

GOODNESS WE CAN TRUST

HOPE for all



See our nation's history through different eyes, and take a fresh look at the future.



A diverse group of churches from throughout Aotearoa New Zealand have come together to give this booklet to every home. It contains remarkable stories of hope from within our nation, past and present, and an ancient message that is still bringing very real hope.

Since Jesus lived on Earth, his teachings have been transforming our world in more ways than we can possibly imagine.

In this ninth 'Hope for all' booklet, we consider God's 'goodness'. While we may question it when times are tough, nevertheless this is when it seems to shine brightest. We hear from people who reached out in trust, experiencing extraordinary goodness and hope in return.



*"The Lord is good,
a refuge in times of
trouble. He cares for
those who trust in
him..."*

Nahum 1:7
In the Bible

STORIES OF HOPE FROM THEN AND NOW



Celebrating 200 years of the Christian message in Aotearoa

Jared's story

From addiction to hope

Drinking, drugs and violence were normal in the world in which Jared grew up. By age 12 he was in trouble, going home drunk and being picked up by the police.

At age 18 Jared was sentenced to prison for a robbery. When released two and a half years later he was placed in a drug rehabilitation programme called 'Live for More'. He hoped to change, but the old ways soon got the better of him, and he went back inside.

It was there that he reflected on his life. He missed his family. He realised his little brothers were growing up without the male role model he could be. He asked himself, *"How can I break the patterns?"*

When Jared was free again and at a rehab programme, a guest speaker named Tama visited and shared his story. Jared could see that Tama's life had been genuinely turned around. Tama said faith in God had been a key part of his change — and his story gave Jared hope.

Later in a café, Jared and Tama talked, and Jared decided to make a simple prayer to God, inviting him into his life to help. When he opened his eyes, he says, the world looked different. *"That is when the miracle happened,"* he says. *"That's the day I was set free!"*

From that very day all of Jared's addictions were gone — including the meth, the marijuana and the cigarettes. As he sees it, God took hold of him, to bring him back to life.

Today Jared's life is very different. Not only is he married and a father, he also works as a youth mentor in the same programme that helped him, helping other youth who are going through what he went through.

There is always hope!

Hear Jared telling his own story at
HopeProject.co.nz/stories



TRULY AMAZING:

The Turtle with a Global Positioning System in its head!

Instinctively racing across a beach, a baby sea turtle then swims thousands of kilometres to a feeding ground it's never been to — how?



Essentially it has a compass imbedded in its cells, so it knows where magnetic north is at all times. The turtle can also 'feel' the angle and intensity of various magnetic field lines around the Earth, to know exactly where it is, enabling it to travel thousands of kilometres to specific locations.

At 10 years old a female turtle will follow the same 'magnetic path' to where she was born — sometimes landing on the same beach and within metres of where she entered the sea all those years ago!

The turtle's navigation system is one of thousands of highly complex natural systems that show extraordinary design.

Sometimes we may wonder if we're here for a purpose. The Christian faith suggests that, just like the sea turtle, we've been made with great care to fulfil a great mission!

Hēni's story

Hēni Te Kiri Karamū, or Jane Foley as she was also known, was one of New Zealand's most remarkable women.



SLAVERY AND FAITH

Hēni (Jane) was born in Northland in 1837. Her mother, Maraea, was a captive of the Ngāpuhi. Maraea named Hēni after Jane Matthews, wife of the local reverend who'd shown them great kindness. When Hēni was eight, Matthews helped the pair escape the burning town of Kororāreka (Russell). As the Christian message was embraced, peace came to many tribes. When it was announced all slaves were to be released, Hēni was taken for the first time to her Te Arawa people (Rotorua).

Hēni grew to be a woman of deep Christian faith. A later education at the mission school in Auckland saw her becoming fluent in te reo Māori, English and French. Able to thrive in both the Māori and Pākehā worlds, by 16 she was an administrator at the mission school, overseeing a boarding school for Māori children — and a full-time teacher.

MARRIAGE AND POLITICS

A first marriage in 1855 to Te Kiri Karamū from her home tribe of Te Arawa saw four children grow to adulthood,¹ but the couple were to drift apart. Māori chiefs recognised Hēni's abilities in language and her knowledge of protocol and she was soon busy helping to write submissions to Government and as an interpreter for the chiefs. The marriage ended. Because of the injustices she saw due to her work, when the Kīngitanga (Māori King) movement began, she supported it.

¹ Both marriages saw children die in infancy. Hēni's eldest son, Rangiteaore, later became chief of Te Kiri Karamū's hapū, Ngāti Rangiteaore.

Image of Hēni Te Kiri Karamū provided by the Alexander Turnbull Library.

WAR AND LOVE SHOWN TO ENEMIES

On April 29 1864, the British attacked at Gate Pā (Pukahinahina) in Tauranga, where Māori had taken defensive positions. This became Hēni's most famous moment.

Hēni was nearly killed by the first shot, surviving only because an elderly tohunga who saw the cannon fire pulled her into a trench. Two others were killed in that moment.

During the battle she heard a British soldier calling for help. As a Christian, what was she to do? Remembering the Bible's teachings, where it says, *"If your enemy is hungry, feed him, if he is thirsty, give him a drink"*², she decided to act. Grabbing a water canister, she risked her life by running across open land. She then cupped her hands to pour water into his mouth³ — and then for another, and another, before returning to her own trench.

Tragically, the victory of that day was followed by a terrible defeat on the next. Hēni's involvement with the wars was then over. She was 27 years old — and her life was just beginning!



Mural by Joan Moore as found in the Chapel at the Historic Village in Tauranga.

WHAT FAITH AND LOVE THEN DID

In 1867 Hēni married Denis Foley, seeing three more children grow to adulthood¹. Having run a hotel at Maketu, they cleared farmland near Katikati. In their marriage of 33 years they survived the Great Depression and participated fully in their community — which included Hēni working as a teacher.

In a tragic season, Denis drank too much and attacked Hēni, seriously wounding her. He was placed in an asylum for the insane. Hēni decided to forgive him and took him home to restore his mind. Denis was never again controlled by alcohol. However, when he later passed way, this shaped what Hēni did next.

Returning to her people at Te Arawa, Hēni joined the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The women battled the widespread alcoholism of those times because it led to the neglect and abuse of women and children. They also helped to gain women the right to vote! They then applied their Christian convictions to the running of night shelters for the homeless and soup kitchens for the hungry, helping prisoners and starting the first kindergartens.

Hēni also gave many years to serving as an intermediary in important transactions between Māori and Pākehā, including representing many Māori land owners in the Native Land Court.

She passed away in 1936 at the age of 96.

What does being a true follower of Jesus in a messy world look like? Hēni's example is remarkable!

2 Romans 12:20

3 The first helped was Lieutenant-Colonel H. J. P. Booth. He told others about what she had done before passing away in a medical centre a few days later.

Thanks to Jeff Foley – Great-grandson of Hēni, and Alfred D Foley's book *"Jane's Story – Biography of Heeni Te Kōwhiri / Pore (Jane) Foley. Woman of Profound Purpose."*

Leayne's story

How can God be good when there's suffering?

When she was 12 years old, Leayne and a friend went to Girls' Brigade together at a local church. One day, on a group outing her friend was killed in a car accident. It was on that day that Leayne lost her trust in God.

In fact, it seemed to her that a person might even get punished for trusting God!

That began what Leayne now sees as a 40-year 'desert' in her life. She lived a good life, and marriage and children brought

blessings, but she still somehow felt there must be more to life than that. At times she tried to take God more seriously — even attending a church and getting baptised. But she didn't feel different afterwards, and couldn't shake the idea that you might pay a price if you follow God. People said that God was loving, but Leayne found this hard to believe.

Then the unexpected happened. Two of Leayne's four brothers got serious cancers — and then she did too. She and her husband had been drifting apart, and then her husband announced he was going to leave her — on the very day that one of her brothers also died. Leayne was devastated.

With grief added to grief, and nothing to lose, she said, *"God, I can't do this any more. I need some help."* It was right then — with everything surrendered, that she felt a peace she'd never known before.

She decided to commit herself to her local church — while nervous that there might be a price to pay. The next day at work she was called to meet her manager. She expected the worst, but was offered a job promotion.

As she sees it now, *"To mistrust God and live distanced from his love — that was the real price."*

While bad things definitely happen in this life, God's promise is to always be with us. He loves us dearly, which means there's always hope.

Hear Leayne telling her own story at
HopeProject.co.nz/stories

FROM THE BIBLE:

Is God really good?

Jesus told the story⁴ of a son who demanded his half of the inheritance, while his father was still alive. Having moved away and wasted the money, the son faced poverty. Realising that his father's hired servants were better off than he was, he returned home with an 'apology speech' prepared, expecting an angry father.

However, the twist to the story was in the father's response.

Instead of being angry or bitter, the father saw his son at a distance and ran to embrace him. While the son tried to make his apology, the father ordered that a feast be prepared, *"For this son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found"*.

The point of this story is that God is like the loving father who was ready to forgive.



4 Luke 15:11-32.

It can be difficult to trust God. As in Leayne's story — with the death of a friend, what answer could ever be given to the question 'why?' Or what was Hēni to make of the injustices she could not fix?

The Bible explains that the world was created perfect, without evil or suffering — but that perfection was wrecked. God had given us free will, because that enables love — yet we used it to choose to do things that were wrong.

Our choices damaged our relationships with our creator, each other and our environment.

While God could have erased the problem by destroying us, the Bible records that he didn't because of his love for us, and his plan to give us eternal hope.

In the most humble act ever imagined, the God of love limited himself to a human body as Jesus, to demonstrate how we should live. Jesus then died for our wrongdoing in our place. As the prophet Isaiah predicted (in 700 BC), *"The punishment that brought us peace was upon him."*⁵

While there's plenty of mess in this world, this life isn't all that there is.

**God loves us, and where there is faith
there is always hope!**

There is an optional prayer on the next page.
Thanks for reading.

5 Isaiah 53:5.

A PERSONAL PRAYER

“ God, our creator, in spite of any and all wrongs I have ever done, I thank you for loving me, for providing for my needs, and for giving me life.

I thank you, Jesus, for taking my punishment when you died, and for inviting me into friendship with you. Today I choose that friendship.

Please forgive me for the selfish and wrong things I have done.

Please help me to understand the Bible and to find friends for this new journey. Help me also to love others as you have loved me, for I know this is how you want me to live until that day on which I meet you face to face.

Thank you for your love, for a purpose and for hope!

”

SOME OPTIONS FOR YOU:

1 TAKE THE 10 DAY CHALLENGE

A simple introduction to the Christian faith — this is a series of 10 short videos, with reflective questions.

Go to 10DayChallenge.co.nz OR access this by searching ‘10 Day Challenge’ within the Plan’ section of the YouVersion Bible app.



2 VISIT A CHURCH NEAR YOU

Find one on the map at: 10DayChallenge.co.nz/churches

3 GET A FREE BIBLE

Either download a Bible app for your mobile device at:

YouVersion.com/the-bible-app

OR ask for a hard-copy of the New Testament — about Jesus, his teachings and the early Christians who applied them.

Email: admin@hopeproject.co.nz

or write to Hope Project, PO Box 6078, Brookfield, Tauranga 3146.

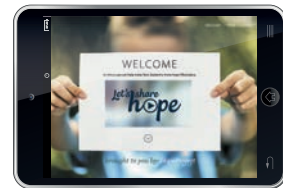


4 VIEW ‘HOPE’ STORIES

Browse: HopeProject.co.nz

— receive hope-filled posts from:

[Facebook.com/HopeProjectNZ](https://www.facebook.com/HopeProjectNZ)



HopeProject
.co.nz

10DayChallenge.co.nz

Supported by a diverse group of Christian churches from throughout New Zealand, who came together to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in New Zealand and the beginning of a 'hope-filled' bicultural partnership.

In this spirit, let's make New Zealand a more hope-filled place.