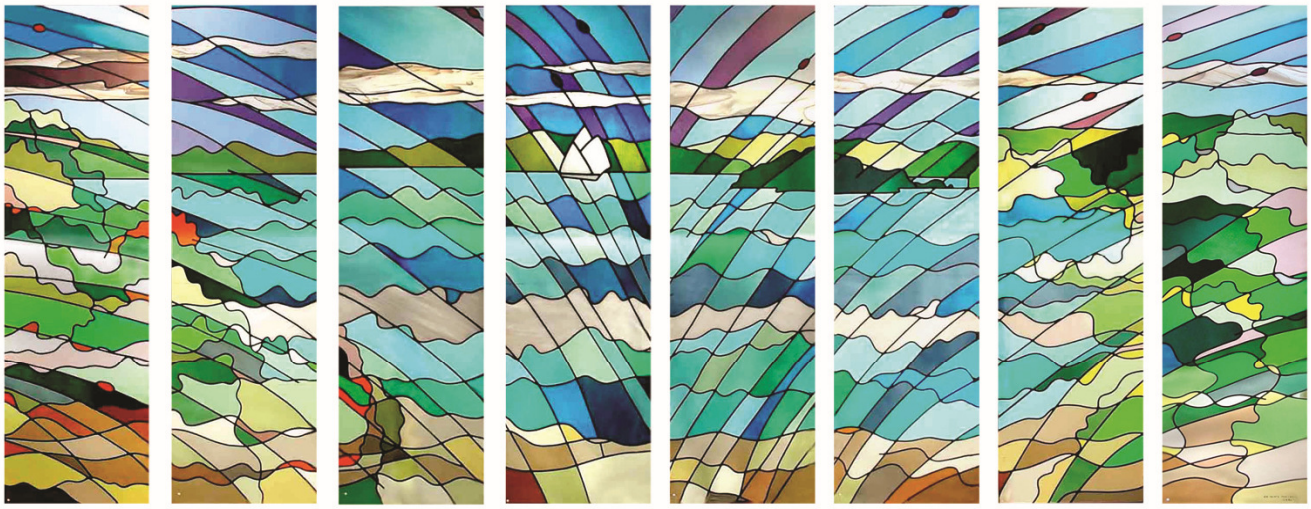

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

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Special Edition –The Eastbourne Winter Series
July/August 2017

PRE-ELECTION THINKING – HOPES AND POSSIBILITIES

A series of four lectures hosted by St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne

July 9	**Freshwater - How clean do we want it?**	*Marnie Prickett*
July 23	**Has education lost its way?**	*Drs Deborah Stevens & Lynne Bowyer*
August 6	**What hope is there for peace?**	*Dr Rebecca Dudley*
August 20	**The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media**	*Dr Peter Thompson*

Pre-election thinking – hopes and possibilities…

With this year being a general election, choosing a theme that embraced some of the most pressing issues facing society seemed obvious. The planning group, which first convened in March, quickly identified four possible topics: •the state of our waterways, •education for our young people, •achieving peace in a fractured world and •how to preserve public service media in an environment overwhelmed by digital choice.

Finding presenters is always a challenge. We had our dream list, but as so often happens, these people are not necessarily available. However, as also so very often happens, other recommendations and suggestions soon emerge and, in the end, we put together a team of some top-class people. Not only did they present their material in a fresh and engaging way, but each of them stimulated some lively debate among the 60 or so who attended each of the fortnightly, Sunday-afternoon lectures. Hospitality in the form of afternoon tea afterwards is an important element of what has become an important biennial outreach by St Ronan's Church to the wider Wellington/Hutt community.

Mounting such a series has its challenges and can be very time-consuming for the small group of volunteers, but the feedback received from our audiences certainly made it all worthwhile. Many said they would love the series to run every year, but better to do something well every two years rather than stretch ourselves too thinly and perhaps compromise on quality.

My thanks again to all those who helped out – on the technical side managing sound and powerpoints; as hosts at the church door; and in the kitchen serving food, pouring the tea and coffee, and cleaning up afterwards.

Following are summaries of the four lectures, written by me, with sign-off by the speakers.

Winter Series co-ordinator ***Anne Manchester***

Improving our freshwater – it's up to us…!

This year's *Eastbourne Winter Series* got off to a riveting start with a presentation on freshwater by *Choose Clean Water* spokesperson Marnie Prickett. Her idealism and commitment to the cause of improving the quality of our waterways was a clarion call to all those present.
She presented us with some sobering facts. Only 30 per cent of our rivers are swimmable. Twenty-three per cent of our monitored groundwater sites are now too polluted with pathogens for human consumption. Seventy-four per cent of our native fish are threatened with extinction – they could all be gone by 2040. Forty-four per cent of our monitored lakes are eutrophic or worse.
What has happened to our beautiful place, she asked, when signs like "*Caution – water quality borderline for swimming. Best advice is to stay out of the water and avoid eating lake fish"* or "*Health warning – this waterway is polluted. Swimming is not recommended*" are becoming all too common?
Quoting the Maori whakatauki "*Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au*" (I am the river and the river is me), she said many tangata whenua now thought *they* were dying, along with their rivers.

Government reclassifies what's swimmable

Last year, the Government said swimmable rivers were "impractical". However, following public pressure, they had now set 2040 as a "swimmable" rivers target. To achieve this, all it had done was to lower the bottom line for nitrate toxicity, Marnie said. Its new A standard for swimmable rivers (where the estimated risk of Campylobacter infection is less than 50 cases in every 1000 exposures) was in fact its former C standard. This meant the former "wadeable" category was now classed as swimmable. Marnie described this as "a cynical move".
Many people were not aware that the Government's focus was just on the really big rivers and lakes. This meant 90 per cent of rivers were not covered by the policy. "There is no bottom line at all for most of New Zealand's waterways," Marnie said.
The OECD was also critical about changes to our environment, suggesting our growth model, "*largely based on exporting primary products, has started to show its environment limits, with increased greenhouse gas emissions, diffuse freshwater pollution and threats to biodiversity"*.
Marnie agreed with Environment Minister Nick Smith that water quality issues affected both urban and rural areas.

Finding a way to rescue our waterways

Despite all this bad news, Marnie said we should not feel demoralised. "We can find solutions and we can work together on this."

A Freshwater Rescue Plan, backed by eight organisations, including Forest and Bird, the Tourism Export Council, Choose Clean Water and Greenpeace, offers a seven-step initial plan:

1) Set strict and enforceable water standards
2) Withdraw all public subsidies of irrigation schemes
3) Invest in an agricultural transition fund, ie redirect the $480 million of public money earmarked for irrigation to more environmentally friendly framing methods and the restoring of damaged waterways
4) Implement strategies to decrease cow numbers immediately
5) Instigate polluter-pays systems nationally
6) Regional councils should be expected to produce quarterly reports on improving water quality, to show how they are monitoring breaches
7) Develop a long-term vision for transitioning to a low-carbon, greener economy.

Where we go from here, Marnie said, was up to us all. All of us can choose to speak up about these issues, to write to MPs or newspapers, to get in touch with like-minded groups (eg the Friends of Hutt River) and to stay in touch.

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Has education lost its way…?

According to our speakers at the second of the Eastbourne Winter Series, education *has* lost its way.

The fundamental questions we needed to ask ourselves, said Drs Deborah Stevens (above) and Lynne Bowyer (below), were what we wanted students to learn, why we wanted them to learn, how we wanted them to learn and what the purpose of education was. To answer the last question, Deborah and Lynne said the purpose was to develop the whole person, to foster young people who were knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring and connected.

"In our rapidly changing technological environment, we need young people to live well together. From 2020, the 'digital curriculum' will be mandatory in schools. As a society, we need to consider how we embrace these changes."

Deborah said the planned New Zealand curriculum was a good one – "There is no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but there is a need to refresh the bathwater."

Life is a bowl of noodles

Deborah believes the problem lies with the way the curriculum is being taught, assessed and experienced. "I see life like a bowl of noodles rather than a box of chocolates. And the fact is, there are more noodles in the bowl than ever before. We need to examine what values our young people will embrace when they become citizens. The Greeks knew life was complicated, that a person's psyche and body need to be equally nourished.

"We see young people living primarily in a 'belly' society, a society of hyper-stimulation that provides instant gratification through social media, texting, peer groups. Young people are connected to their peer groups as never before.

"Once a household had only one landline phone and it was usually in the dining room where everyone could overhear conversations. Now young people have their own devices. From these devises, advertising invades their lives, and it is from this advertising that young people's main messages and sources of values are coming."

New Zealand's market-driven society had also given rise to cultures of materialism, individualism and relativism, she said. Relativism meant different points of view of what was desirable or not in society were not being critiqued.

Despite better nutrition, greater opportunities and choices, Deborah and Lynne believe the overall well-being of young people has declined. "We see greater aggression and depression among young people. They tend to externalise

faults and they lack the ability to learn from their mistakes. We see rising rates of binge drinking, earlier sexual behaviour and alarming increases in anti-depressants prescribed for young people. The answer is to get young people to think – about the ethical issues they face and their place in society."

The role of education was to encourage and nurture thinking in young people. "It's not about locating information, not about learning fixed responses to pass endless assessments. Young people learn values from being with each other, from being guided by their elders, by sharing experiences and being exposed to the eternal values expressed in art, music, poetry, literature."

Teachers becoming demoralised

In their contact with teachers around the country, Deborah and Lynne have observed them becoming demoralised, frustrated and overworked - the emphasis on standardised testing is undermining their professional responsibilities.

"Teachers want to provide a fun, challenging and student-focused atmosphere, but instead they are always having to look towards the next assessment."

Through the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, a charitable trust that works in schools and with community groups to discuss ethical and social issues, Deborah and Lynne have the opportunity to work with young people for a whole day, engaging them in a wide range of social, ethical and political issues, e.g. reproductive technology, the Treaty of Waitangi, genetics, the end of life and euthanasia. "We find young people are hungry to engage in these issues, to have the opportunity to express their own values."

For more about the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, go to www.nzcsc.org

What hope is there for peace…?

Hope is a decision – and a defiant decision, if need be.

This was the message of New Zealand Red Cross humanitarian law adviser Dr Rebecca Dudley in an address entitled 'What hope is there for peace?'

Rebecca described the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement as the guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL). She believes visionary, imaginative legal frameworks provide a key to peace-building. These laws seek to ensure that even if we are insane enough to go to war, we are sane enough to set limits on warfare.

It was Rebecca's experience living in Belfast and being part of the Northern Ireland peace process that cemented her decision to make bringing down walls and building peace her vocation. This developed into a belief or personal mantra that 'imaginative law can bring down walls. It can build peace. Imagine'.

Peace, in the sense of "world peace", she said, was a process, rather than an event. "Peace can be strengthened through building democratic institutions, supporting credible and transparent elections, and promoting and upholding human rights and good governance.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, she said, was guided by the fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, neutrality and independence. "Humanitarian advocacy is about persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with respect of humanitarian principles."

Is the world today uniquely terrible?

It was tempting for people to think the world was uniquely terrible in 2017, Rebecca said. But one only had to go back to 1946 to discover another terrible time. One of the most shocking developments of World War II was atomic weapons, used for the first time 72 years ago. Another war could mean the destruction of the human race.

Another shocking development was the holocaust. This saw Germany, a so-called civilised country with a proud philosophical, cultural, intellectual tradition, abuse state power and enshrine discrimination in law to the point where it sponsored and implemented genocide. "The hope for world peace started from the rubble of atomic weapons and the holocaust in Europe."

From this rubble, two kinds of law emerged - human rights law and the law of armed conflict. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an attempt to confront nuclear Armageddon in 1946.
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justice so peace would also flourish, within nations and between nations," Rebecca said.
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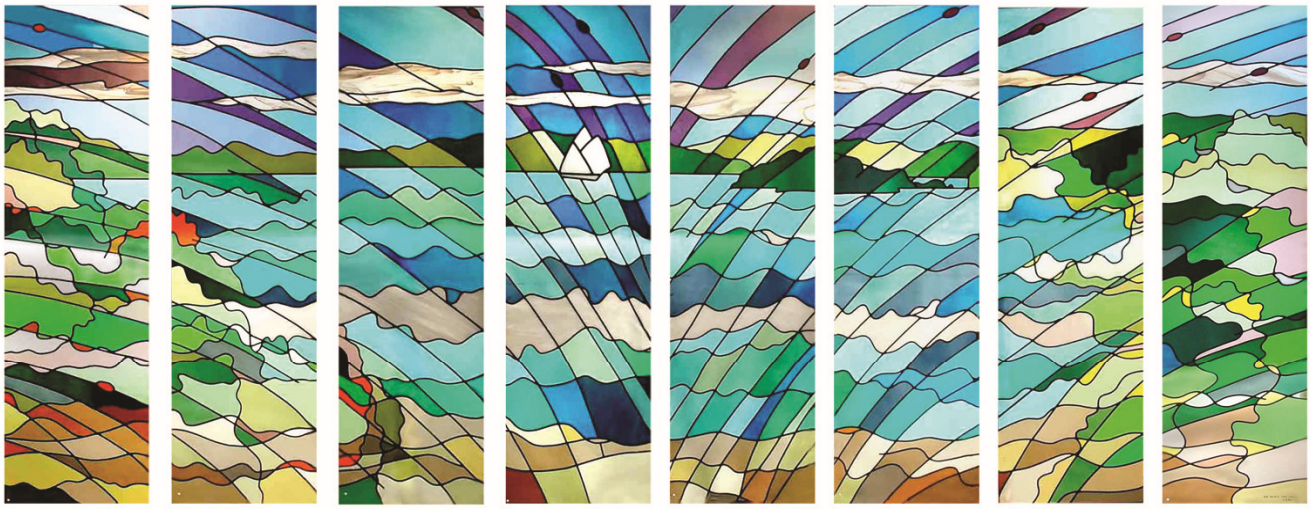

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Following are summaries of the four lectures, written by me, with sign-off by the speakers.

Winter Series co-ordinator ***Anne Manchester***

Improving our freshwater – it's up to us…!

This year's *Eastbourne Winter Series* got off to a riveting start with a presentation on freshwater by *Choose Clean Water* spokesperson Marnie Prickett. Her idealism and commitment to the cause of improving the quality of our waterways was a clarion call to all those present.
She presented us with some sobering facts. Only 30 per cent of our rivers are swimmable. Twenty-three per cent of our monitored groundwater sites are now too polluted with pathogens for human consumption. Seventy-four per cent of our native fish are threatened with extinction – they could all be gone by 2040. Forty-four per cent of our monitored lakes are eutrophic or worse.
What has happened to our beautiful place, she asked, when signs like "*Caution – water quality borderline for swimming. Best advice is to stay out of the water and avoid eating lake fish"* or "*Health warning – this waterway is polluted. Swimming is not recommended*" are becoming all too common?
Quoting the Maori whakatauki "*Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au*" (I am the river and the river is me), she said many tangata whenua now thought *they* were dying, along with their rivers.

Government reclassifies what's swimmable

Last year, the Government said swimmable rivers were "impractical". However, following public pressure, they had now set 2040 as a "swimmable" rivers target. To achieve this, all it had done was to lower the bottom line for nitrate toxicity, Marnie said. Its new A standard for swimmable rivers (where the estimated risk of Campylobacter infection is less than 50 cases in every 1000 exposures) was in fact its former C standard. This meant the former "wadeable" category was now classed as swimmable. Marnie described this as "a cynical move".
Many people were not aware that the Government's focus was just on the really big rivers and lakes. This meant 90 per cent of rivers were not covered by the policy. "There is no bottom line at all for most of New Zealand's waterways," Marnie said.
The OECD was also critical about changes to our environment, suggesting our growth model, "*largely based on exporting primary products, has started to show its environment limits, with increased greenhouse gas emissions, diffuse freshwater pollution and threats to biodiversity"*.
Marnie agreed with Environment Minister Nick Smith that water quality issues affected both urban and rural areas.

Finding a way to rescue our waterways

Despite all this bad news, Marnie said we should not feel demoralised. "We can find solutions and we can work together on this."

A Freshwater Rescue Plan, backed by eight organisations, including Forest and Bird, the Tourism Export Council, Choose Clean Water and Greenpeace, offers a seven-step initial plan:

1) Set strict and enforceable water standards
2) Withdraw all public subsidies of irrigation schemes
3) Invest in an agricultural transition fund, ie redirect the $480 million of public money earmarked for irrigation to more environmentally friendly framing methods and the restoring of damaged waterways
4) Implement strategies to decrease cow numbers immediately
5) Instigate polluter-pays systems nationally
6) Regional councils should be expected to produce quarterly reports on improving water quality, to show how they are monitoring breaches
7) Develop a long-term vision for transitioning to a low-carbon, greener economy.

Where we go from here, Marnie said, was up to us all. All of us can choose to speak up about these issues, to write to MPs or newspapers, to get in touch with like-minded groups (eg the Friends of Hutt River) and to stay in touch.

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Has education lost its way…?

According to our speakers at the second of the Eastbourne Winter Series, education *has* lost its way.

The fundamental questions we needed to ask ourselves, said Drs Deborah Stevens (above) and Lynne Bowyer (below), were what we wanted students to learn, why we wanted them to learn, how we wanted them to learn and what the purpose of education was. To answer the last question, Deborah and Lynne said the purpose was to develop the whole person, to foster young people who were knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring and connected.

"In our rapidly changing technological environment, we need young people to live well together. From 2020, the 'digital curriculum' will be mandatory in schools. As a society, we need to consider how we embrace these changes."

Deborah said the planned New Zealand curriculum was a good one – "There is no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but there is a need to refresh the bathwater."

Life is a bowl of noodles

Deborah believes the problem lies with the way the curriculum is being taught, assessed and experienced. "I see life like a bowl of noodles rather than a box of chocolates. And the fact is, there are more noodles in the bowl than ever before. We need to examine what values our young people will embrace when they become citizens. The Greeks knew life was complicated, that a person's psyche and body need to be equally nourished.

"We see young people living primarily in a 'belly' society, a society of hyper-stimulation that provides instant gratification through social media, texting, peer groups. Young people are connected to their peer groups as never before.

"Once a household had only one landline phone and it was usually in the dining room where everyone could overhear conversations. Now young people have their own devices. From these devises, advertising invades their lives, and it is from this advertising that young people's main messages and sources of values are coming."

New Zealand's market-driven society had also given rise to cultures of materialism, individualism and relativism, she said. Relativism meant different points of view of what was desirable or not in society were not being critiqued.

Despite better nutrition, greater opportunities and choices, Deborah and Lynne believe the overall well-being of young people has declined. "We see greater aggression and depression among young people. They tend to externalise

faults and they lack the ability to learn from their mistakes. We see rising rates of binge drinking, earlier sexual behaviour and alarming increases in anti-depressants prescribed for young people. The answer is to get young people to think – about the ethical issues they face and their place in society."

The role of education was to encourage and nurture thinking in young people. "It's not about locating information, not about learning fixed responses to pass endless assessments. Young people learn values from being with each other, from being guided by their elders, by sharing experiences and being exposed to the eternal values expressed in art, music, poetry, literature."

Teachers becoming demoralised

In their contact with teachers around the country, Deborah and Lynne have observed them becoming demoralised, frustrated and overworked - the emphasis on standardised testing is undermining their professional responsibilities.

"Teachers want to provide a fun, challenging and student-focused atmosphere, but instead they are always having to look towards the next assessment."

Through the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, a charitable trust that works in schools and with community groups to discuss ethical and social issues, Deborah and Lynne have the opportunity to work with young people for a whole day, engaging them in a wide range of social, ethical and political issues, e.g. reproductive technology, the Treaty of Waitangi, genetics, the end of life and euthanasia. "We find young people are hungry to engage in these issues, to have the opportunity to express their own values."

For more about the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, go to www.nzcsc.org

What hope is there for peace…?

Hope is a decision – and a defiant decision, if need be.

This was the message of New Zealand Red Cross humanitarian law adviser Dr Rebecca Dudley in an address entitled 'What hope is there for peace?'

Rebecca described the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement as the guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL). She believes visionary, imaginative legal frameworks provide a key to peace-building. These laws seek to ensure that even if we are insane enough to go to war, we are sane enough to set limits on warfare.

It was Rebecca's experience living in Belfast and being part of the Northern Ireland peace process that cemented her decision to make bringing down walls and building peace her vocation. This developed into a belief or personal mantra that 'imaginative law can bring down walls. It can build peace. Imagine'.

Peace, in the sense of "world peace", she said, was a process, rather than an event. "Peace can be strengthened through building democratic institutions, supporting credible and transparent elections, and promoting and upholding human rights and good governance.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, she said, was guided by the fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, neutrality and independence. "Humanitarian advocacy is about persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with respect of humanitarian principles."

Is the world today uniquely terrible?

It was tempting for people to think the world was uniquely terrible in 2017, Rebecca said. But one only had to go back to 1946 to discover another terrible time. One of the most shocking developments of World War II was atomic weapons, used for the first time 72 years ago. Another war could mean the destruction of the human race.

Another shocking development was the holocaust. This saw Germany, a so-called civilised country with a proud philosophical, cultural, intellectual tradition, abuse state power and enshrine discrimination in law to the point where it sponsored and implemented genocide. "The hope for world peace started from the rubble of atomic weapons and the holocaust in Europe."

From this rubble, two kinds of law emerged - human rights law and the law of armed conflict. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an attempt to confront nuclear Armageddon in 1946.
"The birth of the modern human rights movement is what I would call imaginative law. It was about recalibrating with a common purpose, to build

justice so peace would also flourish, within nations and between nations," Rebecca said.
"The declaration of human rights has led to other international protections, for example against torture, for civil and political rights, and for the elimination of racial and gender discrimination. Countries sign these declarations as if they are peace treaties and are held accountable."

The law of armed conflict

The law of armed conflict was about reformulating and strengthening the Geneva Conventions around the means and methods of warfare, and to protect people who are not, or no longer participating in hostilities. This means protecting prisoners of war, those wounded, shipwrecked in conflicts at sea, prisoners of war and civilians.

"The law of armed conflict is born out of the extremes of battlefield experience - the last resort when diplomats have failed. Perhaps the existence of the law of armed conflict itself is a testimony to human creativity that can emerge out of dreadful necessity."

The modern project of humanitarian advocacy, Rebecca said, was a defiant decision to salvage something human from the worst circumstances, even as the survival of the human race was at risk.

However, the continuing danger of nuclear weapons remained one of the greatest challenges to peace.

Climate change versus nuclear weapons

American linguist, social critic and political activist Noam Chomsky suggests two existential challenges face all humanity today: climate change and nuclear war. One difference, identified by UN diplomat on disarmament Ramesh Thakur, is that nuclear weapons will probably kill us quicker. Thakur - a former professor of International Relations at the University of Otago - also says that long-running tensions and territorial disputes (as between China, India and Pakistan) and other features mean the relationships between nuclear powers are now more complex than during the Cold War. There are many fewer nuclear weapons now than at the height of the Cold War, with 65-70,000 in the mid-1980s and about 15,000 now. However, Thakur says there is a higher likelihood of their use, by design, accident, rogue launch or system error. "Do we really want a nuclear war launched by blips on a radar screen?" he asks.

"The first resolution of the new United Nations was to work to eliminate nuclear weapons," Rebecca said. "Even 72 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Red Cross hospitals are still treating the wounded and their children.

"Under IHL, there is no express prohibition for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Rather, the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited if it is likely to cause civilian casualties or environmental impact.

New treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

In July this year in New York, at a conference mandated by the UN General Assembly, 122 States adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - a historic agreement welcomed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. "This newest treaty recognises the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and contains a clear and robust prohibition of nuclear weapons based on IHL. It also sets out pathways for the elimination of nuclear weapons. By prohibiting nuclear weapons and setting a framework for their elimination, the treaty provides a concrete step towards implementing existing international obligations on nuclear disarmament."

Although a major achievement, there was a lot of work to be done to ensure it became a strong global norm, Rebecca said. "The first challenge is to urge states to sign the treaty when it is opened for signatures on September 20 and then we need to start the process to ratify it soon after. The treaty will enter into force after 50 states have ratified it.

"None of the nuclear States participated in the treaty process, but risk reduction is an intermediate step that nuclear-armed States must pursue, pending the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Regardless of their views on a nuclear weapon ban treaty, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) argues that all states should acknowledge that any risk of use of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

"As ICRC Director General Yves Daccord said earlier this year: 'Ultimately, the only way to remove the risk of use of nuclear weapons, and to guarantee they will never again be used, is to prohibit and eliminate them. The current negotiations of a nuclear weapon ban treaty are the best chance for progress towards the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.'

Rebecca continues to be excited about international humanitarian advocacy and its imaginative laws. "These laws try to find a way out of no way. When the door slams shut, humanitarian advocacy tries to find a window. When that window shuts, we try to find another. It's about not giving up.

"Hope is a decision: what decision will you make?"

Can we trust the digital tooth fairy…?

The diet served up by the media should not just be about what people want but should focus on their needs as citizens living in a democratic society.
So argued Dr Peter Thompson, senior lecturer in media studies at Victoria University and chair of the Better Public Media Trust, in an intriguingly entitled lecture – "The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media".
Peter painted a picture of the public service media - particularly news media - being in crisis mode and people turning increasingly to new digital media for their information and entertainment. Despite the huge range of new online services giving the impression of infinite choice, many important forms of content were still under-provided. "The digital cornucopia is a myth," he said. "We can entertain ourselves to death but it is not giving us the public service media that society needs and deserves."
Public service entails serving the public as citizens, not only as consumers and providing high-quality content that informs and educates, not just entertains. It also requires universal access regardless of ability to pay, catering to all members of society, not just majority demographics, and ensuring there is a robust fourth estate to hold those in power to account.
After 1989 TVNZ became a commercial state owned enterprise and competition from private media like TV3 and Sky expanded. However, even with the support of NZ On Air, this increasing commercialisation saw an overall increase in imported content and a decline in some key local genres. The drive for ratings and revenue led to more populist news and current affairs, and a dearth of other quality, locally-made programmes, Peter said.
In 2003, under the Labour-led Government, TVNZ was given a public service charter. However, it remained primarily a commercial entity, with 90 per cent of its income dependent on advertising. This arrangement saw TVNZ paying out more in dividends than it received to deliver the charter. "The government was literally giving TVNZ money with one hand and taking it back with the other," Peter said.
Maori Television was nevertheless established in 2004, with a more specialised public service with a mission to protect te reo. In 2006/2007, TVNZ also started two commercial-free channels, TVNZ 6 and 7, although the subsequent National-led government discontinued these, citing budget constraints.

Investment in ultra-fast broadband

When National returned to office in 2008, its focus was a $2 billion investment in a fibre-optic network for ultra-fast broadband (UFB). "The UFB project is important but it has a different philosophy from public service broadcasting. UFB is about enabling people to select their own media content and information across a range of platforms. National claimed that funding public service

institutions was no longer relevant in the digital media environment. NZ On Air was expected to compensate for commercial market failures by funding quality local content on a platform-neutral basis. However, NZ On Air requires cooperation from broadcasters to air funded content. Without a public service channel, the commercial schedulers have gatekeeping power over NZ On Air. If something looks commercially risky, it will be very hard to find a broadcaster willing to air it," Peter said.

At the same time, new services like Netflix have emerged, creating intensified commercial competition. "But Netflix, though cheaper to subscribe to than Sky, provides no local public service content."

Newspapers are also losing hard copy sales but are failing to maintain online revenue as advertisers increasingly use Facebook and Google. The result has been cuts to news budgets, journalistic redundancies and a stronger focus on populist news driven by online audience metrics.

RNZ's budget was frozen from 2008 to 2017 and was expected, at the same time, to expand online.

All these developments had created an unprecedented crisis in our media ecology, Peter said. "The digital tooth-fairy has proven to be a myth!"

New models for public service in New Zealand

Questioned about what good models of public service broadcasting there were overseas, Peter pointed to RTE in Ireland, which gets half its funding from a license fee, SBS in Australia (a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster), and other models in Scandinavian countries. These all provide useful models which could be adapted to work in the New Zealand context.

Peter sees another way to ensure a quality and diversity of media content is provided. He suggests either a one or 0.5 per cent marginal levy be applied across the whole media value chain, including subscription media revenues (eg Sky, Netlix), commercial advertising (especially Google and Facebook), telecommunication retail services and audio-visual retail. This tax would mostly be passed on to the consumer who would barely notice a one per cent increase on these services. The tax had the potential to raise either $160 million or $80 million a year. A budget of $160 million was worth five times RNZ's current budget.

"This money could then be ring-fenced to provide public service media. RNZ's current services could be expanded, with a free-to-air television channel and an online portal for showcasing local content. Its newsroom could be expanded to take on more investigative reporting and in-depth prime time current affairs. Meanwhile, NZ On Air's contestable funding could be extended to support original local content across all genres, including regional and minority content to be carried on RNZ's platforms."

Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

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234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne 5013

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Email:	reg@thirdage.co.nz

Parish Clerk Sandy Lang

Hall Bookings Sandy Lang

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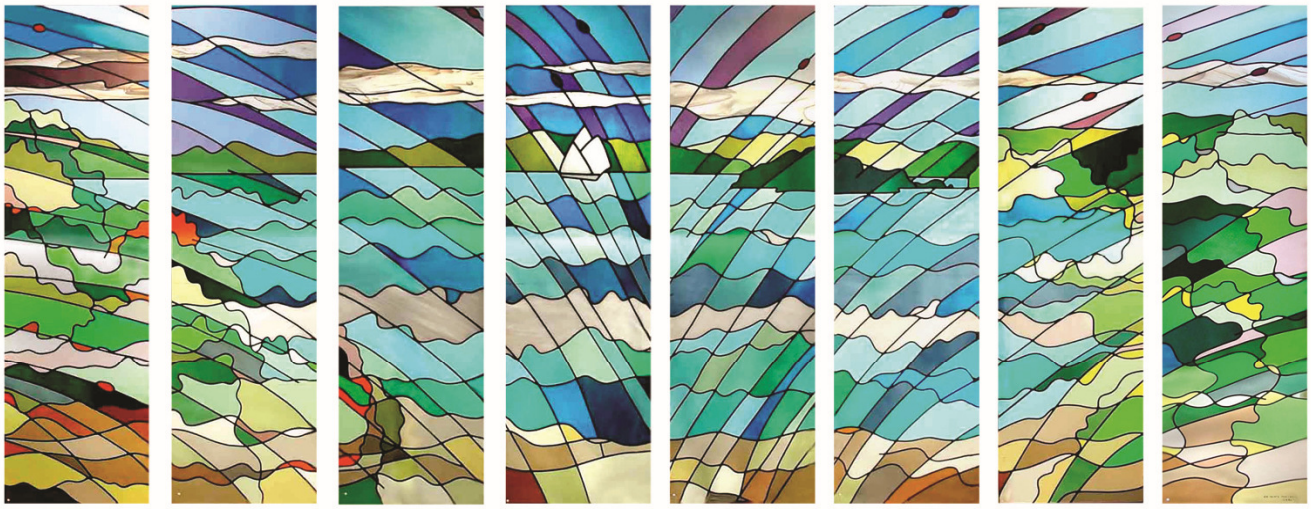
Email:	slang@xtra.co.nz

Church office (Tues mornings)	562 7583
Email:	office@stronans.org.nz
Website:	www.stronans.org.nz



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

Special Edition –The Eastbourne Winter Series
July/August 2017

PRE-ELECTION THINKING – HOPES AND POSSIBILITIES

A series of four lectures hosted by St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne

July 9	**Freshwater - How clean do we want it?**	*Marnie Prickett*
July 23	**Has education lost its way?**	*Drs Deborah Stevens & Lynne Bowyer*
August 6	**What hope is there for peace?**	*Dr Rebecca Dudley*
August 20	**The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media**	*Dr Peter Thompson*

Pre-election thinking – hopes and possibilities…

With this year being a general election, choosing a theme that embraced some of the most pressing issues facing society seemed obvious. The planning group, which first convened in March, quickly identified four possible topics: •the state of our waterways, •education for our young people, •achieving peace in a fractured world and •how to preserve public service media in an environment overwhelmed by digital choice.

Finding presenters is always a challenge. We had our dream list, but as so often happens, these people are not necessarily available. However, as also so very often happens, other recommendations and suggestions soon emerge and, in the end, we put together a team of some top-class people. Not only did they present their material in a fresh and engaging way, but each of them stimulated some lively debate among the 60 or so who attended each of the fortnightly, Sunday-afternoon lectures. Hospitality in the form of afternoon tea afterwards is an important element of what has become an important biennial outreach by St Ronan's Church to the wider Wellington/Hutt community.

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Climate change versus nuclear weapons

American linguist, social critic and political activist Noam Chomsky suggests two existential challenges face all humanity today: climate change and nuclear war. One difference, identified by UN diplomat on disarmament Ramesh Thakur, is that nuclear weapons will probably kill us quicker. Thakur - a former professor of International Relations at the University of Otago - also says that long-running tensions and territorial disputes (as between China, India and Pakistan) and other features mean the relationships between nuclear powers are now more complex than during the Cold War. There are many fewer nuclear weapons now than at the height of the Cold War, with 65-70,000 in the mid-1980s and about 15,000 now. However, Thakur says there is a higher likelihood of their use, by design, accident, rogue launch or system error. "Do we really want a nuclear war launched by blips on a radar screen?" he asks.

"The first resolution of the new United Nations was to work to eliminate nuclear weapons," Rebecca said. "Even 72 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Red Cross hospitals are still treating the wounded and their children.

"Under IHL, there is no express prohibition for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Rather, the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited if it is likely to cause civilian casualties or environmental impact.

New treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

In July this year in New York, at a conference mandated by the UN General Assembly, 122 States adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - a historic agreement welcomed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. "This newest treaty recognises the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and contains a clear and robust prohibition of nuclear weapons based on IHL. It also sets out pathways for the elimination of nuclear weapons. By prohibiting nuclear weapons and setting a framework for their elimination, the treaty provides a concrete step towards implementing existing international obligations on nuclear disarmament."

Although a major achievement, there was a lot of work to be done to ensure it became a strong global norm, Rebecca said. "The first challenge is to urge states to sign the treaty when it is opened for signatures on September 20 and then we need to start the process to ratify it soon after. The treaty will enter into force after 50 states have ratified it.

"None of the nuclear States participated in the treaty process, but risk reduction is an intermediate step that nuclear-armed States must pursue, pending the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Regardless of their views on a nuclear weapon ban treaty, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) argues that all states should acknowledge that any risk of use of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

"As ICRC Director General Yves Daccord said earlier this year: 'Ultimately, the only way to remove the risk of use of nuclear weapons, and to guarantee they will never again be used, is to prohibit and eliminate them. The current negotiations of a nuclear weapon ban treaty are the best chance for progress towards the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.'

Rebecca continues to be excited about international humanitarian advocacy and its imaginative laws. "These laws try to find a way out of no way. When the door slams shut, humanitarian advocacy tries to find a window. When that window shuts, we try to find another. It's about not giving up.

"Hope is a decision: what decision will you make?"

Can we trust the digital tooth fairy…?

The diet served up by the media should not just be about what people want but should focus on their needs as citizens living in a democratic society.
So argued Dr Peter Thompson, senior lecturer in media studies at Victoria University and chair of the Better Public Media Trust, in an intriguingly entitled lecture – "The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media".
Peter painted a picture of the public service media - particularly news media - being in crisis mode and people turning increasingly to new digital media for their information and entertainment. Despite the huge range of new online services giving the impression of infinite choice, many important forms of content were still under-provided. "The digital cornucopia is a myth," he said. "We can entertain ourselves to death but it is not giving us the public service media that society needs and deserves."
Public service entails serving the public as citizens, not only as consumers and providing high-quality content that informs and educates, not just entertains. It also requires universal access regardless of ability to pay, catering to all members of society, not just majority demographics, and ensuring there is a robust fourth estate to hold those in power to account.
After 1989 TVNZ became a commercial state owned enterprise and competition from private media like TV3 and Sky expanded. However, even with the support of NZ On Air, this increasing commercialisation saw an overall increase in imported content and a decline in some key local genres. The drive for ratings and revenue led to more populist news and current affairs, and a dearth of other quality, locally-made programmes, Peter said.
In 2003, under the Labour-led Government, TVNZ was given a public service charter. However, it remained primarily a commercial entity, with 90 per cent of its income dependent on advertising. This arrangement saw TVNZ paying out more in dividends than it received to deliver the charter. "The government was literally giving TVNZ money with one hand and taking it back with the other," Peter said.
Maori Television was nevertheless established in 2004, with a more specialised public service with a mission to protect te reo. In 2006/2007, TVNZ also started two commercial-free channels, TVNZ 6 and 7, although the subsequent National-led government discontinued these, citing budget constraints.

Investment in ultra-fast broadband

When National returned to office in 2008, its focus was a $2 billion investment in a fibre-optic network for ultra-fast broadband (UFB). "The UFB project is important but it has a different philosophy from public service broadcasting. UFB is about enabling people to select their own media content and information across a range of platforms. National claimed that funding public service

institutions was no longer relevant in the digital media environment. NZ On Air was expected to compensate for commercial market failures by funding quality local content on a platform-neutral basis. However, NZ On Air requires cooperation from broadcasters to air funded content. Without a public service channel, the commercial schedulers have gatekeeping power over NZ On Air. If something looks commercially risky, it will be very hard to find a broadcaster willing to air it," Peter said.

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Newspapers are also losing hard copy sales but are failing to maintain online revenue as advertisers increasingly use Facebook and Google. The result has been cuts to news budgets, journalistic redundancies and a stronger focus on populist news driven by online audience metrics.

RNZ's budget was frozen from 2008 to 2017 and was expected, at the same time, to expand online.

All these developments had created an unprecedented crisis in our media ecology, Peter said. "The digital tooth-fairy has proven to be a myth!"

New models for public service in New Zealand

Questioned about what good models of public service broadcasting there were overseas, Peter pointed to RTE in Ireland, which gets half its funding from a license fee, SBS in Australia (a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster), and other models in Scandinavian countries. These all provide useful models which could be adapted to work in the New Zealand context.

Peter sees another way to ensure a quality and diversity of media content is provided. He suggests either a one or 0.5 per cent marginal levy be applied across the whole media value chain, including subscription media revenues (eg Sky, Netlix), commercial advertising (especially Google and Facebook), telecommunication retail services and audio-visual retail. This tax would mostly be passed on to the consumer who would barely notice a one per cent increase on these services. The tax had the potential to raise either $160 million or $80 million a year. A budget of $160 million was worth five times RNZ's current budget.

"This money could then be ring-fenced to provide public service media. RNZ's current services could be expanded, with a free-to-air television channel and an online portal for showcasing local content. Its newsroom could be expanded to take on more investigative reporting and in-depth prime time current affairs. Meanwhile, NZ On Air's contestable funding could be extended to support original local content across all genres, including regional and minority content to be carried on RNZ's platforms."

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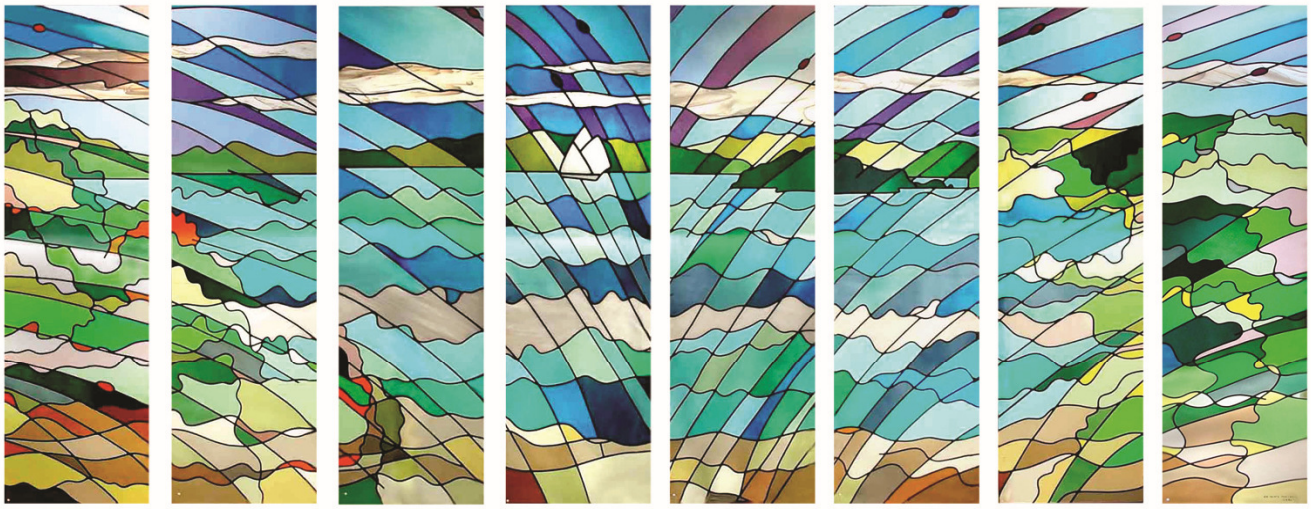

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

Special Edition –The Eastbourne Winter Series
July/August 2017

PRE-ELECTION THINKING – HOPES AND POSSIBILITIES

A series of four lectures hosted by St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
234 Muritai Road, Eastbourne

July 9	**Freshwater - How clean do we want it?**	*Marnie Prickett*
July 23	**Has education lost its way?**	*Drs Deborah Stevens & Lynne Bowyer*
August 6	**What hope is there for peace?**	*Dr Rebecca Dudley*
August 20	**The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media**	*Dr Peter Thompson*

Pre-election thinking – hopes and possibilities…

With this year being a general election, choosing a theme that embraced some of the most pressing issues facing society seemed obvious. The planning group, which first convened in March, quickly identified four possible topics: •the state of our waterways, •education for our young people, •achieving peace in a fractured world and •how to preserve public service media in an environment overwhelmed by digital choice.

Finding presenters is always a challenge. We had our dream list, but as so often happens, these people are not necessarily available. However, as also so very often happens, other recommendations and suggestions soon emerge and, in the end, we put together a team of some top-class people. Not only did they present their material in a fresh and engaging way, but each of them stimulated some lively debate among the 60 or so who attended each of the fortnightly, Sunday-afternoon lectures. Hospitality in the form of afternoon tea afterwards is an important element of what has become an important biennial outreach by St Ronan's Church to the wider Wellington/Hutt community.

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My thanks again to all those who helped out – on the technical side managing sound and powerpoints; as hosts at the church door; and in the kitchen serving food, pouring the tea and coffee, and cleaning up afterwards.

Following are summaries of the four lectures, written by me, with sign-off by the speakers.

Winter Series co-ordinator ***Anne Manchester***

Improving our freshwater – it's up to us…!

This year's *Eastbourne Winter Series* got off to a riveting start with a presentation on freshwater by *Choose Clean Water* spokesperson Marnie Prickett. Her idealism and commitment to the cause of improving the quality of our waterways was a clarion call to all those present.
She presented us with some sobering facts. Only 30 per cent of our rivers are swimmable. Twenty-three per cent of our monitored groundwater sites are now too polluted with pathogens for human consumption. Seventy-four per cent of our native fish are threatened with extinction – they could all be gone by 2040. Forty-four per cent of our monitored lakes are eutrophic or worse.
What has happened to our beautiful place, she asked, when signs like "*Caution – water quality borderline for swimming. Best advice is to stay out of the water and avoid eating lake fish"* or "*Health warning – this waterway is polluted. Swimming is not recommended*" are becoming all too common?
Quoting the Maori whakatauki "*Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au*" (I am the river and the river is me), she said many tangata whenua now thought *they* were dying, along with their rivers.

Government reclassifies what's swimmable

Last year, the Government said swimmable rivers were "impractical". However, following public pressure, they had now set 2040 as a "swimmable" rivers target. To achieve this, all it had done was to lower the bottom line for nitrate toxicity, Marnie said. Its new A standard for swimmable rivers (where the estimated risk of Campylobacter infection is less than 50 cases in every 1000 exposures) was in fact its former C standard. This meant the former "wadeable" category was now classed as swimmable. Marnie described this as "a cynical move".
Many people were not aware that the Government's focus was just on the really big rivers and lakes. This meant 90 per cent of rivers were not covered by the policy. "There is no bottom line at all for most of New Zealand's waterways," Marnie said.
The OECD was also critical about changes to our environment, suggesting our growth model, "*largely based on exporting primary products, has started to show its environment limits, with increased greenhouse gas emissions, diffuse freshwater pollution and threats to biodiversity"*.
Marnie agreed with Environment Minister Nick Smith that water quality issues affected both urban and rural areas.

Finding a way to rescue our waterways

Despite all this bad news, Marnie said we should not feel demoralised. "We can find solutions and we can work together on this."

A Freshwater Rescue Plan, backed by eight organisations, including Forest and Bird, the Tourism Export Council, Choose Clean Water and Greenpeace, offers a seven-step initial plan:

1) Set strict and enforceable water standards
2) Withdraw all public subsidies of irrigation schemes
3) Invest in an agricultural transition fund, ie redirect the $480 million of public money earmarked for irrigation to more environmentally friendly framing methods and the restoring of damaged waterways
4) Implement strategies to decrease cow numbers immediately
5) Instigate polluter-pays systems nationally
6) Regional councils should be expected to produce quarterly reports on improving water quality, to show how they are monitoring breaches
7) Develop a long-term vision for transitioning to a low-carbon, greener economy.

Where we go from here, Marnie said, was up to us all. All of us can choose to speak up about these issues, to write to MPs or newspapers, to get in touch with like-minded groups (eg the Friends of Hutt River) and to stay in touch.

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Has education lost its way…?

According to our speakers at the second of the Eastbourne Winter Series, education *has* lost its way.

The fundamental questions we needed to ask ourselves, said Drs Deborah Stevens (above) and Lynne Bowyer (below), were what we wanted students to learn, why we wanted them to learn, how we wanted them to learn and what the purpose of education was. To answer the last question, Deborah and Lynne said the purpose was to develop the whole person, to foster young people who were knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring and connected.

"In our rapidly changing technological environment, we need young people to live well together. From 2020, the 'digital curriculum' will be mandatory in schools. As a society, we need to consider how we embrace these changes."

Deborah said the planned New Zealand curriculum was a good one – "There is no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but there is a need to refresh the bathwater."

Life is a bowl of noodles

Deborah believes the problem lies with the way the curriculum is being taught, assessed and experienced. "I see life like a bowl of noodles rather than a box of chocolates. And the fact is, there are more noodles in the bowl than ever before. We need to examine what values our young people will embrace when they become citizens. The Greeks knew life was complicated, that a person's psyche and body need to be equally nourished.

"We see young people living primarily in a 'belly' society, a society of hyper-stimulation that provides instant gratification through social media, texting, peer groups. Young people are connected to their peer groups as never before.

"Once a household had only one landline phone and it was usually in the dining room where everyone could overhear conversations. Now young people have their own devices. From these devises, advertising invades their lives, and it is from this advertising that young people's main messages and sources of values are coming."

New Zealand's market-driven society had also given rise to cultures of materialism, individualism and relativism, she said. Relativism meant different points of view of what was desirable or not in society were not being critiqued.

Despite better nutrition, greater opportunities and choices, Deborah and Lynne believe the overall well-being of young people has declined. "We see greater aggression and depression among young people. They tend to externalise

faults and they lack the ability to learn from their mistakes. We see rising rates of binge drinking, earlier sexual behaviour and alarming increases in anti-depressants prescribed for young people. The answer is to get young people to think – about the ethical issues they face and their place in society."

The role of education was to encourage and nurture thinking in young people. "It's not about locating information, not about learning fixed responses to pass endless assessments. Young people learn values from being with each other, from being guided by their elders, by sharing experiences and being exposed to the eternal values expressed in art, music, poetry, literature."

Teachers becoming demoralised

In their contact with teachers around the country, Deborah and Lynne have observed them becoming demoralised, frustrated and overworked - the emphasis on standardised testing is undermining their professional responsibilities.

"Teachers want to provide a fun, challenging and student-focused atmosphere, but instead they are always having to look towards the next assessment."

Through the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, a charitable trust that works in schools and with community groups to discuss ethical and social issues, Deborah and Lynne have the opportunity to work with young people for a whole day, engaging them in a wide range of social, ethical and political issues, e.g. reproductive technology, the Treaty of Waitangi, genetics, the end of life and euthanasia. "We find young people are hungry to engage in these issues, to have the opportunity to express their own values."

For more about the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, go to www.nzcsc.org

What hope is there for peace…?

Hope is a decision – and a defiant decision, if need be.

This was the message of New Zealand Red Cross humanitarian law adviser Dr Rebecca Dudley in an address entitled 'What hope is there for peace?'

Rebecca described the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement as the guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL). She believes visionary, imaginative legal frameworks provide a key to peace-building. These laws seek to ensure that even if we are insane enough to go to war, we are sane enough to set limits on warfare.

It was Rebecca's experience living in Belfast and being part of the Northern Ireland peace process that cemented her decision to make bringing down walls and building peace her vocation. This developed into a belief or personal mantra that 'imaginative law can bring down walls. It can build peace. Imagine'.

Peace, in the sense of "world peace", she said, was a process, rather than an event. "Peace can be strengthened through building democratic institutions, supporting credible and transparent elections, and promoting and upholding human rights and good governance.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, she said, was guided by the fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, neutrality and independence. "Humanitarian advocacy is about persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with respect of humanitarian principles."

Is the world today uniquely terrible?

It was tempting for people to think the world was uniquely terrible in 2017, Rebecca said. But one only had to go back to 1946 to discover another terrible time. One of the most shocking developments of World War II was atomic weapons, used for the first time 72 years ago. Another war could mean the destruction of the human race.

Another shocking development was the holocaust. This saw Germany, a so-called civilised country with a proud philosophical, cultural, intellectual tradition, abuse state power and enshrine discrimination in law to the point where it sponsored and implemented genocide. "The hope for world peace started from the rubble of atomic weapons and the holocaust in Europe."

From this rubble, two kinds of law emerged - human rights law and the law of armed conflict. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an attempt to confront nuclear Armageddon in 1946.
"The birth of the modern human rights movement is what I would call imaginative law. It was about recalibrating with a common purpose, to build

justice so peace would also flourish, within nations and between nations," Rebecca said.
"The declaration of human rights has led to other international protections, for example against torture, for civil and political rights, and for the elimination of racial and gender discrimination. Countries sign these declarations as if they are peace treaties and are held accountable."

The law of armed conflict

The law of armed conflict was about reformulating and strengthening the Geneva Conventions around the means and methods of warfare, and to protect people who are not, or no longer participating in hostilities. This means protecting prisoners of war, those wounded, shipwrecked in conflicts at sea, prisoners of war and civilians.

"The law of armed conflict is born out of the extremes of battlefield experience - the last resort when diplomats have failed. Perhaps the existence of the law of armed conflict itself is a testimony to human creativity that can emerge out of dreadful necessity."

The modern project of humanitarian advocacy, Rebecca said, was a defiant decision to salvage something human from the worst circumstances, even as the survival of the human race was at risk.

However, the continuing danger of nuclear weapons remained one of the greatest challenges to peace.

Climate change versus nuclear weapons

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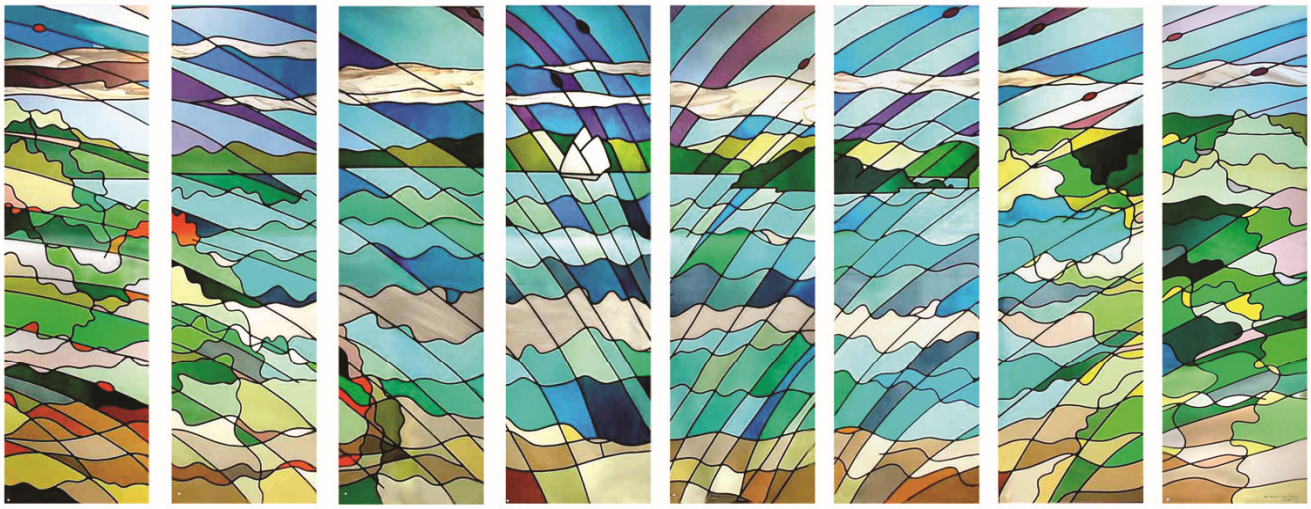

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This year's *Eastbourne Winter Series* got off to a riveting start with a presentation on freshwater by *Choose Clean Water* spokesperson Marnie Prickett. Her idealism and commitment to the cause of improving the quality of our waterways was a clarion call to all those present.
She presented us with some sobering facts. Only 30 per cent of our rivers are swimmable. Twenty-three per cent of our monitored groundwater sites are now too polluted with pathogens for human consumption. Seventy-four per cent of our native fish are threatened with extinction – they could all be gone by 2040. Forty-four per cent of our monitored lakes are eutrophic or worse.
What has happened to our beautiful place, she asked, when signs like "*Caution – water quality borderline for swimming. Best advice is to stay out of the water and avoid eating lake fish"* or "*Health warning – this waterway is polluted. Swimming is not recommended*" are becoming all too common?
Quoting the Maori whakatauki "*Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au*" (I am the river and the river is me), she said many tangata whenua now thought *they* were dying, along with their rivers.

Government reclassifies what's swimmable

Last year, the Government said swimmable rivers were "impractical". However, following public pressure, they had now set 2040 as a "swimmable" rivers target. To achieve this, all it had done was to lower the bottom line for nitrate toxicity, Marnie said. Its new A standard for swimmable rivers (where the estimated risk of Campylobacter infection is less than 50 cases in every 1000 exposures) was in fact its former C standard. This meant the former "wadeable" category was now classed as swimmable. Marnie described this as "a cynical move".
Many people were not aware that the Government's focus was just on the really big rivers and lakes. This meant 90 per cent of rivers were not covered by the policy. "There is no bottom line at all for most of New Zealand's waterways," Marnie said.
The OECD was also critical about changes to our environment, suggesting our growth model, "*largely based on exporting primary products, has started to show its environment limits, with increased greenhouse gas emissions, diffuse freshwater pollution and threats to biodiversity"*.
Marnie agreed with Environment Minister Nick Smith that water quality issues affected both urban and rural areas.

Finding a way to rescue our waterways

Despite all this bad news, Marnie said we should not feel demoralised. "We can find solutions and we can work together on this."

A Freshwater Rescue Plan, backed by eight organisations, including Forest and Bird, the Tourism Export Council, Choose Clean Water and Greenpeace, offers a seven-step initial plan:

1) Set strict and enforceable water standards
2) Withdraw all public subsidies of irrigation schemes
3) Invest in an agricultural transition fund, ie redirect the $480 million of public money earmarked for irrigation to more environmentally friendly framing methods and the restoring of damaged waterways
4) Implement strategies to decrease cow numbers immediately
5) Instigate polluter-pays systems nationally
6) Regional councils should be expected to produce quarterly reports on improving water quality, to show how they are monitoring breaches
7) Develop a long-term vision for transitioning to a low-carbon, greener economy.

Where we go from here, Marnie said, was up to us all. All of us can choose to speak up about these issues, to write to MPs or newspapers, to get in touch with like-minded groups (eg the Friends of Hutt River) and to stay in touch.

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Has education lost its way…?

According to our speakers at the second of the Eastbourne Winter Series, education *has* lost its way.

The fundamental questions we needed to ask ourselves, said Drs Deborah Stevens (above) and Lynne Bowyer (below), were what we wanted students to learn, why we wanted them to learn, how we wanted them to learn and what the purpose of education was. To answer the last question, Deborah and Lynne said the purpose was to develop the whole person, to foster young people who were knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring and connected.

"In our rapidly changing technological environment, we need young people to live well together. From 2020, the 'digital curriculum' will be mandatory in schools. As a society, we need to consider how we embrace these changes."

Deborah said the planned New Zealand curriculum was a good one – "There is no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but there is a need to refresh the bathwater."

Life is a bowl of noodles

Deborah believes the problem lies with the way the curriculum is being taught, assessed and experienced. "I see life like a bowl of noodles rather than a box of chocolates. And the fact is, there are more noodles in the bowl than ever before. We need to examine what values our young people will embrace when they become citizens. The Greeks knew life was complicated, that a person's psyche and body need to be equally nourished.

"We see young people living primarily in a 'belly' society, a society of hyper-stimulation that provides instant gratification through social media, texting, peer groups. Young people are connected to their peer groups as never before.

"Once a household had only one landline phone and it was usually in the dining room where everyone could overhear conversations. Now young people have their own devices. From these devises, advertising invades their lives, and it is from this advertising that young people's main messages and sources of values are coming."

New Zealand's market-driven society had also given rise to cultures of materialism, individualism and relativism, she said. Relativism meant different points of view of what was desirable or not in society were not being critiqued.

Despite better nutrition, greater opportunities and choices, Deborah and Lynne believe the overall well-being of young people has declined. "We see greater aggression and depression among young people. They tend to externalise

faults and they lack the ability to learn from their mistakes. We see rising rates of binge drinking, earlier sexual behaviour and alarming increases in anti-depressants prescribed for young people. The answer is to get young people to think – about the ethical issues they face and their place in society."

The role of education was to encourage and nurture thinking in young people. "It's not about locating information, not about learning fixed responses to pass endless assessments. Young people learn values from being with each other, from being guided by their elders, by sharing experiences and being exposed to the eternal values expressed in art, music, poetry, literature."

Teachers becoming demoralised

In their contact with teachers around the country, Deborah and Lynne have observed them becoming demoralised, frustrated and overworked - the emphasis on standardised testing is undermining their professional responsibilities.

"Teachers want to provide a fun, challenging and student-focused atmosphere, but instead they are always having to look towards the next assessment."

Through the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, a charitable trust that works in schools and with community groups to discuss ethical and social issues, Deborah and Lynne have the opportunity to work with young people for a whole day, engaging them in a wide range of social, ethical and political issues, e.g. reproductive technology, the Treaty of Waitangi, genetics, the end of life and euthanasia. "We find young people are hungry to engage in these issues, to have the opportunity to express their own values."

For more about the *Centre for Science and Citizenship*, go to www.nzcsc.org

What hope is there for peace…?

Hope is a decision – and a defiant decision, if need be.

This was the message of New Zealand Red Cross humanitarian law adviser Dr Rebecca Dudley in an address entitled 'What hope is there for peace?'

Rebecca described the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement as the guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL). She believes visionary, imaginative legal frameworks provide a key to peace-building. These laws seek to ensure that even if we are insane enough to go to war, we are sane enough to set limits on warfare.

It was Rebecca's experience living in Belfast and being part of the Northern Ireland peace process that cemented her decision to make bringing down walls and building peace her vocation. This developed into a belief or personal mantra that 'imaginative law can bring down walls. It can build peace. Imagine'.

Peace, in the sense of "world peace", she said, was a process, rather than an event. "Peace can be strengthened through building democratic institutions, supporting credible and transparent elections, and promoting and upholding human rights and good governance.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, she said, was guided by the fundamental principles of humanity and impartiality, neutrality and independence. "Humanitarian advocacy is about persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with respect of humanitarian principles."

Is the world today uniquely terrible?

It was tempting for people to think the world was uniquely terrible in 2017, Rebecca said. But one only had to go back to 1946 to discover another terrible time. One of the most shocking developments of World War II was atomic weapons, used for the first time 72 years ago. Another war could mean the destruction of the human race.

Another shocking development was the holocaust. This saw Germany, a so-called civilised country with a proud philosophical, cultural, intellectual tradition, abuse state power and enshrine discrimination in law to the point where it sponsored and implemented genocide. "The hope for world peace started from the rubble of atomic weapons and the holocaust in Europe."

From this rubble, two kinds of law emerged - human rights law and the law of armed conflict. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was an attempt to confront nuclear Armageddon in 1946.
"The birth of the modern human rights movement is what I would call imaginative law. It was about recalibrating with a common purpose, to build

justice so peace would also flourish, within nations and between nations," Rebecca said.
"The declaration of human rights has led to other international protections, for example against torture, for civil and political rights, and for the elimination of racial and gender discrimination. Countries sign these declarations as if they are peace treaties and are held accountable."

The law of armed conflict

The law of armed conflict was about reformulating and strengthening the Geneva Conventions around the means and methods of warfare, and to protect people who are not, or no longer participating in hostilities. This means protecting prisoners of war, those wounded, shipwrecked in conflicts at sea, prisoners of war and civilians.

"The law of armed conflict is born out of the extremes of battlefield experience - the last resort when diplomats have failed. Perhaps the existence of the law of armed conflict itself is a testimony to human creativity that can emerge out of dreadful necessity."

The modern project of humanitarian advocacy, Rebecca said, was a defiant decision to salvage something human from the worst circumstances, even as the survival of the human race was at risk.

However, the continuing danger of nuclear weapons remained one of the greatest challenges to peace.

Climate change versus nuclear weapons

American linguist, social critic and political activist Noam Chomsky suggests two existential challenges face all humanity today: climate change and nuclear war. One difference, identified by UN diplomat on disarmament Ramesh Thakur, is that nuclear weapons will probably kill us quicker. Thakur - a former professor of International Relations at the University of Otago - also says that long-running tensions and territorial disputes (as between China, India and Pakistan) and other features mean the relationships between nuclear powers are now more complex than during the Cold War. There are many fewer nuclear weapons now than at the height of the Cold War, with 65-70,000 in the mid-1980s and about 15,000 now. However, Thakur says there is a higher likelihood of their use, by design, accident, rogue launch or system error. "Do we really want a nuclear war launched by blips on a radar screen?" he asks.

"The first resolution of the new United Nations was to work to eliminate nuclear weapons," Rebecca said. "Even 72 years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Red Cross hospitals are still treating the wounded and their children.

"Under IHL, there is no express prohibition for the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Rather, the use of nuclear weapons is prohibited if it is likely to cause civilian casualties or environmental impact.

New treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

In July this year in New York, at a conference mandated by the UN General Assembly, 122 States adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons - a historic agreement welcomed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. "This newest treaty recognises the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and contains a clear and robust prohibition of nuclear weapons based on IHL. It also sets out pathways for the elimination of nuclear weapons. By prohibiting nuclear weapons and setting a framework for their elimination, the treaty provides a concrete step towards implementing existing international obligations on nuclear disarmament."

Although a major achievement, there was a lot of work to be done to ensure it became a strong global norm, Rebecca said. "The first challenge is to urge states to sign the treaty when it is opened for signatures on September 20 and then we need to start the process to ratify it soon after. The treaty will enter into force after 50 states have ratified it.

"None of the nuclear States participated in the treaty process, but risk reduction is an intermediate step that nuclear-armed States must pursue, pending the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Regardless of their views on a nuclear weapon ban treaty, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) argues that all states should acknowledge that any risk of use of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

"As ICRC Director General Yves Daccord said earlier this year: 'Ultimately, the only way to remove the risk of use of nuclear weapons, and to guarantee they will never again be used, is to prohibit and eliminate them. The current negotiations of a nuclear weapon ban treaty are the best chance for progress towards the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.'

Rebecca continues to be excited about international humanitarian advocacy and its imaginative laws. "These laws try to find a way out of no way. When the door slams shut, humanitarian advocacy tries to find a window. When that window shuts, we try to find another. It's about not giving up.

"Hope is a decision: what decision will you make?"

Can we trust the digital tooth fairy…?

The diet served up by the media should not just be about what people want but should focus on their needs as citizens living in a democratic society.
So argued Dr Peter Thompson, senior lecturer in media studies at Victoria University and chair of the Better Public Media Trust, in an intriguingly entitled lecture – "The digital tooth-fairy and the importance of public service media".
Peter painted a picture of the public service media - particularly news media - being in crisis mode and people turning increasingly to new digital media for their information and entertainment. Despite the huge range of new online services giving the impression of infinite choice, many important forms of content were still under-provided. "The digital cornucopia is a myth," he said. "We can entertain ourselves to death but it is not giving us the public service media that society needs and deserves."
Public service entails serving the public as citizens, not only as consumers and providing high-quality content that informs and educates, not just entertains. It also requires universal access regardless of ability to pay, catering to all members of society, not just majority demographics, and ensuring there is a robust fourth estate to hold those in power to account.
After 1989 TVNZ became a commercial state owned enterprise and competition from private media like TV3 and Sky expanded. However, even with the support of NZ On Air, this increasing commercialisation saw an overall increase in imported content and a decline in some key local genres. The drive for ratings and revenue led to more populist news and current affairs, and a dearth of other quality, locally-made programmes, Peter said.
In 2003, under the Labour-led Government, TVNZ was given a public service charter. However, it remained primarily a commercial entity, with 90 per cent of its income dependent on advertising. This arrangement saw TVNZ paying out more in dividends than it received to deliver the charter. "The government was literally giving TVNZ money with one hand and taking it back with the other," Peter said.
Maori Television was nevertheless established in 2004, with a more specialised public service with a mission to protect te reo. In 2006/2007, TVNZ also started two commercial-free channels, TVNZ 6 and 7, although the subsequent National-led government discontinued these, citing budget constraints.

Investment in ultra-fast broadband

When National returned to office in 2008, its focus was a $2 billion investment in a fibre-optic network for ultra-fast broadband (UFB). "The UFB project is important but it has a different philosophy from public service broadcasting. UFB is about enabling people to select their own media content and information across a range of platforms. National claimed that funding public service

institutions was no longer relevant in the digital media environment. NZ On Air was expected to compensate for commercial market failures by funding quality local content on a platform-neutral basis. However, NZ On Air requires cooperation from broadcasters to air funded content. Without a public service channel, the commercial schedulers have gatekeeping power over NZ On Air. If something looks commercially risky, it will be very hard to find a broadcaster willing to air it," Peter said.

At the same time, new services like Netflix have emerged, creating intensified commercial competition. "But Netflix, though cheaper to subscribe to than Sky, provides no local public service content."

Newspapers are also losing hard copy sales but are failing to maintain online revenue as advertisers increasingly use Facebook and Google. The result has been cuts to news budgets, journalistic redundancies and a stronger focus on populist news driven by online audience metrics.

RNZ's budget was frozen from 2008 to 2017 and was expected, at the same time, to expand online.

All these developments had created an unprecedented crisis in our media ecology, Peter said. "The digital tooth-fairy has proven to be a myth!"

New models for public service in New Zealand

Questioned about what good models of public service broadcasting there were overseas, Peter pointed to RTE in Ireland, which gets half its funding from a license fee, SBS in Australia (a multicultural and multilingual broadcaster), and other models in Scandinavian countries. These all provide useful models which could be adapted to work in the New Zealand context.

Peter sees another way to ensure a quality and diversity of media content is provided. He suggests either a one or 0.5 per cent marginal levy be applied across the whole media value chain, including subscription media revenues (eg Sky, Netlix), commercial advertising (especially Google and Facebook), telecommunication retail services and audio-visual retail. This tax would mostly be passed on to the consumer who would barely notice a one per cent increase on these services. The tax had the potential to raise either $160 million or $80 million a year. A budget of $160 million was worth five times RNZ's current budget.

"This money could then be ring-fenced to provide public service media. RNZ's current services could be expanded, with a free-to-air television channel and an online portal for showcasing local content. Its newsroom could be expanded to take on more investigative reporting and in-depth prime time current affairs. Meanwhile, NZ On Air's contestable funding could be extended to support original local content across all genres, including regional and minority content to be carried on RNZ's platforms."

Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

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