



Kia ora pastors' group convenors

Here is the Term 4 update, to aid vision and momentum in unity and outreach in all of our NZ cities and towns.

- As a reminder, this is sent to one or two people from each geographic city/town pastors' group.
- To add other local pastors to the e-group, just let us know.

We encourage pausing to consider what is in these updates.

- Noting their length - they are only once per quarter.
- They can feed fresh and directional vision in united bodies, that Christ be seen and known.

(i) In the calendar

(ii) Re spheres of influence

(iii) In unison strategies (United goals - individualised application)

(iv) With unity articles to conclude.

We pray this is useful.

Looking to all God can yet do

Dave Mann

(i) In the calendar - Part I

Term 4, 2025

Part I - In the Term 4 calendar

Part II - To consider for early in the 2026 calendar

Possible revision / encouragement

- How did Marriage Week go?
- What are we each doing to support marriages in our churches and community?

There are **THREE** opportunities to note here for Term 4.

Halloween

Considering the opportunity

This is an economically motivated festival, and it isn't going to go away for that reason.

- **To discover:** Christianity is intrinsic to this festival. The name 'Halloween' comes from 'All Hallows Day Eve'. There is a 1400 year history to 'All Hallows Day' ('All Saints Day') - with its date then changed to 31 October because the Celts had abandoned their paganism to embrace Christianity. A new light had replaced their prior darkness. *This change is a pivotal part of our cultural story!*
- **As a programme:** Light Parties are a common response - at one level being an alternative to the commercialised darker version of Halloween.
- **To expand our communication as**

churches: The SLT has created a vision/resource pack for local churches [here](#). This includes explanation, a [3 minute history video](#) about the THREE legitimate stories that are connected to this festival for use in church and public storytelling, with a Halloween [here](#) created for gifting to people. In short, Halloween could be expanded in the coming decade as a cultural time for storytelling.



- **For details on running a Light Party:** Talk to someone who has run one. Page 4 of the 'Halloween' summary [here](#) includes a list of churches who have run these.

'As One' - Saturday 6th December

Where and when: 'As One' is a unique event for the Church calendar, being held in Eden Park, Auckland, on Saturday 6th December.



Who and why: Organiser, Ps Sanjai Kandregula, describes the goal as uniting the body of Christ across denominations, ethnicities and generations. A multi-cultural choir of over 100 will set the scene from the outset of the event. Styles in worship and prayer will reflect the diversity of God's amazingly diverse and yet united Church.

(This event is new - with a wide range of Christian leaders now on board, with details soon to be released.)

Vision: We would summarise Ps Sanjai's vision as follows: 'As One' is a celebration of the diversity of God's people in our nation - who are concurrently united in Christ and his gospel. Consider that 42% of those living in Auckland today were born overseas. God's Church really is diverse! Yet, while our methods sometimes differ, **our message is the same**. While our languages may differ, **we sing the same song**. While those we can best reach may differ, **our mission is the same too**.



The programme: There will be a few hours of celebration through the afternoon, including worship, prayer and presentations that esteem God's amazing work on our planet, in our nation and in our lives – all pointing to Christ.

Driving distance for Northland, Waikato BOP - is half NZ's population: The Eden Park event will be deliberately timed to finish early - so those from neighbouring provinces can drive home, ready for church the next day.

**Diverse as we are, in this we are the same:
Christ is our King, and we have been transformed.**

Come join a unique event, celebrating the hope of Christ in New Zealand!

For more see AsOneNZ.org.nz

Christmas

Considering the opportunity

This is a cultural festival, purposed to remind us all of the significance of Christianity to who we are.

To this point is not missed: This storytelling is literally the purpose of public festivals and their associated public holidays.

If we who are Christians do not arise to keep the 'CHRIST' in the season of CHRISTmas, no one else will.

>> How will you individually and collectively represent Christ to your community?

Hope Project Christmas aspires to make
CHRIST the **CENTREPIECE** at Christmas in the **public view**
by encouraging individuals to display **NATIVITIES**
wherever they can.

Hope Project Christmas

The vision is simply Jesus being seen through his people.

If we don't tell the story Christmas as a public festival was established here to remember, who else will?



- A growing collection of ideas and resources from across the nation is available to help individuals, businesses, churches & churches together to engage -

Alltogether.co.nz/Christmas

- SLT Monthly updates in Oct / Nov / Dec annually highlight various ideas and stories, to help them be re-discovered and aid inspiration.

"The most significant impact of the united Church will come about when the actual members of the various congregations are united with a vision to act - not merely their leaders."

Tips for public communication with Christian messages at Christmas

- **A platform:** The nativity story naturally arises from a nativity display.
- **Three best stories for public communication:** Consider Jesus, Ruatara and Saint Nicholas.
- **The fourth story - about our culture:** In the wider picture, the festival and public holiday was established (like all public holidays) as a platform for reminding citizens of something significant to who we are as a nation. In this case, it's about the significance of Christianity to our cultural values. Consider

therefore the cultural story of our individual freedoms, human rights, government systems, legal and judicial systems, limitation of government powers, our cultural values of charity, education, healthcare, equality of races, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the equality of genders - and more. These festivals exist so important things are not forgotten. *These* areas of story are, therefore, directly relevant to Christmas - and they are interesting, which is 'gold' for communication.

(i) To consider in the 2026 calendar Planning

There are **THREE opportunities of note for Term 1, 2026.**

- Hope Project - a special vision, with booklet delivery
- Waitangi Day
- Combined church prayer gatherings and nationwide prayer walk

*"A vision without a plan is a dream
A plan without a vision is a drudgery
A vision with a plan is a destiny."*

Hope Project - February/March 2026:

A five-part vision is proposed, benefitting from discussion in 2025, so planning on some elements of this can begin.

"Connecting Kiwis with Jesus. Simple."

For discussion:

Could your local church leaders please view this video together?

This [A5 flyer](#) in their hands, summarising the five points, will aid clarity in discussion.



The five points are as per the t-shirts in front of you, including representation from the Shining Lights Trust/Hope Project, 24-7 Prayer, Long Story Short and Alpha.

For all details see AllTogether.co.nz/hopeproject

Waitangi Day - February 2026

Beyond reference in church services, engaging together with local Iwi and others has value. This would now need planning. Consider:

- Christianity is easily left out of community Waitangi gatherings and storytelling - unless we are there to represent that story.
- If not for Christianity, there would have been no Treaty. There is a story to know and tell.
- For church leaders this can also be useful as an annual connection point with local Iwi leaders to establish / sustain relationships, from which later connection and collaboration can come.

What are your local plans?

United prayer gatherings and nationwide prayer walk - February/March 2025

While there are various 'brands' or names under which churches could organise their united prayer, the idea behind them each is the same.

- Churches uniting for prayer and worship, with awareness of our mission together.
- In this we are all united.

We note the following prayer initiatives:



Open Heaven - a growing network of united prayer and worship events. OpenHeaven.nz



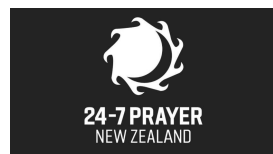
World Day of Prayer - Friday 6 March. The NZ website is worlddayofprayer.org.nz



Global Day of Prayer - Timed for Pentecost annually. The Australian website is gdop.com.au



Many cities and towns run their own combined services / prayer gathering: Well done. Keep going.



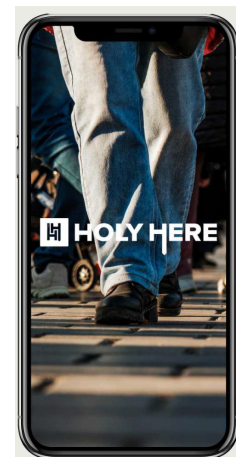
24-7prayer.nz - feeding a vision for united prayer. New to NZ in recent years, this is an extension of the international movement. Various pastors' groups have already been encouraged through this connection to engage in weeks of day-and-night prayer, amongst other expressions.

Sam Harvey heads this up (who can be seen in the black t-shirt in the above Hope Project 2026 video). 24-7prayer.nz

Regarding a nationwide prayer walk:

A prayer walk of every residential street could be achieved, leveraging the Hope Project booklet delivery.

To aid and feed focus, the "[Holy Here](#)" app created via 24-7 Prayer can track where people pray and walk, 'filling in' your city.



How could your united prayer be strengthened?

(ii) Spheres of influence

Knowledge changes perspective

The suggestion: A 'discovery discussion' in pastors' gatherings every 3 months to consider 1 or 2 'spheres of influence', plus any upcoming seasonal opportunities for your churches.

A result: Pastors are empowered to speak as leaders with a perspective of what the Church as a whole is doing in the city. This knowledge shifts vision and shapes initiative. This change in perspective will naturally yield its own fruit.

TERM FOUR FOCUS AREAS:

The question to ask regarding every sphere or season:

What are our churches and their people doing in this area in our city, and how could that be strengthened, enhanced or encouraged?

1. Spheres: Media and creative arts

- How are God's people engaging in these spaces locally?

2. Seasons: Halloween and Christmas

- Firstly, what are churches, their members, businesses and others already doing?
- Secondly, what could yet be done to see the story of Christ better represented?

3. Year-end thanksgiving, encouragement and storytelling:

- A time of thanksgiving together, considering the past year together, is a natural way to conclude a year.
- As an extension to this, there could be **prayer for** relevant united or city **opportunities** early **in the new year**.
- To extend further, the group could consider passing a **note of 'thanks'** from the group to Christians who've done amazing things in the community as an encouragement. As a variation of this idea, the pastors' group could create an annual **'Local Heroes awards'** - given from the pastors together to a few people annually - affirming the 'success story' and encouragement they have been).
- **'Success stories'** from the past year (including those noted by the pastors together) could be told by pastors to their members, thereby **enlarging the vision of many to serve in the city?**

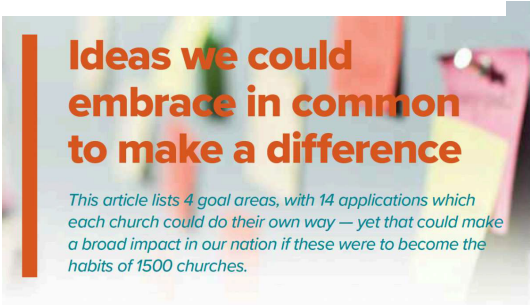
Habits like these build culture.

(iii) 'In unison' strategies

Uniting in common goals rather than programmes

This is about the revelation that the pathway toward some of our most significant united accomplishments will be through common habits and values, not programmes.

An article outlining 14 leadership habits that could be considered and embraced by churches together, with results, can be found [here](#).



Ideas we could embrace in common to make a difference

This article lists 4 goal areas, with 14 applications which each church could do their own way — yet that could make a broad impact in our nation if these were to become the habits of 1500 churches.

Another example would be uniting in a common goal of catalysing weekly prayer meetings among believers in connection with every workplace and school.



While this is the simplest of ideas, the implications if applied could be a game changer for Christian witness and impact in a city. For more see point 3 in 'Becoming More Strategic in our United Prayer' [here](#).

(iv) For thought and reflection

FOUR recent articles on 'unity and outreach' are below:

1. NZ churches losing their voice in Christmas - and how to change this
2. Evidence that intentionality in equipping works (Summary of Dare2Share survey)
3. Key principles for pioneering (From City to City, Australia)
4. Four benefits of annual outreach equipping (Article - Dave Mann)

The next update will be mid-January, prior to the start of Term 1.

1. Losing our voice in the city - *and how to sustain it*

A NZ story and reflection, by Dave Mann

Christians start a community Christmas event - only to then suffer pressure from local businesses that silence their voice. To keep the peace, churches comply. It's an identifiable pattern. This article reminds us of this danger - *and of how we can do it right.*



- The article also includes a 'Christmas message outline' - suiting concise Christian communication on a secular platform.

2. Evidence that **INTENTIONALITY** in equipping youth to reach *and disciple* other youth - works!

Summary of a Dare2Share survey

This is a summary of a report by Dare2Share. (Link to full study included.)

The study evidences that (a) it is possible to equip youth to both reach and disciple other youth, and also (b) that when it is done, it delivers results.



- It is about a different way of thinking and leading in youth ministry - with intentionality in equipping youth as a focus, and results in the data.
- Click the image to read.

3. Key principles for Pioneering

By Chris Swann - City to City, Australia

Whether you are pioneering something new as a church or churches together, pioneering is needed - and pioneering is hard work.

Read an excellent articles on principles for pioneering via the image.

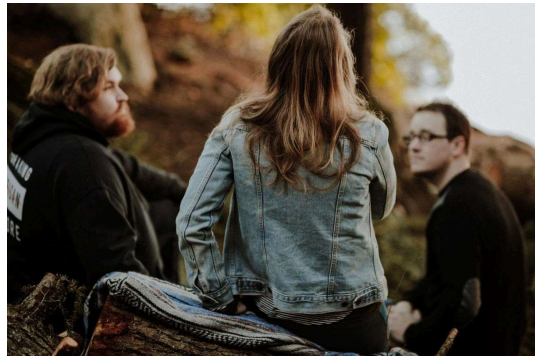


4. Four benefits for churches from annual outreach equipping

Article by Dave Mann

This concise article reiterates again the value of a clear gospel-focus in our churches and among our churches together.

- How might greater intentionality benefit us?
- Click the image to read.



SLT webpage about city pastors' groups: [HERE](#)

SLT articles on unity: [HERE](#)

SLT Messages / Q&A related to pastors' groups: [HERE](#)

SLT FB page for city pastors' groups 'Mahi Ngatahi (working together)': [HERE](#)

City by City FB page for city pastors' groups: [HERE](#)

Book on unity: Free download of Dave's book 'In One Spirit' - free pdf - [HERE](#)

Book on unity: Free download of Colin Shaw's book 'A House for His Glory' - free pdf - [HERE](#)