

The whakapapa, genealogy and identity of the Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki

The diocese was born in 1926, when the southern most Anglican parishes were separated off from the Diocese of Auckland. There was a minimal subsistence trust endowment. The first bishop was Cecil Arthur Cherrington, an Anglo-Catholic, originally from England. The faith communities in the new episcopal unit were expected to become self-sufficient, an invigorating challenge that continues today.

Today the Diocese comprises Waikato, Pīako, Waipā, The King Country, Mokau Aria, and Taranaki: Paraninihi ki Waitotara, having incorporated South Taranaki parishes acquired from the Diocese of Wellington in 1997. These areas had seen some of the most creative mission initiatives from 1836 onwards, involving Māori and Pākehā evangelists, catechists, teachers, and a variety of missionaries. As exemplified below, Māori hosts and ministers of the gospel included Heta Tarawhiti, Tarapīpipi Te Waharoa Wiremu Tāmihana, Nēra Te Awa-i-taia, Rewi Manga Maniapoto, Irihāpeti Te Paea (Hahau) Pōtatau, Te Whiti o Rongomai with Tohu. Some of the earliest Church Missionary Society people in the region included Benjamin and Harriet Ashwell, John and Maria Morgan, Alfred and Charlotte Brown, and William Bolland.

An example of Māori led evangelism is Te Whiti, in Taranaki:

“Te Whiti may have been introduced to the Bible by Minarapa Rangihatuake of Ngāti Māhanga, a freed Ngāpuhi slave who had preached at Rāhotu since 1842. Minarapa had earlier served as a Wesleyan minister at Te Aro from mid 1839, and preached at Wārea before the arrival in 1846 of the Lutheran, Johann Riemenschneider, of whom Te Whiti became a pupil. Other former slaves may also have propagated forms of Christianity that appealed to the young Te Whiti. A new religion, called by its followers Tikanga Hōu (the new doctrine), appeared in the area in 1845.”¹

1. Danny Keenan, in 2012, in The New Zealand Dictionary of Biography, Nga Tangata taumata Rau.

By the mid nineteenth century the ratio of Pākehā to Māori evangelists and teachers was about 20% Pākehā to 80 % Māori; the result was a widespread experience of te rongopai, the gospel, and large numbers of baptisms, together with the creation of many mission schools. These early constructive and pro treaty relationships also resulted in much horticultural, agricultural, and educational success, as evidenced at Rangiaowhia for example.

The first Tainui Māori to be ordained into the Anglican priesthood, the Revd Heta Tarawhiti, a chief, referred to above, created the basis of much of mission growth by his provision of lands and influence. The Te Ngaungau hapū and Heta gifted the 'Church of England' a total of 1385 acres for use for education and religion.

In 1871 Heta built a new chapel along the west banks of the Waikato River with support from Ngāti Whawhākia, Ngāti Tu, Ngāti Huakore, Ngāti Teiaia, Ngāti Huakatoa, Ngāti Whauroa and Ngāti Haua. In 1877 Heta began ministry in Pirongia. The land block is called Pourewa o Te Tonga located at Whatiwhatihoe, not far from King Tawhiao's home. At Tikirahi near the Waikato heads, Ngāti Tiipa gave The Revd Robert Maunsel CMS, land for a potential mission school in the mid 1840s.

Ngāti Apakura and Ngāti Hinetu made the provision of extensive lands for a vast garden and mission at Rangiaowhia which became a food basket for Auckland for a time. This resulted from the original partnership between The Revd John Morgan CMS, and local chiefs, including Rewi Manga Maniapoto, before the start of the New Zealand war in 1864.

Ngāti Haua, with their Tumuaki and paramount chief, Wiremu Tāmihana, the greatest statesman of the nineteenth century, provided lands and buildings as well as partnership, participation and protection, for the earliest Christian missions at Waharoa, Tapiri and Peria in the late 1830s and beyond.

The tragedy of the 1860's New Zealand land wars did widespread damage to the good faith with which the missions began, as well as society as a whole. There were Anglicans on both sides of the conflict. It took many decades of prayerful healing and a quest for a measure of restorative justice for the mission to regroup and begin to partner effectively again. There is still much more of this journey to explore today.

The Māori missions were originally absorbed into the Diocesan culture after 1864 but achieved their own self-determination with the arrival of ngā Pīhopatanga from 1992 onwards. The partnership between the bishops of Manawa ō te Wheke and Te Upoko ō te Ika is a valuable resource for the Bishop of Waikato and Taranaki and will increasingly be utilised by some parish and other ministry unit levels.

The Diocese, through its origins of lean trust endowment, in 1926, the slow processing of the land war aftermath, and now with the complexities and confusions of fluid secular modernity, has many challenges to face. And yet it is these very challenges that invigorate the people and have seen many creative and courageous ministry shapes emerge.

Tikanga pākehā ministry models in the Diocese today, include 54 stipendiary parishes, part stipendiary parishes, local shared ministry parishes, and other collectives and communities of interest, which comprise around 20,000 people. In 2022 there were 73 clergy, over 3,000 families on church rolls, and roughly 55,000 acts of attendance. Nationally, according to the census, Anglicans make up 12% of the population. The Diocese seeks to offer a faith community of some kind within reach of everyone, and so it is committed to every area, rural or urban. There is the hope that some of the faith communities will become more bicultural and work in partnership with Tikanga Māori.

Attendance across parish communities resembles a bell curve: some in decline due to rural depopulation or secular urbanization, some growing with young families and many baptisms, some stable and consolidating even when

members die or move away. ***Healthy parish faith communities are crucial to Diocesan life.*** Warming the liturgy, welcoming and outreaching combined with re engaging with the wider community in the love of the gospel will always be a priority.

Anglican Action Mahi Mihinare, the justice through service mission in Kirikiriroa Hamilton, involves over 85 staff, 75 tangata whaiora and whānau, (those seeking healing), reaching out to hundreds of people at any one time. Anglican Action unites Faith and Te Tiriti in a Mission committed to flax roots support and challenge from the margins of an unequal society in order to liberate and empower. Anglican Action celebrates the spirituality of life and believes that everyone, known or stranger, of this land or another, is considered to be the neighbour.

Anglican Action commits itself to the pursuit of justice through service within and beyond the borders of Aotearoa New Zealand. Mahi Mihinare Anglican Action advocates and stands in solidarity with all those being denied justice. This involves youth justice work, support of mothers and children, and residential re-integration. This agency was the catalyst for the creation of the innovative Christian Social Service Village, Te Ara Hou, in 2000. Today Te Ara Hou village is home to over seven different NGO agencies serving thousands of people.

The introduction of the Bishops Action Foundation (BAF) to diocesan mission in Taranaki has had a transformative effect since its inception in 2005. BAF works with partners across Taranaki and wider New Zealand to manage and deliver solutions to varying community issues. BAF is a catalyst for change, enabling and guiding opportunities and supporting initiatives through to independence. Working with partners allows BAF to get things running, and then hand-over so BAF can continue to search for and grow new projects. This a creative way of being salt, light and leaven within the wider community. A number of community groups owe their existence or viability to BAF now. Key foci are:

1. Guide vision and strategy among partners
2. Support and enable aligned or innovative activities
3. Establish shared and appropriate measurement practices
4. Build a growing base of support and energy
5. Advance policy change at a system level where this is required for sustainability and lasting change
6. Mobilise funding at seeding, piloting, and operational stages

The community outreach of the two cathedrals of St Mary in Taranaki and St Peter in Hamilton is considerable. In Taranaki the development of Te Whare Hononga, and Te Manu Hononga as hospitality and education for justice and reconciliation centres, together with the Meri Tapu St Mary's cathedral earthquake re strengthening programme has seen new bicultural partnerships emerge with local iwi. In Kirikiriroa Hamilton the earthquake restrengthening programme has seen a re stated vision for community facing ministry including youth and adult choirs, music and the arts, civic hospitality, mana whenua input, and street people outreach. Cathedrals are mother ships and hubs for ministry and mission, as well as a space for the diocese to come together.

There are three Anglican affiliated and two diocesan schools in the diocese, Taranaki Diocesan, St Peter's Cambridge, Southwell, Waikato Diocesan and St Paul's Collegiate, with a combined roll of around 3,500 students plus their families. Each school has at least one sometimes two chaplains who offer the gospel afresh to a new generation. These are our largest youth groups, roughly ten per cent of whom often go onto share in a faith community: a tithe to the God of every generation.

The diocese with its bishop is essentially a tribal entity, it exists because it chooses to exist for a cause that is greater than itself: The Kingdom, Kin-dom

of God, the mission of a gospel of faith, hope and love, incarnate in Jesus the Christ. This is a community of grateful hearts and serving hands, moving forward within the terms of mission of the Anglican Communion:

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

To respond to human need by loving service

To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth