

**E te whanau e te karaiti.** *To the family in Christ. Kia ora mai koutou katoa; Talofa lava; Malo e lelei; Noa'ia e mauri; Ni sa bula vinaka; Namaste.* *Greetings to everyone.*

He hōnore, he korōria ki te Atua. He maungārongo ki te whenua. He whakaaro paiki ngā tāngata katoa. Hangā e te Atua he ngākau hou ki roto, ki tēnā, ki tēnā o mātou. Whakatōngia to wairua tapu. Hei awhina, hei tohutohu i a mātou hei ako hoki i ngā mahi mō tēnei rā. Amine. *Honour and glory to God. Peace on Earth. Goodwill to all people. Lord, develop a new heart inside all of us. Instil in us your sacred spirit. Help us, guide us in all the things we need to learn today. Amen.*



This segment from the 'Faith and Works' banner in the Pitt Street Church is a powerful introduction to today's message. On Saturday New Zealanders and Australians both at home and across the world pause to mark ANZAC Day. On ANZAC Day the focus is on remembrance of those who fought and died in the two World Wars, 1914 – 1918 and 1939 – 1945, and also in other armed conflicts.

The late Shirley Erena Murray wrote a hymn for ANZAC Day in 2005 entitled 'Honour the Dead'. The music was written by Colin Gibson. The words skilfully set out what we remember on this day.

*Honour the dead, our country's fighting brave,  
honour our children left in foreign grave,  
where poppies blow and sorrow seeds her flowers,  
honour the crosses marked forever ours.*

*Weep for the places ravaged with our blood,  
weep for the young bones buried in the mud,  
weep for the powers of violence and greed,  
weep for the deals done in the name of need.*

*Honour the brave whose conscience was their call,  
answered no bugle, went against the wall,  
suffered in prisons of contempt and shame,  
branded as cowards, in our country's name.*

*Weep for the waste of all that might have been,  
weep for the cost that war has made obscene,  
weep for the homes that ache with human pain,  
weep that we ever sanction war again.*

*Honour the dream for which our nation bled,  
held now in trust to justify the dead,  
honour their vision on this solemn day:  
peace known in freedom, peace the only way.*

This is the link to the music -

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Famcp.webportals.nz%2Fimages%2Faudio%2F2020%2FHonourTheDead.mp3&data=02%7C01%7CJan.Faulkner%40methodistcentral.org.nz%7C1590b5a9bb024ce883b408d7e64d58bf%7C78dc2782a0d34aa2861d848a63ad3c86%7C0%7C0%7C637231092189136498&sd=el%2BG9Z4vc1KMxYhp6BNgGD2H8BsTtYhceM%2BfRqwuN4%3D&reserved=0>

Thank you Walter.

The effects of the legacy of World War One continue to impact on New Zealand. Ten percent of the New Zealand population saw active service and approximately 20% of those who served did not return. Yale University Historian Professor Jay Winter has written that this was a disproportionate number: even greater than that of Britain. There are those who believe that the impact was that future leaders were lost and that many rural, particularly Maori, communities were significantly disadvantaged by the loss of so many with that 'clear adventurous spirit'.

In the third verse of her hymn Shirley Murray draws attention to 'the brave whose conscience was their call'. The banner shown towards the start of this message illustrates the ambivalent stand that the Methodist Church has held in regards to participation in war. The image with the yellow background marks those who fought and died. The khaki uniform and Flanders poppy faithfully remind us of part of the story, while the smaller image of the soldier tied to a post, watched over by the white rose symbol of the Christian Pacifist movement, is also a faithful representation of those who refused the call to arms as conscientious objectors and were subjected to deprivation and humiliation. Today, these two images can sit side by side. This was not always so. There are other images of note in the Pitt Street Church. The impressive stained glass windows at the rear of the Church, facing Pitt Street, are memorials; and in the photo gallery of Ministers in the walkway between the Church and the Bicentenary Building there are several in military uniform. The Kingsland Church has a War Memorial Board.

This ambivalence within the Methodist Church is shown in one of its sad chapters, leading to the dismissal of Rev Ormond Burton in 1942. The outbreak of WW2 meant that open-air meetings and campaigns against recruitment and the war effort were regarded as seditious. Rev Burton was arrested on a number of occasions and received progressively harsher sentences. The Methodist Conference, meanwhile, had adopted a resolution that strove to walk a middle road. It required that pulpits not be used as vehicles for recruitment to war nor enrolment in pacifism. This was intolerable to Burton's conscience: it undermined the Gospel call to be peacemakers. He argued the case that the Church had no moral right to impose such a restriction on pulpit preaching and refused to accept the discipline. The Conference vote to expel is interesting: 70 for, 45 against and more than 100 abstentions. Rev Burton was reinstated to Ministry in Full Connexion in 1954. Well after his death in 1974 Conference acknowledged its mishandling of the affair. Rev Burton's Circuit Steward at the Webb Street Church in 1942, was Arch Barrington. With Rev Burton, he founded the New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society and later served as Vice-President of Conference in 1974. After the war, Arch Barrington and other Christian Pacifists established the Riverside Community at Lower Moutere near Motueka, hoping to establish a new way of living that would be a 'peace-based beacon' to the wider world. I know of this community as it provided a haven for my mother and her three children for a period following my father's death in 1950. Another member of the Pitt Street Church community has advised me of his time there in the 1970s.

On ANZAC Day 2020 may we pray that final verse in Shirley Murray's hymn: *Honour the dream for which our nation bled, held now in trust to justify the dead, honour their vision on this solemn day: peace known in freedom, peace the only way.*

