



Kia ora pastors' group convenors

Here is a Term 1 update, for possible reflection prior to your first pastors' group meetings for the year.

This is sent to just one or two people from each city/town pastors' group. If the convenor changes, please let us know to add them.

The purpose here is to remind and highlight various things for our cities and towns that are easily overlooked otherwise.

Part 1: In the calendar

Part 2: Spheres of influence

Part 3: In unison strategies - The most effective united efforts will be where we unite in common goals - while choosing our own methodologies.

Part 4: For thought and reflection - Articles and ideas.

There is plenty to be challenged by within this update.

The vision and information passed on could bring about an increased engagement within our cities and towns.



Please get your calendar out. Take a read and scribble some notes where something looks useful - or where information could be passed on to different people or groups.

Looking to all God can yet do
Dave Mann

(i) In the calendar (vision and planning)

(a) To look back first

Possible brief discussion:

- How did Light Parties go in November?
 - How did various Christmas efforts go?
 - How did any New Year efforts go?
-

(b) Key festivals and opportunities (Pastors' group year-planning):

Regarding the coming year as a whole

...What special events do churches have planned?

...Is there vision to leverage seasonal opportunities together to be present in the community, representing Christ well?

- Waitangi
- Valentines
- Easter
- ANZAC
- Matariki
- Mothers Day and Fathers Day
- Marriage Week
- Halloween - noting Light Parties are working well in many places
- Christmas - noting an encouraged vision to return Nativity Scenes to view
- Other_____

...Any united prayer vision?

Do you have a plan for any united prayer gatherings?

The natural rhythm of our culture is based around school terms. Quarterly combined prayer gatherings at the start of school terms could synch with a natural rhythm, bringing meaningful direction to prayer and united vision.

...Any support to youth groups?

The majority of those who come to faith from non-church families do so in their (early) teenage years. How could you enhance the unity, strength and outreach of your youth groups this year? As a part of that, are youth leaders meeting together?

...Any other key areas some have vision to engage within in a representative way?

- **Schools/Education:** Relationship with local schools? Launchpad/Bible in Schools? Christian groups in High Schools?
- **Council/the Mayor:** Relationship? Support to local government or politicians? Mayoral Prayer Breakfast?
- **Iwi:** Relationship / connection? Have local church leaders heard the story of the land - and Christian faith on it, where you live?
- **Chaplaincy:** Rest homes, Hospital, Prison, Police, Workplace, Sports, School?
- **Support to parenting / marriage / family relationships?** (There is a simple vision for pastors' groups regarding this area in an article in this update)
- **Notable current social needs?**

(c) Term 1 calendar highlights

FEBRUARY: Waitangi

Weekend

Are there local opportunities churches could engage with?

How could this weekend be highlighted within our churches? What stories could be told?

(Some video and print resources from the SLT can be found via the image)



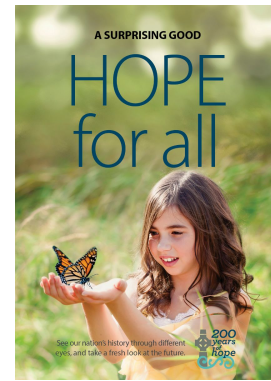
FEBRUARY/MARCH/: Hope Project - Easter

In partnership with Hope Project local churches will enable the booklets getting to 85% of residential homes nationally - complimenting other TV and web media engagement.

At the local levels, the needs are for

- ...collaboration to deliver the booklets - which is concurrently an opportunity to pray along every residential street.
- ...Donations to enable the effort (TV, web, booklets).

As in all prior years, churches are encouraged to leverage the opportunity for conversational outreach equipping via every pulpit, small group and youth group, utilising provided resources.



Two differences in 2024 - fyi:

- The timeline from after Waitangi to Easter is only 7 weeks instead of the usual 9 or 10.
- Extra booklets that were previously sent directly to partnering churches for their own uses will now need picking up from the supply sent for the delivery. This change is due to significantly increased postal costs.

For details, promotional materials, equipping resources and more: alltogether.co.nz/hopeproject/



MARCH: NZ and Beyond Conference: 21-23 March

An annual conference focused specifically on bringing motivation and inspiration to unity and outreach. See nzandbeyond.com

(d) Wider 2024 calendar highlights - nationally

"Pray As One"

This is a weekly 8pm Monday united NATIONAL prayer meeting - hosted by NZ Christian Network via zoom. It is a significant connection point, enabling awareness of both national and regional needs, dynamics and happenings.
(Click images for weblink)



"The Send"

"The Send" is a significant national Church event in 2024.



The effort is purposed to call this generation of young adults (amongst others) to give their lives fully to Jesus and to his service.

- Hence the name, '*The send*'!
- Imaging an amazing Easter camp - with a focus on mobilisation to (local) mission - though including young adults and interested adults.

The idea has already been undertaken in other nations with positive results.

- If this can inspire and catalyse new thinking and action
- Numerous Auckland churches and Christian leaders are positive - which anchors the effort.

Dates and details

- Launch Event - Auckland, Friday 23 February, 7-9pm
- Citywide Pastors' Meetings in March - see website.
- 'The send experience' Pastors Dinners in May - see website.
- **THE SEND NEW ZEALAND / AOTEAROA (The main event)**
 - We will be gathering at the Mystery Creek Events Centre (close to Hamilton airport) on Saturday 23 November 2024.
 - Tickets will cost \$30 and registration is open as of Sunday 28th January 2024.

thesend.org.nz/

An offer of partnership to help pastors' groups connect more widely

HeLP Project is a united communications initiative, entered around promoting things churches are doing to help people within their communities.



This is an option pastors' groups could key into to catalyse wider community profile and engagement.

The four outcomes are as follows:

1. Information on the 'help on offer' from your city's churches and associated trusts collated and displayed on a website for easy reference - with search engine.
2. This information supplied via a report to the pastor's group to catalyse conversations in view of enhancing collaboration and cohesion amongst churches in your service to and presence within your community.
3. With guidance given - ongoing social media engagement actioned to raise the profile of 'help on offer' from churches and associated trusts by way of telling stories - so people can better see and engage with your help on offer.
4. A formal 'Impact Audit Report' reflecting monetarily the value of the contribution of churches and associated trusts to the welfare of your city or town. This is purposed for showing to local government, social agencies and public media to aid your engagement and relationship with them - with a view to healthy partnership.

A benefit for churches is that more of your stories can be told and heard within the community - noting a culture in which negative stories about churches are often highlighted, while there are plausibly 1000 positive stories for every negative story told.

Pastors' groups are invited to contact Michael in the Shining Lights Team if interested - leveraging technologies, strategy and partnerships created nationally - for your local benefit.

See AllTogether.co.nz/helpproject

Contact Michael Taylor at michael@shininglights.co.nz

(ii) Spheres of influence

The purpose of this second section in this quarterly update is to encourage a brief but also very intentional quarterly discussion amongst pastors around two of the 'spheres of influence' each quarter.

While being unavoidably encouraging, this kind of practice will also empower and catalyse a culture of cohesion and collaboration for the city.

How

- Ask what churches or their members are doing in a given sphere
- Briefly hear about local initiatives
- Speak encouragement and have someone briefly pray blessing on every initiative mentioned

Result

- Awareness amongst your churches of what each other is doing
- Increased collaboration and teamwork
- Those taking initiative are encouraged
- All are informed - enabling ongoing prayer.

TERM ONE FOCUS AREAS:

The natural 'spheres' and festivals that fit into Term 1 are as follows.

1. Biculturalism

What are churches doing to in this space? (Affirm and pray for every initiative)

Note: The purpose is not to hear opinions. The purpose is singularly to hear about *initiatives* being undertaken to enable wider community engagement - in view of how that might be enhanced through the wider awareness of churches.

If conversation is not forth-coming, these questions might help.

- How would churches like to engage with local Iwi / Marae?
- Do church leaders and members know the gospel story of your area - and also the wider story or the land you are upon? Could respected kaumatua be invited to share stories?
- Is support of a local Waitangi Day celebration or dawn service be possible - or partnership to start one?
- How could churches engage, partner or participate more with with local Marae?
- Are there be Christian ('church') meetings on Marae already - who maybe haven't yet been recognised by the wider church, or their leaders invited to join the other pastors?
- How could we encourage a growing understanding of both The Treaty / Te Tiriti and also the strongly Christian dynamic within our history - to provide a needed balance to continuing negative innuendo within much of the public narrative, while opening conversations?

2. Keeping Christ in 'Easter'

What are churches doing in this season individually or together within the wider community? (Affirm and pray for every initiative)

3. Education (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary)

What are churches and/or their people doing in this space? (Affirm and pray for every initiative)

If conversation is not forth-coming, these questions might help.

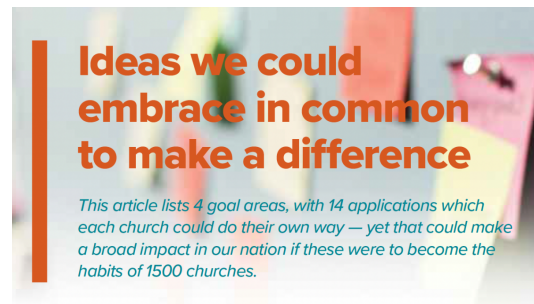
- **Primary:** How is Launchpad (Bible in Schools) going? What support is needed? Could pastors, as ministers of the gospel, give time to taking classes to fill gaps if this is needed?
 - Is school chaplaincy something someone might have interest in - noting Launchpad and others have systems to facilitate this?

- What opportunities or needs might there be in the areas of tuition, after-school care, or in support to children or youth with physical or learning disabilities.
- **Secondary:** Are youth groups united, and do they have a vision to see their youth united in their schools, to pray and support each other as faithful witnesses?
 - Is 24/7 Youthwork a possibility - or some form of school Chaplaincy
- **Tertiary:** How is the wider Church engaging with tertiary campus'? What support or partnership might wider-Church ministries like Student Life (Tandem/Campus Crusade for christ) or TSCF need, to help their initiatives thrive in each campus?
- **Principals and teachers from our congregations:** How could we support or encourage them? Might encouraging them to unite to pray in their schools succeed in seeing that happen?

(iii) 'In unison' unity

Unity by way of shared goals, not shared methods

Uniting in common goals - while leaving each church to pursue them their own way, is both the easiest and possibly most effective approach to united efforts.



What if in 20 years...

1. Our core messages were still being heard — despite cultural hostilities
2. Our members were better equipped to engage difficult conversations
3. Our members were engaging with increased cultural wisdom, knowledge and story
4. The Church as a whole was also stronger in prayer?

[Here](#) are 14 habits to help us to better achieve these goals nationally together?

(iv) FOUR new articles on unity are below...

These are purposed to inspire fresh vision and ideas for those leading in the unity space, these include:

- "A vision for unity" (What will your pastors' group achieve this year?) - A wero (challenge) to inspire fresh vision.
- "Unity finding its voice in the CITY" - A report on Roy Crowne's (HOPE Together UK) recent visit to 8 NZ pastors' groups - sharing insights.

- **"Invercargill's Community Service Day - a unity story"** - You'll be inspired by the simplicity and impact of what they have been doing.
- **"Family relationships and needs - an underutilised gateway"** - This is a profound and simple vision for pastors' groups, not to be overlooked.

The next update will be early April, prior to the start of Term 2.

(If you'd rather receive this content 'one thing at a time' - so you can actually digest it, subscribe for the 'Mahi Ngatahi (working together)' group FaceBook page. The link is at bottom of email.)

We pray this is useful.

Looking to all God can yet do

Dave Mann

(Director - Shining Lights Trust)

AllTogether.co.nz/pastorsgroups

FOUR new articles on unity

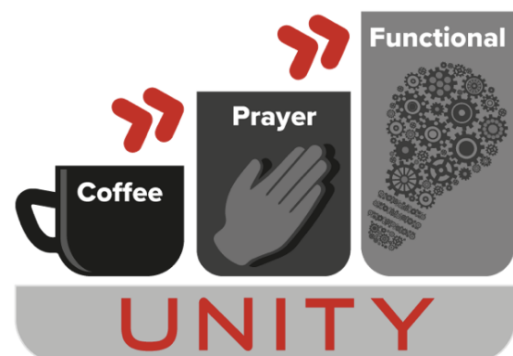
For thought and reflection

Here are some current (new) articles, interviews and videos to feed thought and vision regarding the unity of NZ churches in their mission.

What will your pastors' group achieve this year?

Titled 'A vision for unity' this article articulates some 'easy wins' for pastors' groups. Of note, these are things we could just as easily overlook.

Starting point: Four remarkable goals churches can easily achieve together across their city or town though the principle of partnership in shared vision.



But then for fresh vision: A wero (challenge). Three great and easy goals - summarised in a [12min video that a pastors' group could watch and discuss.](#)

Question: How could we engage more winsomely, to be 'back at the table' more as churches, to be involved in the conversations of our cities?

This is about taking initiative, to pursue things that are simple and sensible - while making a new difference?

Read or watch 'A fresh vision for local church unity' [here](#).

Unity finding its voice in the CITY

A visit from Roy Crowne - and what we can learn
(HOPE Together UK and the 'Talking Jesus' research)



In September 2023 we facilitated a visit by Roy to 8 NZ pastors groups, including cities and towns spread across four provinces.

HOPE Together UK is a significant unity movement for us to learn from - noting we are a small nation, but also a similar culture.

Three things in this article:

1. The UK context vs ours
2. The effect of what they did
3. An interview with Roy

(Image - the Tauranga meeting)





The interview: This took place a couple of months later to give Roy an opportunity to share reflections regarding the unity space of our nation - based on his observations. (Video of comments - 40mins).

To note Roy's credentials: Beyond decades in ministry (including as national director of Youth For Christ UK), for this past 15 years Roy has headed up the *HOPE Together UK* movement which successfully catalysed the uniting of literally thousands of churches in 1500 separate regions of the UK to innovate together to meet local needs. Many thousands of initiatives resulted - with whole new unity movements also then coming about as a result of the new momentum and interest in unity.

This also means Roy has had the TIME to see initiatives rise and fall - and to consider why.

To understand the simplicity: What they initially did was challenge churches together in each place to do ONE THING together that met a community need. The story is about what was catalysed when churches in 1500 places then did that.

What could we learn from Roy and the HOPE Together UK movement?

Read article - or watch the interview - [here](#).

Unity finding its voice in the NATION

The 'HeLP Project' - noted above, suggests that by working more intentionally together as churches to tell our stories and promote the 'help on offer' churches provide would be in our interests.

One of its four stated outcomes is an 'Impact Audit' for (local and national) Government and media - which would be achieved via an included partnership with an international organisation.



For your encouragement, here's one effect of a similar 'Impact Audit' amongst churches in the Gold Coast, Australia. This shows the nature of what can be achieved through purposeful partnership. (Click the image or [here](#)).

Invercargill's Community Service Day – a unity story

With a vision to engage more widely in the community, Ps Keith Harrington of Invercargill Central Baptist proposed a day given to serving the community in practical hands-on ways - on a Sunday.



Invercargill's Community Service Day – a unity story

Why a Sunday? Church members are available!

Now engaged with Council, Schools, Iwi, environmental trust and other charities - not only are they making a difference; the reputation of all of the churches is being built!

Strategic bullet points:

- At this stage it is 2 churches, with 250 volunteers, achieving 28 concurrent projects on one Sunday morning (4 hours) - with broad favour as a result.
- The idea can easily be expanded to include other churches locally.
- The idea could easily be duplicated.
- Clear benefits have come as a byproduct of finding and meeting practical needs.

Click the image or [here](#) for a summary of what Keith most-recently facilitated.

Family relationships and needs - an underutilised gateway (A simple and wide-reaching initiative that for pastors could facilitate together)

What if we were to engage more wisely and pro-actively as united churches around FAMILY / PARENTING / MARRIAGE?



Family relationships – an under-utilised gateway

Most churches have someone in them for whom marriage and family is a primary passion.

This is surely one of our most underutilised strengths as churches - while also being a gateway for the hope we carry. To leverage it more could be fun, meaningful and effective! But how?

Click the image or [here](#) for a compelling and simple vision that churches could achieve together in each NZ city and town - by way of providing and uniting to promote a range of

support courses, city-wide / town-wide. As a result churches can gain broader positive profile and make new connections - as the byproduct of helping people!

Re pastors' groups: alltogether.co.nz/pastorsgroups/

Messages / Q&A from the Shining Lights Trust (SLT) related to pastors' groups: alltogether.co.nz/unitymessages/

FB page for city pastors' groups, from the SLT (The content is like what is in this update. Typically 2 posts per week)

Closed group - only for active church leaders with a vision for unity.

Search "Mahi Ngatahi (working together)" and 'ask to join'. facebook.com/groups/359827991384316

FB page for city pastors' groups, from 'City by City' facebook.com/groups/315797175097647

Free download of Dave Mann's book on unity

'In One Spirit' - free pdf - [here](#)

Free download of Colin Shaw's book on unity

'A House for His Glory' - free pdf - [here](#)
