

# **Wisdom to Act**

**The pedagogical and philosophical theory  
and practice for the education of practical  
theologians as community leaders for social  
transformation**

**Susan Adams**

**2011**

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**Susan Adams**

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**Institute of Public Policy**

**Primary Supervisor: Dr Love Chile**

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## Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Susan Adams \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Ethics Approval



## MEMORANDUM

To: Love Chile  
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTECH  
Date: 25 October 2006  
Subject: Ethics Application Number 06/159 **Wisdom to act: the pedagogical and philosophical theory and practice for the education of practical theologians as community leaders for social transformation.**

Dear Love

I am pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTECH) approved your resubmitted ethics application at their meeting on 9 October 2006. Your application is now approved for a period of three years until 9 October 2009.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit to AUTECH the following:

- A brief annual progress report indicating compliance with the ethical approval given using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/ethics>, including when necessary a request for extension of the approval one month prior to its expiry on 9 October 2009;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 9 October 2009 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is also a condition of approval that AUTECH is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence and that AUTECH approval is sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to the participant documents involved.

You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that any research undertaken under this approval is carried out within the parameters approved for your application. Any change to the research outside the parameters of this approval must be submitted to AUTECH for approval before that change is implemented.

Please note that AUTECH grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all written and verbal correspondence with us. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at [charles.grinter@aut.ac.nz](mailto:charles.grinter@aut.ac.nz) or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

On behalf of the Committee and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely

**Madeline Banda**  
**Executive Secretary**  
**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: Susan Adams [susanadams@clear.net.nz](mailto:susanadams@clear.net.nz)

From the desk of...  
Madeline Banda  
Academic Services  
Student Services

Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1020  
New Zealand  
E-mail: [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz)

Tel: 64 9 921 9999  
ext 8044  
Fax: 64 9 921 9812  
page 1 of 1

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## **Abstract**

This study engages retrospectively with three theological education projects in which the researcher participated over a 30 year time span. From these projects the study identifies markers in theological education that characterise practical theology as a process for equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation. The research into these markers uses a qualitative methodology using a case study approach based on the three education projects. This approach enables each project to be described and considered in its historical context and to include the role of the researcher. These projects in theological education in Aotearoa-New Zealand have not previously been described or reviewed, nor has their contribution to theological education been considered. This study therefore contributes the story of these three projects, and seeks to identify educational markers from these theological programmes. These markers emerge from the case studies and from the reflected-on experience of the researcher, with the field of practical theology as a framework. In a contribution to the fields of practical theology and theological education, 'integrative practical theology' is presented as a way of conceptualising the theory and practice of theology, in which philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches and educational practices coalesce in developing ministry leaders for social transformation.

# PART ONE

## ESTABLISHING THE BASICS

This study records the learnings and experiences of participants in three educational projects which have not previously been investigated. These projects delivered theological education programmes within the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand between 1978 and 2008. This study documents these projects in a way that uses the methodology of the projects themselves, which engaged in a collaborative critical inquiry as to what had taken place, why and how, and learnings for the future. The emphasis is on the ways in which each project connected with its social and historical context, reflected this context in its programme design and process, and was able to meet its stated intentions through its life-span.

The objective of the study is to review these learnings as each project sought to equip ministry leaders for church and community in relation to their particular context. Through the processes of interviews, focus groups and the consideration of documents, the study identifies positive 'markers' of a theological education that can equip ministry leaders for social transformation. A further objective is to identify the challenges and constraints in establishing and sustaining such approaches to theological education. These challenges and constraints will need to be addressed if there are to be further sustainable developments in theological education of a similar nature.

This research project is not seeking to develop a theory of practical theology or theological education, nor to locate the research within a particular theoretical framework. Nor is it the intention of the research to engage in critique of particular theories. Rather, the research project will draw on many theoretical perspectives, in order to locate practical theology in the wider fields of

education and theology and to give shape to the characteristics of practical theology that emerge from the analysis of the research engaged in. Theory in practical theology is thus understood as a tool to guide discussion and action rather than as providing a substantive shape to the discipline.

The core purpose of this study is to make a contribution to the future design and practice of theological education in the context of Aotearoa-New Zealand and to contribute to discussions in the international field of practical theology. When the first project was begun, the language of practical theology was not in use in Aotearoa-New Zealand, except perhaps as a descriptor of the application of the pastoral skills of the minister within the congregations and structures of the church. By the time the third project ended in 2008, the field of practical theology had developed, with an international network exploring its complexities and potential in church and society. My contribution to the field is in arguing for practical theology as a form of theological education that integrates content and process, theory and practice, for the equipping of ministry leaders as practical theologians. I call this approach 'integrative practical theology'.

The research identifies the critical transferable elements in the evolution of the three generations of the education programmes. It identifies those markers in the programmes that prioritised contextual awareness and sought to develop leadership for social and personal transformation.

The study is presented in three Parts covering respectively the basic influences and methods, the case studies, and the analysis and conclusions (Chapter 1, Section 2.2, p.14). In the three chapters of Part One, I establish the circumstances that gave rise to this study, the theoretical undergirding and the literature that have influenced the study, and the methodology that has been employed. The study covers a thirty year period of engagement by the

researcher in theological education within the Anglican and Methodist Churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand. There has been no critical evaluation to date of the projects in theological education that are the subject of the three case studies, each of which included an emphasis on processes of transformation. My research question in considering these projects is: *What markers in theological education characterise practical theology as a process of equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation?*

In responding to this question, I will use the term *practical theology* to describe an approach to the disciplines of theology and the theory and practice of theological education, in which philosophical perspectives, educational methods and practices, processes of interpretation, and engagement in social transformation are integral components. Some writers and practitioners in theological education use 'practical theology' in other ways, and this will be noted in relation to literature in the field.

The term *theological education* describes education in the various disciplines of theology, such as biblical studies, systematic and historical theology, and ethics. Where this education is intended to help equip ministry leaders, a process of *ministry formation* would be included, focussing on professional skills and personal development. Where the two processes are being distinguished, the separate terms will be used; otherwise, 'theological education' will include ministry formation.

The term *ministry leader* refers to persons selected and trained to provide leadership within Christian churches and communities, either as ordained ministers or as lay persons, with specific authority or responsibility within both the life of the church and the wider community. The term *practical theologian* is used in this study to refer to ministry leaders who have been trained in a practical theology programme designed to equip them to act as

leaders engaged in social transformation. In this context, I use the term *social transformation* to signify changes made in structures, relationships and functions within a community so as to enhance wellbeing and participation for members of the community.

I am using *project* to refer to the three educational projects which form the basis of the case studies in Part Two: the Glendowie project, the Auckland Diocesan Ministry Training Programme, and Trinity Methodist Theological College's Ministry Training Unit. The term *programme* is used to refer to organised educational activities within the life of a project, including activities that lead to a credential.

During the time of the projects there had been significant changes in both the social and the church contexts in this country, and I have drawn attention to these changes where I felt they were relevant to the study.

Chapter 1 establishes the rationale for the study in relation to these changes and the contribution the study can make to the field of theological education. The social context in New Zealand in 2010, including the re-positioning of religious organisation (including Christian institutions as they seek to reassert influence), demands that the Church re-examine how the theological education of ministry leaders as practical theologians could assist them to engage theology in interests of social concern. The view of practical theology that I am working with in this thesis seeks positive outcomes for the wellbeing of specific communities, especially marginalised groups within those communities.

The study is motivated by a search for ways to take seriously the spirituality of human communities, their cultural traditions, and the desire to live well in the social systems that shape life in Aotearoa-New Zealand in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It is informed by the perspective of practical theology that considers the churches can play a significant role in this process by developing ministry leaders who are able to lead social transformation. Such transformation seeks change within both the church and the community, in ways that take seriously the nature of contemporary multi-cultural society in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

In Chapter 2, I outline literature that has helped shape the field of practical theology and the key components of that field which impact on this study. Further literature is identified throughout the study as it becomes relevant in relation to the projects, to the process of reflection, to educational practice, or to the philosophical influences that impacted on the projects. This latter point is important in significance as it impacts on the emergence of practical theology within the field of theology and theological education.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological features of the study. The dynamic of critical reflection which was used in each project, was then used with the focus groups whose members were familiar with that process. The process of gathering data and reflecting on it has been spiralling in nature, consistent with the educational practice that evolved over the three projects and core to the processes of practical theology as I have come to understand them.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1. Rationale and Significance of the Study

Chile and Simpson assert that “the world view of the majority of poor people in the world is essentially spiritual” (and) development workers who have no ear for the spirituality of the people they work with risk becoming irrelevant in contemporary development practice (Chile & Simpson, 2004, p. 329). My argument is that spiritually-aware and theologically-trained persons can and should provide effective leadership in situations where social transformation is necessary to enable the wellbeing of persons and groups within any community.

In a British ecumenical and interfaith report, *Faithful Cities*, prepared by the Archbishop’s Commission on Urban Faith in 2007, the Commissioners identify spirituality as the “5<sup>th</sup> Pillar” in healthy cities. They contend that “regeneration is not just about the built environment and economic targets but is also human and spiritual”. Religious communities, they suggest, have a role to play in enabling a just and equitable society to flourish. The report goes on to encourage “the development of networks of leadership training and of collaboration between faith communities, and highlights the need for greater literacy on matters of faith among civil servants and local government officials” (*Faithful Cities*, 2006, p. 2). My contention is that relevant and effective processes of training and education are critical in the formation of transformative leaders who can link religious communities and society.

In 1994, bell hooks (without capitalisation) in her work on progressive education draws on the writings of Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh who speaks of the teacher as healer. Thich Nhat Hanh offered a way of thinking

about pedagogy which emphasised wholeness, a union of mind, body and spirit.

His focus on a holistic approach to learning and spiritual practice enabled me to overcome years of socialisation that taught me to believe a classroom was diminished if students and professors regarded one another as “whole” human beings, striving not just for knowledge in books, but knowledge about how to live in the world (hooks, 1994, p. 14).

The Christian community, the church, has had long experience in spiritual formation and the education of ministry leaders, including the use of both mentoring or apprenticeship models and intellectual learning (Farley, 1983, pp. 29-44). Intentional programmes were in place from the Middle Ages, where they formed the foundation for the university model (Farley, 1983, pp. 34-39; Nelson, accessed 2011), and developed into systematic theological education following the Enlightenment (Farley, 1983, pp. 29-44).

From its origins, the Christian church has also identified its core role in seeking to care for all members of a community and in seeking social transformation as a component in this. In its early years, documenters of Christian origins have Jesus’ mother claiming that God “has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly” and has “filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1: 52-53; Miranda, 1974, p. ix). They present Jesus as defining his ministry by quoting an older prophet, saying he has come to “bring good news to the poor”, “proclaim release to the captives”, and “let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18; Pixley, 1983, p. 383). The church picked up this priority early (Pixley, 1983, pp. 384-393; McLellan, 1997, part one; Cassidy, 1987), and has maintained a transformative emphasis in various ways since (Russell, 1993, pp. 43-44, 101-104; McLellan, 1997; Bevans and Schroeder, 2004, pp. 61-72).

However, there is little identifiable evidence that the church has worked consistently at intentional equipping of its ministry leaders to provide leadership in the processes of social transformation that the church has frequently called for. In more recent times, some individual courses have been offered in, for example, social ethics (Ogletree, 1991, pp. 216ff), and various calls have been made for social engagement and transformation to be included in theological education programmes (Banks, 1999, pp. 28-30; Cornwell Collective 1980). But there have been few sustained intentional programmes in the style of the projects which are the focus of this study, and none in New Zealand to my knowledge.

This background and the insights gained from my own experiences, particularly during the time of the Ministry Training Unit (MTU) 2000 – 2008 and its engagement with Pacific communities, suggest possibilities for a theological education that supports leaders who are able to connect spirituality with community wellbeing and empowerment. I intend in this thesis to identify the markers for such a theological education.

The increasing cultural diversity amongst Christian communities within Aotearoa-New Zealand and the struggle of some migrants - individuals, groups and communities - for identity in their new homeland, provides a sense of urgency to rethinking and designing relevant theological education and ministry training.

New Zealand's ethnic make-up has continued to change, according to 2006 Census results. European remained the largest of the major ethnic groups, with 2,609,592 people (67.6 percent of the population) in 2006. The Māori ethnic group is the second largest, with 565,329 people (or 14.6 percent). Of the major ethnic groups, the Asian ethnic group grew the fastest between 2001 and 2006, increasing from 238,176 people in 2001 to reach 354,552 people in

2006 (an increase of almost 50 percent). Those identifying with the Pacific peoples ethnic group had the second-largest increase from the 2001 Census, up 14.7 percent to total 265,974 people.

Auckland was then the most ethnically diverse region in New Zealand, with 56.5 percent of its population identifying with the European ethnic group, 18.9 percent with the Asian ethnic group, 14.4 percent with the Pacific peoples ethnic group, and 11.1 percent with the Māori ethnic group (Statistics New Zealand, 2006a).

The role of the church within migrant communities, in particular the Pacific and Asian communities which continue to a large extent to be influenced by the leadership and ideology of church, positions it to become an instrument of positive change as those communities seek their place in Aotearoa-New Zealand. “Of 31,000 Korean migrants resident in New Zealand, 21,690 or 70% identify as Christian” (Statistics New Zealand, 2006b).

The migrant communities relevant to this study were significantly influenced by western missionaries in their home countries, and carry with them a strong Christian identity and world view. Just over 8 in 10 Pacific peoples (80.2 percent or 199,983 people) who answered the religious affiliation question identified with Christian religions (Statistics New Zealand, 2006c).

Such migrant communities, then, often struggle to engage with the religious and social issues of this predominantly secular new ‘homeland’. I argue, therefore, that intentionally educated Christian ministry leaders, exercising leadership in these migrant communities, are uniquely positioned to encourage the exploration of identity in this new context and an active evaluation and cultural reshaping of those communities as they adapt in the new and rapidly changing environment. In the same way, I contend that

Christian ministers exercising leadership in Pakeha/Palangi communities can assist the development of social wellbeing in those communities in ways that support self-determination and social transformation.

In reflecting with graduates from the three projects, the study will identify ways in which the particular educational programmes, shaped by their respective current insights into theology and education, became means of practical empowerment for graduates as they engage in community leadership.

As I embarked on this study I was mindful, too, of my own search in the early 1970s for an education and formation as a ministry leader (a priest in the Anglican Church) that would help me formulate and ask the critical questions about life, social responsibility and living well in the contemporary world. I failed to find it within the formal theological education programme of the Anglican Church at that time. This early personal experience of what the church failed to offer, along with my work in education and community development, left me with a long-term commitment to supporting students in their search for a relevant and appropriate theological education for their roles as ministry leaders.

Over a thirty year span, I have been engaged with the design and implementation of three 'innovative' educational programmes within the Anglican and Methodist churches. Each sought to respond to the social context of its time without the constraints of the traditional pre-existing programmes. In each instance, the church authority appeared to be willing to experiment. Also in each instance there were students who saw benefits for themselves in terms of either their own ministry aspirations or an educational model that would enable academic achievement and skill development beyond what would otherwise be available to them. As well, each project

faced constraints in seeking to maintain and develop the style and ethos of its programme.

The study identifies 'markers' derived from the positive outcomes of these three projects which indicate approaches to theological education that can achieve the goal of educating transformative community leaders: practical theologians. It also identifies the challenges and constraints of sustaining an alternative programme with a different pedagogical base and philosophical perspective, under the auspices of the same institution that authorises a parallel programme in the same general field.

Further, the reflected-on experience of the three projects that delivered the education programmes leads towards a particular understanding of the nature of 'practical theology' as an approach to theological education, and thus contributes towards the contemporary discussion on both practical theology and theological education.

## **2. An Outline of the Study**

The study describes and analyses these projects, each of which was considered at the time they were established to be innovative. I locate each of the studies in the social context of events in the wider society of Aotearoa-New Zealand during their respective time-frames: 1979-1985; 1989-1998; 2000-2008. I note also the contexts shaped by the changing priorities within the two church denominations, Anglican and Methodist, to which the projects were accountable.

I thus present three case studies in theological education, and critically analyse these three innovative approaches to theological education and the formation of ministry leaders over this period. Case study methods enable me to respect the differences of each of the three programmes while considering the

common themes in the stories and reflections on the experiences of the projects that emerge. In the process of gathering these stories and reflections I have interviewed stakeholders and convened focus groups related to each of the projects, I have referred to documents and called on my own recollections. This various material is clearly identified in the study. I engage also with international discussions within the field of practical theology, as a contributor to the discussion of theological education in today's social settings.

Consistent with the core teaching practice of the various projects, this study is itself cyclical in nature, with material emerging and re-emerging as it takes on new or different significance in subsequent years and varying contexts.

### **2.1. The projects being studied**

The first project being studied is the Glendowie project that was established in 1979 and continued till 1985 when it changed in character. In 1978, in New Zealand, a partnership venture was entered into between three bodies of the Anglican Church in Auckland: Anglican Methodist Social Services, St John's Theological College, and the parish of St Philips, St Heliers Bay. This partnership sought the support of two government departments, the New Zealand Housing Corporation and the Department of Internal Affairs, in a new initiative to provide social support and community development in a state-housing estate in Glen Innes, an Auckland suburb. It reflected the emerging contracting arrangements between government departments and 'private' agencies at the time.

The Ministry of Recreation and Sport, together with the Department of Labour, appear to be the most highly involved providing resources for community development in New Zealand. The Ministry of Recreation and Sport provides a series of assistance programmes in the area of community development. It runs a Community Development Fund, which aims 'to encourage and strengthen... community life' (Department of Internal Affairs, 1979) (Wilkes, 1982, pp. 124-125).

The primary goal of this partnership from the perspective of the non-governmental agencies was to increase social participation and raise issues of social justice, as part of initiatives to respond to the multiple needs of the residents of that housing estate community. Key aspects of the project that came to be recognised by the various stakeholders as significant for a sense of wellbeing amongst residents were community identity and hope. These came to be spoken of by residents as 'spirituality'. This project provides the first case study for this thesis.

The second project examined began in 1989. It was the re-development of an existing programme to provide theological education and ministry formation. The re-development was to include those seeking lay ministry leadership alongside ordination candidates from the Auckland Anglican Diocese in one student group and to establish a relevant curriculum and pedagogical framework. This project built on learnings from the first project studied. The objective was to develop practical theologians who had the capacity to engage community and church resources for spiritual, community development, and social wellbeing of local parishes.

The third project studied was the Ministry Training Unit (MTU) of Trinity Methodist Theological College. This project, similar to the first two studied, sought to further develop the educational pedagogy of practical theology. From the outset it sought to embody 'best practice' adult education in ways relevant to the multicultural student group. Reflecting on the previous projects, the learning community was seen as having great significance, along with the different social contexts from which the students came.

The educational design of each of the three projects drew extensively from the work of Ivan Illich (Illich, 1971) and Paulo Freire (Freire, 1972, 1974, 1992), and the third project drew from the theoretical approaches to practical theology of

Edward Foley (Foley, 2007) and Don Browning (Browning, 1996; Browning, 1980). The teaching practice in each case was premised on emerging theories in adult education which emphasised the co-creation of knowledge between learners and teachers, and the processes of discovery, action/reflection, and praxis.

The educational aim of each project was to form leaders who were able to engage in open processes of reflection which bring to the surface awareness and social critique while pointing toward the possibilities of action for transformation. The study will consider the philosophical and pedagogical underpinnings relevant for a model of theological education developed intentionally to hold a dialogical tension between theory and practice in educating ministry leaders as practical theologians.

A further challenge that arose from these tensions was the issue of sustainability of projects that are based on a critical and contextual analysis of both church and society. While such projects allow for institutional innovation at the outset and respond to the demand for change and relevance, in the long-term the change they inevitably demand may create tensions between them and the institution that funds and sustains them.

## **2.2 The structure of the study**

Part One introduces the study, outlines its theoretical influences, and discusses its methodology.

Part Two examines the case studies in relation to their particular social contexts. Chapter 4 covers the community-based Glendowie Project, 1979-1985. Chapter 5 then considers the Auckland Anglican Diocesan Programme, 1990-1999. Chapter 6 examines the Ministry Training Unit of Trinity Methodist Theological College, 2000-2008.

Part Three engages in analysis of the projects and identifies challenges and markers. Chapter 7 analyses the case-study data and their emerging themes. Chapter 8 identifies challenges that face the establishment and maintenance of intentional education projects for practical theologians. Chapter 9 identifies markers for practical theology as theological education for transformative community leaders and weaves together common threads from the case studies. Chapter 10 gathers together the conclusions and indicates further areas of research.

The Appendices provide documentation on the case study research and aspects of the three projects.

### **3. Theoretical Influences in the Study**

Practical theology, I will argue, not only describes the field within which the study is set but also provides the primary theoretical influence for the study. It is an approach to theologising and theological education that embraces process and content, as well as demanding active engagement in identified social issues. The practical theologian is able to observe and gather information, reflect on that information in relation to justice and wellbeing in social situations, and engage others in actions and processes of social transformation. Practical theology connects theology with social engagement in ways that open up spaces for dialogue, so that a mutually critical analysis can inform social transformation. This study aims to examine how these dynamics have developed in the three specific educational situations.

Another theoretical influence in the study is the challenge that emerges from liberation theology. This approach to theology emerged out of the struggles for justice by peasant farmers and the urban poor of Latin America and the conscientising of women (Gutiérrez, 1974; Ruether, 1972; Russell, 1974, 1976;

Segundo, 1976; Schussler Fiorenza, 1983). Liberation theology demands that theology engage with issues of justice and establish a preferential option for attending to the needs of those who are on the underside of histories of colonisation and its systems of domination. This approach to theology is self-consciously contextual, demanding a depth of understanding of social issues grounded in specific communities and structures, along with active engagement in processes of change. Liberation theology, with its challenge of contextual relevance, provided the initial theoretical influence for the first of the projects, the Glendowie project. Liberation theology and the challenge it produced to the priorities of the church, provided a lasting influence throughout the span of years covering the three projects. In the 1980s and 1990s feminist theology, as an expression of liberation theology, became influential in light of the issues for church and society at that time. These dynamics will be discussed further in Chapter 5. Feminist theology introduced the specific concerns of women to the general demands for justice. Women introduced into the justice agenda their social roles and the structural marginalisation they experienced in church and society. Feminists demanded a re-think of theology and its resources from the perspectives of the equality of women and their freedom to name for themselves what it means to be women, and their capacity to engage in the systems and structures of society without discrimination.

The study seeks to explore how theological education from a practical theology approach can equip ministry leaders for community leadership toward social transformation, that is, as practical theologians.

#### **4. Summary**

This study identifies key markers in philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, and the practice of education that have the potential to shape the education of ministry leaders enabling them to become socially transforming

leaders with wisdom to act. The research also identifies challenges and tensions to the sustainability of such programmes.

I argue that the identification of such markers will enable the future design of theological education and ministry formation programmes that could inform a more critical approach to the role of the Christian church in society.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Theoretical Influences and Literature**

#### **1. Locating the Study**

The discipline of practical theology, as a set of perspectives and processes that shape the education of practical theologians who can act as community leaders for social transformation, forms the core of the field in which this study is located. The literature that supports and resources practical theology is diverse and for the purposes of this study is classified under four key theoretical categories that undergird and resource practical theology, namely philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches, educational practice, and social transformation. Each of these areas help to locate this research study, and the literature review is undertaken and presented under these four theoretical categories, together with the nature and practice of practical theology itself.

#### **2. Practical Theology**

Practical theology, as it has developed in the last thirty years, is a field of theological enquiry and practice that is predicated on engaging people in processes of personal and social transformation. The literature of practical theology comprises a range of different emphases, understandings and practices which together construct the field of practical theology, itself a diverse field displaying various differing aspects and components (Poling and Miller, 1985, chpt. 2; Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p. v; Cahalan and Nieman, 2008). Although there is debate around some aspects of the field and different authors emphasise different components, this section picks up the most significant aspects of the field of practical theology at this time.

## 2.1. Contextually focussed reflective practice

Much literature on practical theology stresses engagement of the whole person in order to facilitate their intellectual exploration, skills development and personal commitment to change. This emphasis signals a shift from the notion of applied theology to intentional engagement in reflective practice (Graham, Walton, & Ward, 2005, p. 2; Schön, 1987; Killen and de Beer, 1999). Reflective practice is understood as a dialogical process between the ideas that inform practice and the experience in practice that shapes the relevant ideas: in this setting it is about thoughtful engagement with both theological ideas and the practice of ministry leadership. This aspect of practical theology, then, seeks to recognise the potential impact of theological discourse that engages the contemporary world as both a key 'text' and as the arena for action (Stackhouse, 1988, chpt. 3). In Green's (1990) foundational book for practical theologians, *Let's Do Theology* (Green, 2004) he invites those who would study theology not primarily to read about other people's theology but to become engaged in 'doing' theology.

A participative theology will not only allow for alternative styles of expression, but will also encourage the pressing issues of the day to be more adequately focussed. For it seems that the church is rather behind the times when its academic theologians continue to expend so much energy in that old debate as to whether or not theology is intellectually defensible in an age so wedded to the criteria of science (Green, 2004, p. 6).

Green shifts the focus of theology from the academy and the written text to "addressing today's issues" (Green, 2004 p. 7). In this way, the particular location and its issues assume a priority for examination and the transformative action Green seeks, and become the 'text' on which attention is focussed.

Contemporary writing in the field of practical theology recognises the significance of context (Heitink, 1999, p. 168) and especially of local contexts

(Osmer, 2005, p. xvi; Schreiter, 1985), and seeks to raise theological questions relevant to the liberation and healing required for justice in particular contexts (Reader, 1994, p. 14). It is thus an active, praxis approach for doing theology, and not a theoretical body of information to be transferred and remembered, taught and received (Heitink, 1999, pp. 151ff). Kaufman, for example, suggests that we should think of doing theology as like building a house, in which we use our experience along with the available materials of previous theological work (Kaufman, 1995, p. 34), while Stackhouse sees praxis as a critical methodology for theological education (Stackhouse, 1988, chpt. 6). The contemporary field of practical theology as discussed in this context is thus an approach that moves away from simply the application of the timeless truths of received theology (Veling, 2005, pp. 3-7), and is instead a process that engages theological insights and practical experiences in a dialogical process of reflection.

## **2.2. From 'application' to 'practice'**

Frederich Schleiermacher, writing out of a German university context in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, is often spoken of as the 'father of practical theology' (Heitink, 1999, p. 22). Heitink questions if this is reasonable, however, as Schleiermacher does not adequately use empirical methods to describe or assess 'practice' (Heitink, 1999, p. 22). It does seem, though, that Schleiermacher is the first to use the *term* 'practical theology' (Schleiermacher, 1875, pp. 187-218), and is cited by most writers on practical theology during the past 30 years. Schleiermacher contends that theological education comprises three core disciplines: philosophical theology, historical theology, and practical theology. He considers that these three disciplines should be interwoven in the task of educating church leaders (Clements, 1991, p. 147), with practical theology as the culmination or "crown" (Schleiermacher 1875, p. 220), the final part of the study, presupposing everything else, and preparing for engaged action (Heitink, 1999, p. 27).

Much theological education that built on Schleiermacher's foundation over the subsequent century and a half, however, developed an 'application' approach, understanding the 'practical theology' component as the application of the theological disciplines of biblical studies, church history, governance and leadership to the tasks of preaching, pastoral practice, and the missional work of the church's clergy (ministry leaders), rather than part of an interwoven theological whole (Farley, 1987, p. 3). The University Of Auckland School Of Theology, for example, promotes a course in 'practical theology' that uses this 'applied' approach (Auckland University School of Theology, 2010). For all the breadth and depth of Osmer's work, he does end up seeming to locate practical theology as a separate theological discipline (Osmer, 2006, p. xiv), and this is a temptation for those who function within the setting of traditional theological education institutions, with their roots in Schleiermacher's structure.

A broader expression of the 'application' of theology and the associated skills could be said to be at its most 'successful' in the work of the colonial missionaries. Jemima Tiatia in her influential book *Caught Between Cultures* describes and analyses how in Tonga, for example, missionary theology framed the social structures currently active in the Kingdom of Tonga, and established the values base and world view of successive generations of Tongan people. The hierarchical social structure of power and authority left little room for critique to arise out of contemporary lived experience, or for any kind of reflection on practice. Similarly, the role of religious authority within the social structure and the 'revealed truths' they taught, actively discouraged questioning or re-visioning. Tiatia asks for a rethinking of these structures and truths for today, particularly for Tongans living in Aotearoa-New Zealand, if they are to find holistic health (Tiatia, 1998).

The field of practical theology that forms the setting for this study does not accept this approach of 'applied' theology, however, but argues instead for a starting-point in practice – normally ministry practice – which helps shape the total theological enterprise. The dominant concern is thus for practical theology as a form of reflective practice.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, postcolonial theorists who engage with theology seek to develop theology that arises from critical reflection on local experience. This is understood to involve careful, attentive, and discerning listening to the voices and the activities of hope and healing in specific contexts (Gorringer, 2002, p. 16). As Ziebert and Schweitzer note in the introduction to the edited papers from the bi-annual conference of the International Academy of Practical Theology (IAPT) in Brisbane in 2005,

International exchange in practical theology makes higher demands on the participants or readers who have to develop an ability to go beyond their traditional ways of listening, reading and understanding (Ziebertz and Schweitzer, 2007, p. 8).

At that conference, presentations and discussion were organised around three streams that emerged from the 2003 Manchester IAPT conference, with a focus on the theme of 'public theology' (Graham and Rowlands, 2005). These three streams - ministry formation, liberating practice and empirical research - were expected to shape the discipline of practical theology and hold together the different aspects of the field rather than focus on their competing dialogue. In this way the weighting and emphasis of the different perspectives on the discipline were to engage each other with integrity, with all of them expressing engagement with some aspect of practice. The conference organisers argued that each of the streams contributes a facet through which to reflect on the dynamic of the discipline, but cannot be completely separated from the others (International Academy of Practical Theology). This approach

can also be understood from the opening paragraphs of the preface to the proceedings from that 2005 Brisbane Conference:

The purpose of this Academy is to support international dialogue and cooperation in all fields of practical theology. Its emphasis is on practical issues and contemporary challenges as well as on long term research and foundational questions relating to practical theology as an academic discipline (Ziebertz & Schweitzer, 2007, p. 8).

The organisers of the conference acknowledged the focus and expertise of both practitioners and academics, and their interdependence, which is the complexity and intrinsic dialogical nature of practical theology. This dialogical and interdependent perspective applies to each of the practical areas of ministry formation, liberative practice, and empirical research.

### **2.3. Ministry formation and personal transformation**

Against this background, strands in the literature argue that both ministry formation and theological education located in the field of practical theology will work to assist the personal growth and self awareness of those preparing for ministry leadership (Mudge and Poling, 1987, P. xxiv). Some acknowledge that such growth is not easily attained and involves sustained in-depth engagement in theory and practice together (Scharen, 2008), and perhaps requires a 'conversion' experience, from learning the theory and arts of ministry in order to apply those in given situations, to actively 'doing' theology within those situations using the data that is to be found there. Senge speaks of a 'mind-shift', or 'metanoia' (Senge, 1990, p. 13). In the New Zealand context, Randerson (2010) contends that a conversion from a focus on the needs of the church to those of wider society is necessary and that church leadership needs to be trained to enable this process.

In his book *Engagement 21*, Randerson, a retired bishop of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, identifies the mission of the Anglican

Church and the demographic data that provides the context for that mission. He notes the fivefold Mission Statement of the Anglican Consultative Council, adopted by the Anglican Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, points three and four being “To respond to human need by loving service, and to seek to transform the unjust structures of society” (Randerson, 2010, p. 10). Further in the chapter, as he reports on his research findings, he notes:

Unless the Church prepares its members to serve in the world (through prayer, worship, skill development, knowledge and understanding) it cannot be said to be in mission either to itself, or to others.

What assessment is ever made of how a parish is performing in community outreach, justice, peace and environmental care?

Mission means not only engaging with individuals but with cultures, races and nations and with their histories, policies and structures.

The problem is that conversion is often seen as being personal only and not a conversion to restoring right relationships in the world (Randerson, 2010, pp. 11-12).

I note these comments as background to Randerson’s later comments in which respondents in his research contend that the current church-facing paradigm is not working, and that the current ministry leaders are not trained or equipped to be leaders of social change (Randerson, 2010, p. 28). It is here, I will argue, that practical theology can make a significant contribution to the education of transformative leaders.

The works of Farley (1983) and Foley (2007) articulate the challenge of practical theology in terms of the process of formation and education. As noted (chap 2, 2.1), Schön (1987) and Killen and de Beer (1999), amongst others, provide insights into the art of reflective practice. The reflective practice approach they describe attends holistically to the personal and interpersonal dynamics of awareness in interaction with specific issues and

contexts. These reflective dynamics enable individuals to participate in healthy social engagement, and so learn from that engagement in ways that create both knowledge and self-awareness (Killen and de Beer, 1999, p. 73). Osmer in the final chapter of his book *Practical Theology: an introduction*, identifies four 'general educational issues' shaped by the desired outcomes or 'endstates' of the particular community that require reflective engagement. These four issues in relation to 'teaching practical theology' are:

Conceptualizing task competence in terms of the broader end states of practical theology,  
The importance of integrating the ... tasks of practical theological interpretation,  
The importance of educating the capacity for cross-disciplinary thinking  
Attending to the person of students (Osmer, 2008, pp. 220-223).

He notes that, contrary to what students sometimes think, the process of interpretation used by the practical theologian in relation to the intersecting disciplines:

Is not simply a matter of learning techniques ... it involves good judgement in quite particular circumstances. It takes key attitudes like willingness to attend to others with openness and thoughtfulness and to "suffer" the risks of raising normative questions and of leading change (Osmer, 2008, p. 222).

This process of education and leadership formation is thus seen to include the exploration of personal values and motivation, along with the ability to articulate theological perspectives that emerge from the life experiences of the persons and groups involved issues. Clarity of purpose and vision, and an ability to articulate the theology emerging from amongst the life experiences of communities, provide core dynamics for the approach as it is addressed, for example, by Osmer (2008). Green (1990), Browning (1996), and others who are concerned for the formation and education of the practical theologian, also point in this direction.

#### 2.4. Educating for 'liberating practice'

The category described in the Brisbane Conference of IAPT as 'liberating practice' attempts to understand and analyse contextual issues that are impediments to justice and liberation (International Academy of Practical Theology). The papers in the proceedings of that same conference, gathered together in *Dreaming the Land*, indicate this concern across issues of land and issues for indigenous Australian women and issues of multiculturalism and migration, and aged care (Ziebertz and Schweitzer, 2007). In the liberating practice aspect of practical theology, it is social dynamics and community engagement in processes for justice that are prioritised, building on the emphases of liberation theology (Gutierrez, 1974; Boff, 1988). Freire's educational approach to liberative action recognises that things 'sacred' are not separate from the ordinariness of human living but infuse it and its search for liberation and justice (Freire, 1972, 1974, 1998). Alison Kadlec (2006) seeks to reclaim Dewey's work (Dewey, 1916, 1938) that explores 'experience' within ordinary living, and to re-value it in education and philosophical enquiry. She does this because of Dewey's commitment to the "transformatory potential of lived experience to a reconstructed conception of individualism, and to the cultivation of reflective social intelligence ..." (Kadlec, 2006, p. 1).

It is argued by some in the field that one of the roles of theologian as transformative leader is to discern and attend both to lived experience and to the spirituality of people in time and place (Veling, 2005, p. 217). Daniel Louw (2007) suggests that,

Processes for the transformation of land include not merely structural transformation, but a transformation of attitude and aptitude as well (Louw, 2007, p. 12).

In addition to 'land' as the focus for the attention of the practical theologian, 'place' is also significant in practical theology literature. Gorringer argues that the 'built environment' is 'a place' where the majority of people's everyday

interactions are created and re-shaped and this too requires the attention of the theologian and other dialogue partners (Gorringe, 2002, p. 4). The support of urban dwellers is a necessary and growing concern which Christian theology and spirituality will need to attend to through the engagement of practical theologians. Gorringe suggests a contemporary significant issue for this work includes critical reflection on the way we construct our built environment. He contends that the way we build and what we build makes both a theological and an ethical statement about who we are and what we value (Gorringe, 2002, chpt. 2).

Empirical research is the third category in the dialogical processes of practical theology that were identified at the Brisbane conference of IAPT in 2005. Hans-Günter notes that “to be comprehensive, practical theologians need to include the full range of praxis in their empirical research” (Hans-Günter, 2005, p. 289). He suggests that the empirical partner in practical theology adds credibility to theological debate which contributes to public policy and social change. Practical theology thus understands itself as a social science rather than as a speculative enterprise, as traditional theology has been. Heitink (1999) underlines the significance of empirical research in practical theology, ensuring that actions and perspectives are rooted in the data of specific times and places (Heitink, 1999, pp. 221-223).

David Tracy points to the place of empirical research as he offers a way of identifying the scope of attention for the practical theologian (Tracy, 1981, p. 4) and the need for ‘persuasive argument’ (Tracy, 1981, p. 2). He identifies ‘three publics’ of theology: society, academy and church (Tracy, 1981, p. 3) which could be seen as representing the categories of liberating practice, empirical research and ministry formation respectively, and which Graham et al refer to as a triangulation of enquiry and practice that need each other (Graham et al., 2005, pp. 159 - 161). Tracy notes

Many theologians try to resolve this dilemma by choosing one of the three publics as their primary reference group. They tend to leave the other two publics at the margins of the consciousness (Tracy 1981, p. 13).

And yet he is insistent that theologians must speak on many issues and address public issues in ways that attend to all three publics.

## **2.5. Integrated and integrating**

Integration is a common theme in the literature of practical theology, as the material referred to in this section shows, highlighting this as a point of distinction from traditionally isolated disciplines and theoretical approaches. There is, however, tension within theological education between a theoretical research-based priority and an integrative praxis priority. Osmer identifies that tension within the field of practical theology. He notes the need for whole departments of theology to engage in designing courses that will integrate knowledge, attitudes, and skills and move away from the 'siloed' design of discrete theoretical courses (Osmer, 2008, pp. 220-221). Osmer also sees the need for practical theology to integrate insights from other disciplines into its work, calling for an inter-disciplinary approach, though he recognises the further tension in practical theology as different practical theologians look to differing discipline partners in, for example, sociology or psychology (Osmer, 2005, p. 307).

The theory-praxis tension exists also in other disciplines linked to vocational education, such as teaching, nursing and engineering. An article in *The New Zealand Herald*, for example, describes this same tension in relation to the school of engineering of Auckland University. The article suggests that graduates from School of Engineering are in danger of having all the theory, but being unable to use it in practice, such as to construct functional buildings in New Zealand's high earthquake risk zone:

The engineering schools are not training people ... They have been told by the Government that they [graduates] are required to have PhDs, and that is in conflict with training people to become good design engineers (Publish and Be Damned, 2007, p. B3).

Recent debates within the IAPT (Brisbane 2005 and Berlin 2007), also indicate the struggle to hold together theory and research with practice and experience in a mutually informative dialogue. Tension was expressed in the three fundamental approaches to practical theology identified in the Brisbane conference, linking practical theology respectively with 'empirical research' 'liberating practice' and 'ministry formation'.

They refer to three approaches with different objects, aim, and central questions and methods, that is, to different practical theological discourses (International Academy of Practical Theology, accessed online 30 July 2010).

In a paper presented at the Berlin conference, Foley explores the significance of 'integration' for ministers in a fragmenting and secularising world (Foley, 2007). He defines 'integration' as a continuous process of making connections and not a 'finished state'. Farley (1983) and Browning (1996) argue that practical theology is a discipline with a powerful contribution to make to specific contextual issues facing contemporary society because of its integrative, cross-disciplinary methodology. Their view is consistent with Ballard and Prichard, who suggest that practical theology is an approach to pastoral ministry which engages the issues of the social context (Ballard & Pritchard, 1996). Killen and de Beer (1999), Whitehead and Whitehead (1995), and Graham, Walton and Ward (2005) provide key texts which establish processes for theological reflection, which is foundational to practical theology. Such reflection enables the integration of different kinds of data, of experience with received theory, and of various relevant disciplines.

Schleiermacher, in his early work in what has become the field of practical theology, also stressed aspects of this integrative style and goal (Schleiermacher, pp. 218-219). He sought both to ensure that all theology was practical and to bring together theory and pastoral practice. Graham (1996, pp. 59-61) and Browning (1980) describe how Schleiermacher structures theological education around theoretical subjects such as biblical studies and ethics on the one hand and practical clerical skills as an applied art on the other, with the aim of assisting ministers to put their theory into practice. Heitink (1999), addressing the emerging theoretical discipline of practical theology in Europe seeks to shape a theory that integrates the diverse aspects of what was often known as pastoral or applied theology. The field of practical theology, as drawn on in this study, is understood as an integrated and integrative activity, not as a way of applying theory to practice (Veling 1998, p. 198).

The next section of this review of literature considers work that is indicative of the philosophical perspectives that influence practical theology and which underpin the understandings of knowledge and of human learning relevant to practical theology.

### **3. Philosophical Perspectives**

In considering philosophical perspectives that resource and help shape practical theology, the focus is on philosophical emphases that stress understandings of the nature of knowledge and the nature and purpose of education in ways that undergird the equipping of practical theologians who can lead transformative activity.

#### **3.1. The nature of knowledge**

Within the broad range of epistemological perspectives presented by various philosophical traditions, the perspectives which are most conducive to

practical theology and are most likely to be reflected in the methods and approaches of practical theology, are those which see knowledge as arising from human communities and being shaped by those communities. Such knowledge is then accessed through some process of interpretation of the products (including language and texts), structures (including social order), and interactions (including lifestyle and history) of the community. So the focus in epistemological perspectives of this kind tends to be on communal and personal experience (Dewey, 1938) evidenced in texts of various kinds (Rorty, 1999), through expressions of group history (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) and in social ordering (Diamond and Quinby, 1988), together with hermeneutical approaches and methods designed to interpret these experiences (Ricoeur, 1991).

John Dewey's pragmatism or instrumentalism (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, 2006, pp. 5ff) lies behind most of the educational approaches used within practical theology (Dewey 1916; 1938). The focus here is on knowledge that is 'useful', that arises from experimental methods and enables us to perceive "those connections of an object which determine its applicability in a given situation" (Dewey 1916, p. 340). The pragmatist strand continues more recently in the work of philosophers such as Rorty (Rorty, 1998, 1999). Rorty points out that for Dewey the emphasis is on 'experience', while more recent pragmatists, like himself, tend to emphasise the role of 'language' (Rorty, 1998; 1999, p. 35). For each, the focus is on knowledge as an aspect of human activity, of experience, tested by whether or not it helps to "create a better future" (Rorty, 1999, pp. 27-28).

A related approach is that of constructivism, which claims all knowledge is a human construction, something we create for ourselves through our human reflection and discourse, rather than something that exists outside of humanity, which we then seek to discover. Rorty's linguistic view sits in this

approach, asserting that truth (as certain knowledge) is “made not found” (Rorty 1998, p. 65). Piaget spoke of “constructivist epistemologies” in his research around human developmental processes (Piaget, 1967). Berger and Luckmann’s *Social Construction of Reality* explores the concept, using sociological insights and understandings, and contending that knowledge and reality are not external to human communities but are, in effect, constructed by them (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). ‘Communal constructivism’ is a term applied to the construction of knowledge by members of a community for the purposes of sharing it with their wider community (Holmes, et al, 2001). Contemporary, so-called ‘postmodern’ viewpoints tend to present this constructivist view in some form (Middleton and Walsh, 1995, pp. 35ff; Kitching, G. 2008).

Polanyi speaks of ‘personal knowledge’ (Polanyi, 1958), specifically in relation to scientific knowledge, arguing that researchers inevitably participate personally in the process of gaining and validating knowledge. He speaks further of ‘tacit knowing’ (Polanyi, 1966), where, he suggests, we can know something “only by relying on our awareness of it” while attending to something else: the knowledge is tacit rather than direct (Polanyi, 1966, p. 10).

Feminist writers present a range of ways in which women’s experience shapes their understanding of knowledge (Belenky, et al., 1986). In each of these, women’s experience is central: “when we speak of women’s experience, we are talking first and foremost of experience as reflected upon, what might be called knowledge” (Young, 1990, p. 49). Significant also is the recognition that long-held traditional views of knowledge have been shaped by men, out of male experience (Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 5). Jones (2000) identifies that

When feminists ‘do theory’, they look at individual and collective thought processes and ask about the grounding assumptions, orders, and rules that actively but often invisibly contribute to both the oppression and ultimate flourishing of women ( Jones, 2000, p. 4).

In all of these epistemological views, the process of interpretation – hermeneutics – has a significant role to play. Key writers, such as Habermas (1984-1987), Gadamer (2003; Hollinger (ed.), 1985), Foucault (2005) and Ricoeur (1991), stress this interpretive mode. In these writings there is the stress also on the need to develop critical methods and approaches that take into account such factors as the prior perspectives of the interpreter, the contexts of both the originating texts or actions and the current situation, and the influence of power dynamics. Feminist authors also move in this direction, making use of similar influences, often with a strong emphasis on the power issues, particularly in identifying the male sexist perspective of many originators of texts or actions (Schüssler Fiorenza, 2001).

### **3.2. The purpose of education**

There has been a wide range of purposes for education argued in the philosophical tradition. In the literature of practical theology, the purposes which emerge as most relevant are those which stress aspects of social change, rather than individual development alone. The work of Ivan Illich, especially in *Deschooling Society* (Illich, 1975), offers an important starting point for practical theology. Illich argues that the purpose of education is to challenge dominant ideologies and offer alternative approaches for gaining knowledge. His approach combined with Freire's methodology of bringing to critical consciousness those on the underside of history who have been silenced by dominant powers, makes education a 'subversive' tool for social change (Freire, 1972, 1974). Kadlec identifies the nature of education as being more than schooling, but is rather the process of developing critical awareness of our environment and our actions within it, and the capacity to effect change by making different choices from those passed on to us (Kadlec, 2006). In the context of adult learning, Brookfield (2005, p. 408) highlights the role of education in challenging prevailing ideologies and the sources of dominant

power. Earlier, Postman and Weingartner (1971) called for teaching to be understood and practised as a 'subversive activity'.

Freire's (1972) approach aims to put knowledge at the service of those less-privileged in society; to enable a coming to critical awareness of their social location and incipient power, then to engage these in self-determination in the process of social transformation. In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks (1974) speaks of education as 'the practice of freedom' and calls for education to be seen as a 'liberatory' practice (p. 14). The educational philosophies developed by Freire and Illich propose that reflection on experience, directly with the community of the 'oppressed', would lead to 'knowing and wisdom', or a new critical consciousness (Freire, 1972, pp. 51-56). From this, the ability to engage in processes of transformative action (Freire, 1972, pp. 25, 31) would emerge. Freire time and again stresses the need to move away from education as a system wherein the teacher 'makes deposits' and the student uncritically absorbs the deposit (1972, chpt. 2). Schreiner, Banev, Oxley, (2005) contend that the purpose of all education is to develop all aspects [body and spirit] of persons within the setting of their wider community.

These dynamics interweave with the need for critical awareness of the political dynamics of theological education, and its potential to contribute to social change (Wingate, 1999; Cornwall Collective, 1980; Chopp, 1987). Liberation theology, particularly its foundational works from Latin America, linked the priorities of social transformation and liberation with the role of the church and its theological discourse (Boff, 1988; Segundo, 1976). They emphasise the fundamental importance of *praxis* and contextualised reflected-on lived experience as the starting place for a dynamic transformative theology.

### 3.3. Experience and practical wisdom in education

Many philosophies of education have stressed the significance of experience in the process of learning. Jarvis, in relation to adult learning discusses the important role of experience (Jarvis, 2004, pp. 90-101). For Dewey, experience is at the core (Dewey, 1938). Dewey also expresses concern if the aims of education being established come from outside the social group involved:

For in that case some portion of the whole social group will find their aims determined by external dictation; their aims will not arise from free growth of their own experience, and their nominal aims will be means to more ulterior ends of others rather than truly their own (Dewey, 1916, pp. 100-101).

Dewey's emphasis was to enable participatory democracy, as outlined in *Democracy and Education* (Dewey, 1916, chpt. 7). He argues that not all experience constitutes matter beneficial to the educational task, however, all experience should be identified.

A primary responsibility of educators is that they not only be aware of the general principle of the shaping of actual experience by enviroing conditions, but that they also recognise in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth (1938, p. 40).

Dewey sought to overcome the dualisms that he saw existing in western education especially in the USA (Dewey, 1916, chpt. 8). That dualism between those with authority and leadership and able to think and reflect, and the mechanical transference of skill to the lower socio-economic classes, the labourers, Dewey referred to as the dualism of 'culture' and 'utility'. He argued instead to:

Construct a course of studies which makes thought a guide of free action for all and ... leisure a reward of accepting responsibility for service rather than a state of exemption from it (Dewey, 1916, p. 261).

He sought, for everyone, the ability to freely engage in the political framework of social organisation (1916, pp. 4-5). The use of the term 'political' by Dewey,

and in this study, implies engagement in decision making processes and the power to implement decisions (1916, chpt. 7).

Gadamer, in asserting the importance of questioning the *normative* truths that have been established by tradition, and which influence the questioner, warns that, rather than dispensing with traditional truth-claims, we need to be aware of them and their relevance for the contemporary experience of the questioner (Gadamer, 2004, p. 305). Dostal (2002) identifies that Gadamer sets the ground work for a *hermeneutical* approach in which contemporary experience and traditional 'truths' are in a mutually-critical and informative relationship (Dostal, 2002, pp. 46-58). Browning (1991), in discussing his proposals for systematic theology, notes in relation to Gadamer's hermeneutics:

That there is an intimate relation in his thought between the hermeneutical process and practical wisdom, or phronesis. ... [a] conversational model of hermeneutics (Browning, 1991, p. 300).

In 336 BCE, Aristotle used the term *phronesis*, or practical wisdom as it is translated from the Greek, to discuss the desire to act for the good of others that emerges from "deliberat[ing] well", (Aristotle, 1952 p. 389) that is, the dialogical engagement of reflection on traditional knowledge and current experience. The actions that result from "deliberating well" propel the person or persons concerned toward actions in the interests of the common good in as much as it promotes health and happiness (Aristotle, 1952, p. 389).

For Aristotle, *phronesis* provides both the momentum for the human community to create an alternative vision for its development as it questions its past, and the dynamic action necessary to bring about change for the good that will bring that vision into being. This momentum is fuelled by the desire for *happiness*, and happiness is inherent in actions that are in themselves *good*, the best, the most noble (1952, Book I: 7- 13, pp. 344 -348). The theory-*praxis* or thought-action reflection processes fundamental to the hermeneutics of

practical theology are also to be found in the writing of Aristotle (1952, Book VI: 7-8, p. 390). Aristotle considered that knowledge was gained by thinking about experience – it is a process of induction (1952, Book II: 2, p. 349). Thus practical theology is indebted to Aristotle for its reflection-on-experience approach to the gaining of knowledge (Scharen, 2008).

## **4. Pedagogical Approach**

A pedagogical approach outlines the theoretical models used to support and shape educational practice. In this section, the work of educators whose pedagogical models encourage the development of transformative leaders is considered for their contribution to the work of practical theology.

### **4.1. Problem-based**

The term ‘problem-based learning’ is used to describe the process of learning which emphasises the necessity of asking questions, as stressed by some key contributors to educational literature (Dewey, 1916; Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 11). It is an approach that challenges the ‘banking’ model (Freire, 1972, chpt. 2), or the ‘transfer of information’ model of education. Such models, critiqued by Freire, assume those who have information pass it on to those who do not. The recipients will then remember it, and thereby be enriched, and draw on this transferred information for the ‘right understandings of truth’ and responsible citizenship. A ‘problem-based’, praxis model privileges reflected-on experience, or what may be referred to as ‘wisdom from below’. In his later *Pedagogy of Hope* (1992), Freire discusses the importance of experience and listening to the ‘educand’ and, rather than accommodating their knowledge, reframing it “as a problem for them thereby bringing them once more into dialogue” (1992, p. 36), and starting on a new path.

Jarvis (1983) also discusses the importance of 'problem-based learning' for adults, with the role of the 'progressive educator' to assist the identification of the problem (Jarvis, 1983, p. 170-171; Freire, 1972, p. 3, chpt. 2). This contributes to an alternative framework for effective education for those who have not previously benefited from the dominant traditional education models. It recognises starting places in the values of life experiences that are different from the culture that is shaping the dominant educational model and its desired outcomes. It challenges those who function by virtue of social privilege within existing political systems, and who assume the right to pass on knowledge about the ways things are and function, to 'open the spaces' of knowledge creation to those not similarly privileged (hooks, 2003, p. 1).

#### **4.2. Challenging dominant wisdom**

hooks (1994) provides a provocative perspective of an engaged pedagogy, where students are participating in education that expresses the 'practice of freedom' that does not simply 'reflect or reinforce systems of domination'. She argues that education as the practice of freedom needs to be a 'practice site of resistance' and teachers in these practice-sites should be risk-takers and willing to be vulnerable (hooks, 1994, p. 21). She presses for an educational practice that opens the spaces below the dominant frame, providing for the truths of alternative perspectives and experiences to emerge. This recognition of teaching as a 'subversive activity' was previously identified by Postman and Weingartner (1969).

Cultural studies, in particular postcolonial theory, draw attention to the significance of context for the emergence of knowledge and wisdom that move out from under the normative and 'good' formulations of the dominant discourse. Exponents of post-colonial discourse urge educators to provide opportunities to seek new meanings from formative texts and to provide tools helpful in the re-evaluation of biblical interpretation and theology in relation

to particular social contexts and interpretation of events along with the formative texts of the discourse (Loomba, 1998; Sugirtharajah, 2003). The knowledge and interpretations of colonists is no longer acceptable or appropriate in enabling the emergence and self-naming of identity.

Gadamer challenges the notion of singular truth, arguing that there cannot be a truth-claim that is not historically framed and conditioned by some tradition of enquiry. He suggests that the normative tradition will determine the questions (Gadamer, 2004, pp. 355ff; Dostal, 2002, p. 58). It is therefore necessary, he would contend, that we should know the 'normative context', and what in that context will be counted as a 'good' answer to the questions that are raised (Dostal, 2002, pp. 57-59). In exploring a similar idea hooks (1994) notes:

Through the cultivation of awareness, through the decolonisation of our minds, we have the tools to break the dominator model of human social engagement and the will to imagine new and different ways that people might come together. Martin Luther King, Jr. imagined a "beloved community"... (hooks, 1994, p. 35).

To build community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialisation that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination (1994, p. 36).

The growing of knowledge from the underside, or what is often referred to as "wisdom from below", provides a framework for the shaping of knowledge and 'right relations' in a 'just' society by asserting a different way of learning and knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Glodberger, & Tarule, 1986; Adams, 1991). This approach has the potential to engage more effectively with those previously excluded from the creation of knowledge so as to form 'communities of practice' (Ellison, 2007). Those within such communities thus become active participants in the creation of different knowledge in dialogue with the institutions of society that traditionally 'normalise and authenticate'

information and knowledge. Ellison, in a public lecture in Auckland, described communities of practice as:

Groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better. This is usually located in cultural activity based on race, identity or social justice and they claim the power to make and ascribe value to knowledge (Ellison, 2007).

Said (2002) uses the terms 'independent intellectual' and at other times 'dissenting voice' to describe the place and the purpose of those who assist communities and societies to develop new ideas, truths and identity. For example, Said highlights this independent or dissenting stance of the intellectual by suggesting that,

The intellectual's role generally is dialectically oppositional to uncover and elucidate the contest ..., to challenge and defeat imposed silence and the normalised quiet of unseen power wherever possible (Said, 2002, p. 31).

Simmons (2007) describes how in Aotearoa-New Zealand the function of assisting the creation of knowledge has moved out of the university. His essay discusses the importance of intellectuals in community life who are not influenced by corporate priorities in creating reflective communities alternative to a 'knowledge economy' with its focus on economic growth and productivity. He argues that productivity-focus compromises intellectuals and knowledge that benefits the already powerful, rather than the search for knowledge that benefits the people with less social standing and participatory power (Simmons, 2007, pp. 1-21).

### **4.3. Participatory space**

Jarvis and others (Jarvis, 2004; Brookfield, 2005; Mezirow, 1991) argue for the concept of 'adult education' to be set in contrast to 'higher education' in the education of adults, stressing the development of life-long learning skills, and

recognising the value of active participation in the learning process for effective adult learning (Jarvis, 2004, pp. 90ff).

The adult education approach recognises past experiences of persons and their current motivating concerns in relation to the desire to engage in a focussed learning cycle (Fenwick and Tennant, 2004, pp. 55-60; Jarvis, 2004, pp. 82-100). The cycle includes the development of skills in reflective practice, focussed on actions undertaken in the interest of developing deep understanding; practical wisdom. Such reflection enables the development of conceptualising skills, and confidence in the transferability of skills in knowledge gathering and practical action. Brookfield argues that adult education has been described as motivated not by the primacy of data gathering or the accumulation of information, but rather by the growth of integrated knowledge such as is necessary for active engagement in social groupings for the benefit of the group and its several members (Brookfield, 2005, pp. 27-29). In such an approach, enabling students to access learning and skill development in ways that take account of cultural background, past educational experiences, future aspiration and personal learning styles is necessary in order to facilitate personal growth. The growth in self awareness and confidence required by this approach to education in turn facilitates participation and leadership in actions that enable groups to 'live-well' and shape their corporate life and future.

Adult education calls for a learning environment that provides a space that encourages participation. Physical space that recognises the needs of the adult learner for informal conversations and group learning enhances the sharing of past experience and therefore supports active participation. Curriculum design that allows opportunities for the sharing of differing ideas and perspectives on a topic creates space for reflective learning. Brookfield suggests:

Creative silence - periods of reflection during which learners and teachers can quietly ponder new perspectives be encouraged; that traditional seating structures be replaced by small group circles; that class sessions be two or three hours rather than fifty or sixty minutes... (Brookfield, 1997, p. 82).

Schüssler Fiorenza argues that “open space” is necessary in adult learning to enable all ideas and insights to be shared in the common learning process. This might be termed ‘ideational space’, which is, however, not entirely open. In Schüssler Fiorenza’s feminist perspective, this “open space” is “bounded” by the priorities of the feminist analysis (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1993, p. 348). Such ‘bounded’ open space forms an appropriate setting for adult education in relation to any area or topic: “It does not exclude any perspective to begin with ... everyone is encouraged to participate” (Adams and Salmon, 1996, p. 174).

Wenger et al (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) discuss knowledge as a collective dynamic, together with the importance of the ‘community coordinator’, understanding the growth and development of the ‘communities of practice’. They suggest communities of practice will provide stable points of connection and identity markers in an increasingly mobile, global and rapidly changing world (Wenger, 1998, chpt. 2; Wenger et al 2002, p. 11, p. 20).

The key pedagogical approaches examined in this section are all linked with praxis and ‘problem-based’ learning. These theoretical models are biased toward educational practice that enhances participatory citizenship and transformative practice. These writers place emphasis on concepts, such as ‘communities of practice’, in the creation of contextual instruments of empowerment and transformation at a personal and societal level.

## **5. Educational Practice**

The style of educational practice to prepare ministry leaders able to engage with social transformation is articulated in theoretical approaches such as critical theory and the cycle of learning (Jarvis, 2004; Kolb, 1984; Mezirow, 1991). These approaches recognise that the learner comes with prior knowledge, experience, commitment and perspectives embedded in their understanding of how the world works and their place in it.

### **5.1. Provoking the generative questions**

Gadamer contends that “only the person who has questions has knowledge” (Gadamer, 2004, p. 359). The fundamental use of questions as tools in open dialogue builds on the adult learners prior knowledge, experience, commitment and perspectives which can be expressed in critical questions, thereby making them particularly knowledgeable before they enter a formal learning process (Jarvis, Holford, & Griffin, 1998). Rorty develops the idea of a ‘guiding question’: “for what purpose might it be useful to hold that belief? ... What difference will it make?” (Rorty, 1996, p. 39). He explains how questions help inform critical inquiry, suggesting that a guiding question, an open-ended question that shapes the direction of the enquiry while encompassing sufficient cultural indicators, enables a relevant exploration of the ‘problem’ to be pursued in an attempt to serve transitory purposes rather than intrinsic truth (Rorty, 1996, pp. 38-41). A guiding question of this kind connects with the experience and enthusiasms of the questioner.

Baumgartner and Payr (1996) pick up the concept of ‘generative questions’, and note that:

These are questions that open up the problem space, draw attention to the problematic points and make solutions comparable (1996, p. 36).

Freire (1970, chpt. 3) used the concept of generative themes to open up conversation around problems and alternative solutions. These themes are elicited through the use of questions. The 'generative question' enables the enquirer to stay focussed on the issue while at the same time indicating other factors within the scope of the enquiry. Kadlec (2006) draws attention to the impetus in Dewey's work (Dewey, 1938) for critical reflection on experience to challenge dominant interests:

Given Dewey's democratic commitments, the question is how do we actualise the critical potential of everyday experience and transform it into a reservoir for social change? (Kadlec, 2006, p. 533).

Developing the capacity to critically reflect on everyday experiences is core to this:

Education, says Dewey, does not prepare us for anything, it is rather the process by which we "grow" and develop as self-directing human beings capable of recognising the consequences of our actions and as a result, become capable of effecting change toward the betterment of our collective existence (Kadlec, 2006, p. 540).

## **5.2. Creating critical attitudes and fostering reflexive thinking**

The ability to reflect critically on action, essential for leadership that prioritises creative transformation in a contemporary society characterised by rapid change and uncertainty, is stressed by a number of educational writers (Brookfield, 1987, 2005; Mezirow, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Contemporary exponents of adult education urge this approach as necessary for the development of critical thinkers able to engage positively in assessing and solving the continuously emerging problems brought about by rapid change (Jesson & Newman, 2004; Schön, 1987; Senge, 1990). Jarvis, for example, argues that reflective practice is critical for 'life-long learning' and, that institutions need to become 'learning organisations' (Jarvis, 2004, p. 23), while Mezirow suggests "reflection is the central dynamic in intentional learning, problem solving, and validity testing" (Mezirow, 1991, p.99). Schön also posits

the importance of 'learning systems of organisations' (Schön, 1991, pp. 242-243), noting the responsibility of those with leadership in organisations to reflect on the organisational experience, enabling adaptation in solving problems and providing models. He suggests organisations need to learn to reflect on their experiences as contexts for learning, and to explore the challenges and implication of those experiences (Schön 1991, p. 243). Brookfield (1987) identifies a key component in critical thinking as the ability to ask:

... awkward questions concerning common-sense ideas about how we are supposed to organise our workplaces, act in our intimate relationships and become politically aware (Brookfield, 1987, p. 8).

Reflecting on actions, undertaken in an experiential and discovery-based approach, is relevant for the education of adults, such as ministry leaders, the majority of whom are usually older. Participation in a group engaged in practice (Wenger, 1998), facilitates the integration of experience and contemporary theoretical understandings with cultural tradition and classical frameworks and concepts. For example, Rogers notes the importance of a climate of engagement, a goal of which is "to develop a society in which people can live more comfortably with *change* than with *rigidity*" (Rogers, 1969, p. 304). For theological education, such an approach enables the emphasis to shift from a 'Christian enculturation' model to one where education is about discovery and the articulation and communication of reflected insights in the interests of engagement with personal and social transformation. Farley describes the concept of *habitus* in relation to theology which he sees as "self-conscious scholarly enterprise of understanding... usually occurring in some sort of pedagogical setting" (1983, pp. 31-35). He notes further on that "[it is a] deliberate, methodical undertaking whose end was knowledge" (1983, p. 37).

### 5.3. Providing relevant space

Educational writers such as Boyes (Boyes, 2001, pp. 53-66), highlight the way physical space within which learning is to take place impacts on the style and quality of that learning. In addition to appropriate space for intentional learning, attention is also given to space for more informal interactions. In their work on the importance of developing social capital, Cohen and Prusack develop material on the intentional creation of spaces in organisations for informal conversations as an investment in encouraging interpersonal connections and face to face conversations (Cohen & Prusack, 2001, p. 107). They suggest that providing space - physical, conceptual and temporal - for informal social time and 'intimate talking' develops this 'art of conversation' through which relationships and networks are created and collaboration on problems and ideas of mutual interest developed. They consider that a network is one of the most powerful assets any individual can have because it provides access to power and information, knowledge and other networks (Cohen & Prusack, 2001, p. 59). Quality learning environments, they suggest, are those that enable the development of networks to begin. Baron, Field and Schuller (Baron, et al, 2001) also identify the 'network', and the potential for social action to coalesce in networks through the identification of common interests and concerns. They argue that,

One of the key merits of social capital is the way it shifts the focus of analysis from the behaviour of individual agents to the pattern of relations between agents (Baron et al., 2001, p. 35).

Thus provision of 'space' is a core component in its own right, both in considering physical space and in the curriculum design for space in which students can integrate learning and practice reflexivity at their own pace (Jarvis 1983, p. 223). Jarvis also draws attention to the need to take into account the needs of the physical body of the adult learner in the creation of appropriate temporal space (Jarvis, 1983, pp. 68-69). Further, he refers to mental capacities and attention span along with physical needs which can be

affected by seating and food. Time-tabling space in which these dynamics can be attended he considers appropriate in creating optimum learning environments for adult learners (Jarvis 1983).

#### **5.4. Recognising cultural diversity**

Ethnic and cultural diversity has important implications for the way theological education is developed because it results in a wider range of cultural experiences and religious perspectives within a learning group. Literature on multicultural education (Samu, Mara & Siteinie, 2008), helps this development and challenges pre-existing understanding and challenges our understanding of religion and the role of the church in society (Chopp & Taylor, 1994; Tiatia, 1998). Maalouf suggests that within contemporary society there is a need for greater awareness of our multiple identities and the need to learn to dialogue with one another across and between different identities (Maalouf, 2001). He argues that the ability to recognise more than one identity within an individual or group could help move society from embattled defensive stances between different cultural communities to relationships embodying a mutual appreciation of difference (Maalouf, 2001, pp. 30-36). Tiatia (1998) identifies some of the critical tensions experienced by Pacific people, particularly youth, because of identity disruption in settling into Aotearoa-New Zealand society.

The challenge for us as New Zealand born is to theorise our own experiences as we understand them and not have others construct or interpret them for us. These experiences will provide an authentic representation for these significant others (Tiatia, 1998, p. 5).

Tiatia challenges leaders, including church ministry leaders, to move toward a constructive dynamic, reshaping identity that broadens out from that shaped by the church and by implication toward an understanding of social engagement (Tiatia, 1998, pp. 142-150, 167-168). Wendt (1996) explored similar

themes in novel form including the power of the church along with culture in shaping the lives of Samoan people settling in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

In this section I have focussed on literature that discusses pedagogical practices in education which recognise the prior experience of the adult learner. Key themes raised in the literature include the importance of questions and critical reflection as tools that encourage the development of wisdom from below, and the importance of participation in learning communities that 'create knowledge and wisdom' that leads to personal and social transformation. Thus according to hooks,

Professors who embrace the challenge of self-actualisation will be better able to create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply (hooks, 1994, p. 22).

## **6. Social Transformation**

The review of literature relating to practical theology and its philosophical perspectives, pedagogical theory and educational practice, includes also reference to the role of personal and social transformation. The final theoretical component of practical theology explored in the literature is social transformation, as the ultimate outcome of all forms of education.

### **6.1. The concept of 'social transformation'**

Castles (2001) identifies that the task of developing an "overarching theoretical framework" for social transformation is still in its early development stages (2001, p. 14). He suggests that a useful definition in this rapidly changing field would be more specific than definitions tied to "factors such as economic growth, war or political upheavals" (2001, p. 15). He offers

Social transformation ... as an *interdisciplinary analytical framework* for understanding global interconnectedness and its regional, national and local effects. Social transformation studies need therefore to be conceptualised in contrast to notions of development (or development studies) (Castles, 2001, p. 15).

Castles argues that

... it is essential to understand social transformation studies as a field of research that can lead to positive recipes for social and political action to protect local and national communities against negative consequences of global change (Castles, 2001 p. 19).

Castles is adamant that interdisciplinary research in the interests of social transformation requires a holistic approach that must engage people in local communities with whom solutions will be shaped. It requires leaders who will ensure that participatory methods are designed to enable disempowered groups to voice their aspirations and concerns (2001, p. 20).

Castles argues also that, while social transformation should lead to improved livelihood for people in local contexts, it can also lead to local resistance:

... social transformation should lead to positive recipes for political action to help communities improve their livelihoods and cope with the consequences of global change.

... the response to social transformation may not be adaptation to globalisation but rather resistance. This may involve mobilisation of traditional, cultural and social resources, but can also take new forms of 'globalisation from below' through transnational civil society organisations (Castles, 2001, p. 19).

Freire's work provides a valuable starting point for conceptualising social transformation. His writings develop the concept of the process of *conscientization* whereby the oppressed, the 'unfree', come to deepened awareness of their socio-cultural situation and their capacity to substantively change (transform) that situation by their actions upon it (Freire, 1972, pp. 15, 106-107, 127-130).

It is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as Subjects of the transformation (Freire, 1972, p. 97).

Brookfield (1987) argues that “critical questioning is the last thing those in positions of power who are autocratically seeking to retain the status quo wish to see ...” (p. 64). It will bring accusations of bias and therefore requires the teacher to be open about their perspective from the outset. This said, Brookfield further argues that becoming a critical thinker is necessary for a ‘healthy democracy’ and equipping people to participate in change. Developing a critical awareness means we can

identify assumptions underlying behaviours, choices and decisions. They [helpers] help people realise that while actions are shaped by context, context can be altered to be more congruent with people’s desires (Brookfield, 1987, p. 10).

In this way, developing skills, awareness and critical thinking opens the way for participation in social-transformation.

Postcolonial theory provides another marker in the literature on social transformation. Loomba (1998), Castles (2001), and Sugirtharajah (2005) argue that social transformation starts with knowledge that emerges from analysis of the local or national social situation followed by intentional reflection, and then actions focused on changing the forces and structures that shape that social situation. Loomba (1998) provides a framework that helps examine what constitutes social transformation for immigrant communities located within dominant cultures. Loomba (1998) and Sugirtharajah (2003) both note the danger of an unexamined reassertion of ‘traditional cultural’ practices.

From the perspective of Christian liberation theology, Gutierrez presents “transformation as a praxis of liberation” (Gutierrez, 1983, p. 50), highlighting the active process involved in moving toward just society.

## **6.2. Transformative learning**

More recent writers in the area of adult education, Mezirow in particular, discuss adult education as ‘transformative learning’ (Mezirow, 1991).

Transformative learning is learning that develops critical awareness of the social context, along with the ability to hypothesise alternatives and engage in actions to bring the alternatives into being. Mezirow argues that in this process of coming to critical consciousness, fundamental to the transformative process of adult education, educators are faced with numerous ethical issues (Mezirow, 1991, pp. 201-204). Not least, he suggests, is ensuring learners are aware of the difficulties that transformed awareness, and plans to act, may bring for the learner in relation to the social group of which they are a part. He also notes the potential for psychological difficulties which may require attention and which should be provided for (Mezirow, 1991, p. 205). Both Mezirow (1991, p. 281) and hooks, in relation to racism (2003, pp. 93-100), identify how what often is presented as a personal 'problem' comes to be understood as a social issue. Educational practice that opens spaces for critical questioning is fundamental to the conscientization process of adult education and the move from personal to social transformation. In theological education, this turn towards social transformation is recognised and affirmed also in the literature on theological education (Cornwall Collective, 1980; Wheeler & Farley (eds.) 1991; Banks, 1999).

Baert (1998, p.204) identifies a number of social theorists who portray 20th century people as people who live in an unquestioned world. Authors such as Brookfield see the move away from an uncritical acceptance of social structures, and the 'truth-assertions' that support them, as core to adult education and processes of transformation. Brookfield (2005) identifies the work of Habermas on this matter, particularly in relation to "learning democracy" (pp. 248-74). Brookfield notes provocatively that 'hegemony' describes the way we "learn to love our servitude" (2005, p. 94) – that it works by consent. It is by undermining the "commodification of learning" which supports the hegemony (p. 103), through learning critical consciousness in

processes which hold together theory and practice (p. 352), that there grows a “transformative impetus” (p. 353).

### **6.3. Transformative leadership**

Transformation requires leadership if it is to be successful. Such leadership requires listening to, and working with, those whose social situation is most in need of transformation. Some writers in social transformation use the terminology of ‘organiser’ (Alinsky, 1972, p. 177) to describe leadership that works with groups in order to achieve change for a wider social group. Education activities are designed to build this leadership capacity, as in *Training for Transformation* handbooks prepared by Hope and Timmel, who see their material as educating “community workers” (Hope and Timmel, 1984, Vol 1. p. 4).

Various writers on ministry identify the significance of exploring appropriate models of leadership for ministry. Gibbs seeks to redefine church leadership in a changing cultural situation (Gibbs, 2005), while Greenleaf explores Christian leadership in the context of power and authority, using the concept of ‘servant leadership’ to identify a style of leadership that works with the needs and hopes of communities (Greenleaf, 1991). Banks (1999) cites Ferris (1982) as contending that “theological schools should state their commitment to training for servant leadership” (Banks, p. 225). Others contend that ministry leaders can appropriately exercise transformative leadership. Poling and Miller talk about the prophetic and justice-making roles of ministry leadership within community (Poling and Miller, 1985, pp. 136-141). They suggest that “just leadership is sensitive to the needs of the community within the socio-political context and can act with courage to engage the community” (p. 141). Ruether makes a similar point from a feminist perspective (Ruether, 1983, pp. 206-210), while Bonino talks of the link between Christianity and “social praxis” (Bonino, 1983, p. 47).

Prentice identifies leadership this way:

The accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants. The man [sic] who successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends is a leader (Prentice, 2005, p. 151).

Transformative leadership is about change; however, it takes a more collaborative and ethical value base than other forms of leadership (Apps, 1994, p. 223). Apps goes on to note that transformative leadership links social change with an experience of change at a personal level. Transformation is much more than change. It is an enhancement of personal reality as well as a conversion of reality. It is a psychological process, an emotional experience, and an encounter that touches the soul (Apps, 1994, p. 211).

Preece identifies “new leadership models embrac[ing] social transformation and concerns with democracy and social justice” (2003, p. 246). There is risk in the transformative process if it is focussed simply on the goals of emancipation and empowerment, as individuals and groups will come to positions in relation to these from different standpoints. Writing out of the specific context of Southern Africa, she argues for the recognition of spirituality in transformative leadership (2003, pp. 250-352). She links the transformative learner’s inspiration to change and challenge the status-quo on a social as well as on an individual level, using words such as “interconnectedness, inspiration, visions of alternatives and social justice” (2003, p. 251) to indicate the capacity of the transformative leader to lead such change. It is for Preece, as with other authors cited in this literature review, that capacity to reflect, to adjust position, to synthesise information, and to act in a continuous process with others that identifies a transformative leader (2003, p. 251).

## **7. Concluding the Literature review**

Literature in the field of practical theology, with its links to philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, educational practice, and social transformation, portrays the diverse threads of ideas and practices involved, while also pointing to some core aspects of practical theology as a tool for equipping leaders in social transformation. These aspects include the significance of reflective practice in relation to specific contexts, the role of personal transformation in education for change, a stress on liberative methods and goals, the deep value of cross-disciplinary integration, an understanding of 'practical wisdom' as an educational goal, the importance of ongoing question-asking and problem-solving in learning and in transformative practice, and the relevance of the educational setting itself. The notions of 'reflexive thinking' and 'contextual critique' lead towards the formation of 'transformative leaders'. These discussions and emphases within the field of practical theology help shape both the research question now being addressed and the methodological approach being used in exploring that question.

Much of the literature that influenced and informed the researcher in the processes of designing and implementing the three educational projects is included in this review. For example, the work of Freire and Illich were important in relation to first project studied, while feminist writers such as Schüssler Fiorenza and writing on adult education informed the second project. While such literature informed the development and teaching practice of the educational projects, specific writers are not necessarily referred to within the case studies.

The review of literature provided the categories that were used in 'listening' to research interviewees and in analysing the data from both interviews and other documentation in relation to the case studies. The categories of

philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, educational practice and social transformation are used also in identifying markers for practical theology.

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### 1. Setting of the Study

The literature discussed in the previous chapter identifies components of theory and practice that have influenced and resourced the field of practical theology. Writing in the areas of philosophical perspective, pedagogical theory, educational practice and social transformation raises perspectives and questions for practical theology, as the setting for the research question of this study. The literature indicates the diverse nature of practical theology, while highlighting its contextual focus, the significance of reflective and liberating practices, and its integrated and integrating nature. Influential philosophical perspectives point to the purpose of education as developing a critical consciousness, with an emphasis on experience and with practical wisdom as the goal. Pedagogical insights include the relevance of problem-based models, which challenge dominant understandings of wisdom, and support the development of communities of practice. Relevant educational practice emphasises the use of generative questions, which foster reflexive thinking and assist in creating critical attitudes. It also stresses the need to provide space within which learners interact and feel at home, while enabling appropriate responses to culturally-diverse groups. Discussion around the concept of social transformation, as an educational goal of practical theology, identifies also the relevance of both transformative learning and leaders who engage in transformative action.

The research question, *what markers in theological education characterise practical theology as a process of equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation*, sits in the context of these perspectives and the questions raised.

The study is undertaken in order to identify those markers from the experience of the three discrete theological education projects with which the writer was engaged, each of which prioritised transformation amongst its goals.

## **2. The Question of Methodology**

In social research, the key methodological approaches are quantitative and qualitative. A quantitative approach tends to view knowledge as contained in quantifiable data, set in research contexts where that data can be readily measured, and with the expectation that ideas, knowledge or conclusions can be drawn directly from the quantified data. A qualitative approach, on the other hand, tends to view knowledge as contained in or constructed by the lives of persons and groups, so the data will be related primarily to actions and perceptions of such persons and groups and gathered directly from those persons and groups, and resulting in a complex relationship between ideas, hypotheses, data and conclusions.

Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints that shape inquiry ... In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p. 13).

Bearing these differences in mind, along with the nature of the projects this research addresses, and the engagement of the researcher in the projects, a qualitative methodological approach has been selected for the study.

In considering a methodological approach for this study, I was aware of the need to choose an approach that could allow for a small research sample and the organic and socially interactive nature of the projects which are the subjects of this research. Key components in selecting a methodological approach involve considering epistemology, the nature of the data to be

collected, the context within which the research will take place, and the relationship between the data and the ideas, hypotheses or conclusions that are to be explored or identified.

### **2.1. Rationale for a qualitative methodological approach**

The three projects that comprise the study were established separately from each other over a period of thirty years with the researcher as a common factor. Consequently, a significant feature in selecting the methodological approach was consideration of the capacity for the recollections and assumptions of the researcher to be acknowledged and challenged in order for there to be transparency and where necessary, correction.

As this is the first critical reflection on these three projects, it was unclear what issues would be raised during the research phase. The researcher anticipated the data would not be readily quantifiable as the number of persons and groups involved (57) was relatively small, and because much of the data would be evoked from memories and feelings. From a qualitative perspective, there is need to give maximum opportunity for awareness and feelings to emerge as participants bring tacit knowledge to the surface for consideration. So an inductive process of research in which participants could assist each other in remembering and analysing was appropriate. In undertaking the study, a variety of methods consistent with qualitative research methodology was used to gather the data, including focus groups, semi-structured interviews and consideration of reports.

The research sought to identify what markers in these unique theological education projects characterise practical theology as I have described it and point toward the equipping of practical theologians as leaders in social transformation. A methodological approach was sought that would be consistent with the socially interactive nature of the learning groups and

would enable a range of methods to be used. Consequently, this research undertaking sits within the field of social research, utilising a qualitative methodology.

Qualitative methodology according to Swinton and Mowat (2006, p. 6) is “slippery and hard to contain within a single definition”. It does however enable the researcher to observe and participate with the subjects of the research in their social setting and engage with them in interpreting and making sense of their world.

Identifying and developing understandings of these meanings is the primary task of qualitative research (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p. 30).

As this study seeks to elucidate information held in the experiences, memories and feelings of those who participated in the educational projects, bringing it to light and naming those feelings and experiences, a qualitative methodology is appropriate.

The qualitative methodological approach used in gathering and reflecting on the data for this study recognises and enables open-ended and complex interactions between people in discovering what they know about the project they were engaged in and have reflected on since. Knowledge and understanding grows as together, in conversation, memories are recalled and critiqued and stories told. Learning and knowledge are communal projects (Wenger, 1998, Coda II). Jackson and Kassam (1998) discuss the significance of this collaborative approach in the creation and evaluation of knowledge in relation to social development.

The shared knowledge that emerges through this process is more accurate, more complex, and more useful than knowledge that is produced and deployed by professionals alone (Jackson and Kassam, 1998, p. 1).

To this end, the methods I have selected are congruent with a qualitative research approach.

### **3. Selecting Methods for the Research**

Denzin and Lincoln define the interpretative paradigm for this interactive, critical, co-creation as *constructivist*:

The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the general world) set of methodological procedures (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, p. 35).

Etherington (2004) identifies that for her it is important to find a research methodology that is consistent with her underlying values and philosophies on life and beliefs about how knowledge is created (2004, p. 71). For the researcher in this study, following Etherington's proposition, a methodology is required that will enable groups of people to co-create knowledge in interaction with each other and to support each other in articulating "tacit as well as explicit knowledge" (Wenger et al 2002, p. 9). Wenger et al also go on to say "we know more than we can tell. Not everything we know can be codified as documents or tools" (p. 9). Etherington makes a similar comment:

"... our subjective, 'tacit' knowing, and intuition, which did not conform to rational rules, made an equally important contribution... And not only did practitioners need to understand themselves at this deeper level, they also needed to make their understandings explicit in order to go beyond and learn from them" (Etherington, 2000, p. 29).

#### **3.1. Issues relevant to selecting research methods**

The intention of this study is to examine each of the three projects through the remembered experiences of various participants. Consideration will be given to the evolution of the primary educational perspective that provided the impetus for the first of the case studies, referred to as the 'Glendowie project'. It will be significant to note how the later projects were influenced by this

educational perspective, and how the perspective developed over time and in relation to the contextual changes that society and church underwent during the nearly thirty years involved.

As the researcher was engaged in the design and development of each of the three projects, the research methods selected need to provide space in which to acknowledge the personal recollections and the sustained experience of the researcher as these too become part of data. The researcher undertook ongoing reading, experimentation and discussion and critical reflection with colleagues throughout the life of each project. It is inevitable, therefore, that some of the research data and insights arise from this long-term participatory or 'insider' research process. The concept of the *reflexive* researcher describes this role and the contribution the researcher can make to the remembering and distillation of learnings. Etherington (2002, p. 31) defines the concept

I understand researcher reflexivity as the capacity of the researcher to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts (which may be fluid and changing) inform the process and outcomes of inquiry.

The 'reflexive researcher' has been described by Etherington (2002, p. 71), from personal experience and by inclusion of herself

In discussion with others, we can co-construct new meanings in response to their critical reflections and our own. This critical, external reflecting allows us to check for distortions in our interpretations that might be based on past experiences held outside our full awareness ... (2002, p. 29)

To enable an open-ended conversation of a semi-structured nature to take place and in which, to a limited degree, the researcher could be included, methods of gathering data were selected that made provision for these aspects to be acknowledged.

Tolich and Davidson (1999) provide a perspective in relation to research that takes account of the researcher where they have been a participant. They note that the researcher is also a learner (Tolich & Davidson, 1999, p. 6). They also suggest that the researcher who is actively engaged in some way in the projects of the research writes their view of the story, based on what they know, before they embark on the research (Tolich & Davidson, 1999, p. 12). The recording of each of the case studies began this way. The researcher recorded personal memories and experiences before engaging with those of others. This enabled comparison and critique of initial data in relation to the later material, thus ensuring the participant researcher's purposes and memories could be clearly identified.

The size of the projects being studied, their group nature and the relevance of their context, together with the ongoing involvement of the researcher, all influence the choice of method.

### **3.2. Action research methods**

Swinton and Mowat, in presenting an action research method discuss the importance of the participant researcher "being aware of their own historic 'situatedness' and the ways in which it influences their interpretations..." (2006, p. 113). Etherington (2004) also notes the importance of "self-awareness" (p. 128) in situations where the researcher is a participant along with others in gathering data from memories and experiences.

Action research (AR) can help us build a better freer society. ... AR democratizes research processes through the inclusion of local stakeholders as co-researchers (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, p. 3).

This statement provides an indication of the purposes of action research within the broader frame of qualitative social research and points to its usefulness in this study. It identifies a purpose as well as the priority to democratise the research process. It is clear to the researcher that a significant

factor in this study is the credibility of the findings. This becomes a significant factor because, as already identified, the researcher was the common factor across the three projects and the numbers of projects and participants is small. By the inclusion of a range of stakeholders from students to governors in the data-gathering and reflection process, the researcher aims to ensure the credibility of the findings. The findings need not only to be credible to those personally involved in the creation of the knowledge that emerges, but the findings also need to be credible to interested persons 'outside' the process. An action research process, with its inbuilt feedback loop for critique, can help the credibility.

The conventional social research community believes that credibility is created through generalising and universalising propositions of the universal hypothetical, universal disjunctive types, whereas AR believes that only knowledge generated and tested in practice is credible (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, p. 81).

However action research that seeks to gather information from those engaged in the projects and processes would not necessarily recognise the participation of the researcher herself.

Denzin and Lincoln argue there is a clear link with the philosophical perspective of educational projects when whatever methods within action research is taken for gathering data, all agree the knowledge arises from reflective action. They comment that

... the implication of the epistemology of action is that the primary outcome of all these forms of inquiry is a change in the lived experience of those involved in the inquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p. 279)

Swinton and Mowat also argue that

Qualitative research assumes that the world is not simply 'out there' waiting to be discovered. Rather it recognises 'the world' as the locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences including their experience of God (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, p. 30).

Further, Swinton and Mowat claim qualitative research is an approach "allied to the task of practical theology" (p. 32), because it too points us toward an understanding of our world and a reflection on "how we know what we know" (p. 32).

Denzin and Lincoln situate participatory action research (PAR) within the methodologies that expressly provide for the 'creation of knowledge' within groups as a political tool. This point was noted in Chapter 2 in relation to the understanding of knowledge creation within communities. It also connects with the work of Schön (1983, 1987), as he sets out the significance of reflection in processes of adult education and learning. Denzin and Lincoln note:

... so the PAR strategy has a double objective. One aim is to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people - through research, adult education and socio-political action. The second aim is to empower people at a second and deeper level through the process of co-constructing and using their own knowledge.... (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 268).

Participatory action research is argued, however, to be a process located in the work of liberation educators within the Latin America context, utilising a Marxian economic analysis with specific outcome expectations, and so consequently not always appropriate for the work researchers in other contexts (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003, pp. 336-338). Participatory action research is receiving attention of researchers as a contested methodology (Jackson and Kassam, 1998; Bray et al, 2000; Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Kemmis and McTaggart (2003). Greenwood and Levin offer a caution to this effect noting:

[This] set of theories and practices [that] came into existence as a critique and practice of liberation set in the context of a model of class struggle as practised primarily in poor countries and with impoverished groups in rich countries (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, p. 174).

They also note:

The recent rapid resurgence of AR in the north has caused many southern activists to worry legitimately about the co-option of their perspectives in the north for the purpose of obscuring and blunting democratic initiatives (p. 179)

Blaxter et al (1996) note that, in their opinion, there are seven criteria that distinguish action research from other methods. They suggest that action research:

- i. Is educative;
  - ii. Deals with individuals as members of social groups;
  - iii. Is problem-focused, context specific and future-orientated;
  - iv. Involves a change intervention;
  - v. Aims at improvement and involvement;
  - vi. Involves a cyclical process in which research, action, and evaluation are interlinked;
  - vii. Is founded on a research relationship in which those involved are participants in the change process.
- (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1996, p. 69).

These criteria are conducive to the outcome sought by this study, however there is a need to locate the researcher within the study as a participant and not obscure this factor.

### **3.3. Collaborative inquiry**

So, although the goals of liberation education reflect the transformational bias of the projects of this study as they were influenced by liberation theology, *collaborative inquiry* provides the researcher with a more acceptable theoretical approach and succeeds action research and participatory action research in a context that cannot be considered impoverished and which recognises the location of the researcher. Bray et al (2000) argue there is a subtle yet

significant distinction between action research and participatory action research with collaborative inquiry:

Most significant is the distinction between researching a system that may involve gathering data on others (AR and some forms of PAR) and collaboratively learning from the direct experience of participating in the inquiry (Bray et al, 2000, p. 38)

They further argue:

The focus of a collaborative inquiry group is understanding and constructing meaning, around experience ... (Bray et al, 2000, p. 38).

Collaborative inquiry is defined by Bray et al, as

A process consisting of repeated episodes of reflection and action in which a group of peers strives to answer a question of importance to them (Bray et al, 2000, p. 20).

It is a helpful term for the purpose of giving structure to this study, as the focus groups gathered to reflect on shared experience had in the past met regularly. Thus the collaboration was over a longer period of time than this research study. The groups comprise peers with an interest in theological education and the ministry leadership of the church.

### **3.4. Autoethnography**

Although the researcher has been a participant in each of the cases of the study, and from time to time the voice of the researcher will be heard, it is not intended the study focus the recollections and interpretative meaning determined by the researcher as would be the case in an autoethnographic approach. Etherington notes a definition of this autoethnographic approach as

A blend of ethnography and autobiographical writing that incorporates elements of one's own life-experience when writing about others (p. 139).

The purpose of the project is not focused on the personal experience and self understanding of the researcher or of other individuals in the studies, but rather on the collective experiences and critical reflections that can enhance the shaping of the education of the practical theologian. Consequently, an autoethnographic approach is not considered appropriate.

### **3.5. The case study**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 35), identify the case study as a set of “methodological procedures”. Berg (1989, p. 212) also notes “it is not actually a data gathering technique in itself, but a methodological approach that incorporates a number of measures”. A Case Study approach enables data to be collected relevant to a situation, and recorded in ways that build a rich story that includes social context and historically relevant information, along with information emerging from collaborative conversations. In this study, it can provide a way to focus on each of the projects in turn and to maintain the integrity of data collected in relation to each project. Denzin and Lincoln note:

To do case studies does not require examination of diverse issues and contexts... (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 440).

Reinharz also notes the limits that case studies enable:

In its broadest application, “case study” refers to research that focuses on a single case or single issue, in contrast with studies that seek generalisations through comparative analysis or compilation of a large number of instances (Reinharz, 1992, p. 164).

The intention of each case study is to identify components and characteristics within each project that could contribute toward the education of a practical theologian. Stake (2003) suggests the term *instrumental case study* for research projects that examine a case in order to draw ‘generalisations’ that can inform another or a different situation (Stake, 2003, p. 134). While this study will ultimately draw such ‘generalisations’, it also provides for a study of each of

the educational projects in turn. The term 'instrumental case study' seems an appropriate term for the approach taken in this study.

On the one hand the study considers the specific cases in some depth, and on the other seeks to relate the findings to learnings for the education of ministry leaders as practical theologians, regarding the design and potential of such programmes. It is intended to take learnings from the case studies, and consider how they "facilitate our understanding" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 437) of theological education. In this way the studies are *instrumental* case studies.

Within a qualitative approach that includes collaborative inquiry, a *case study* method, supported primarily by *focus groups*, and including semi-structured interviews, was selected for gathering and managing data. The focus groups enabled people who had been involved in the various projects as students or other stakeholders to tell of their experience in their own words. Group participation and this collaborative process would be familiar to them from their educational experiences in the various projects, including identifying and reflecting critically on learnings. In addition, use was made of *available documents* to substantiate recollections and verify information in relation to organisations and structures relevant to the project being studied.

The general literature that influenced the development of each of the projects which the case studies examine has been noted in Chapter 2. Further literature, relevant to each particular case, is included within the respective case studies themselves. This additional literature becomes significant as the learnings from the projects are connected with international developments and insights that are emerging within the strand of theological education that has been identified in this study as 'practical theology'. In this way, the literature stands as a source of data, outside the convergent conversations of

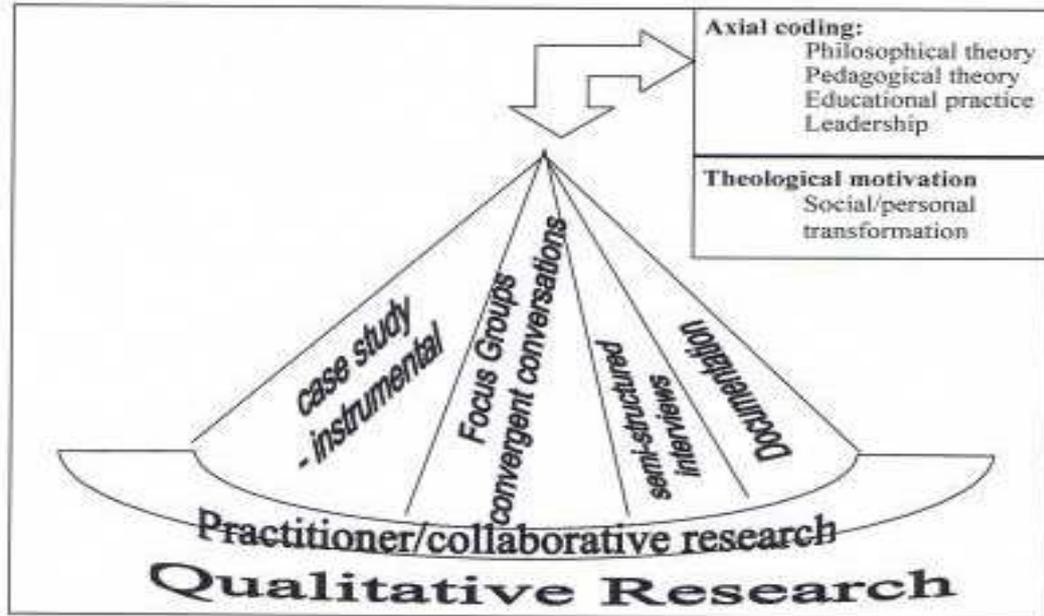
the focus groups and *individual interviews*, and separate from the interests of the researcher, and therefore provides an external reference point.

As this research project sets out to investigate the markers in theological education that characterise the education of practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation, four key categories relevant for practical theology have been identified as the categories within which to analyse the gathered data - philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches, educational practice and social transformation. Transformative leadership is used to focus the link between the educational processes and social transformation. It becomes a sub-set of social transformation in the analysis of the data.

#### **4. Methods Used to Gather Data**

The methods that have been selected for gathering the data are those that facilitate collaborative enquiry and reflection. The methods were intended to enable the individuals interviewed and the focus groups interacted with to engage in reflection and analysis of the educative processes in which they had been involved. In this way, they would be participants in the creation of the knowledge being gathered, and part of the 'community of practice', as discussed in Chapter 2, that shapes an approach to the education of practical theologians.

Diagram 1 illustrates the approach taken to the inter-relationship of the methods employed within the methodological approach of 'qualitative research'.



**Diagram 1: The inter-relationship of methodological strategies**

The methods used include retrospective personal observation and description in 'conversation' with various stakeholders. These 'conversations' occur in focus groups where possible or personal interviews where this is not possible. Where the stakeholders, be they the graduate student body or representatives of the associated organisations, are met with in person, a sharing of memories and impressions with a collaborative critical reflection is encouraged in a similar manner to the group process. The focus groups and interviews, along with the examination of relevant and available documentation, are procedures used within the framework of a case study method.

#### **4.1. Case studies**

As the projects for consideration in this study are limited to three, each with a different time-frame, and the projects were self-reflective and with participants contributing to development, the instrumental case study was selected as the appropriate primary method or set of methods, through which to gather data in relation to each project.

The case studies identify the contextual, organisational and educational influences that informed the design and implementation of each of the three projects at the time of their establishment. They are each 'bounded', or contained, by a specific time-frame, the limited number of students, their geographic location, and the purpose of the project. It is the intention of the researcher to listen for indicators of philosophical perspective, pedagogical approach and educational practice in relation to the education of ministry leaders as practical theologians. As the projects span a period of thirty years, key influences from the wider social context at the time of the start-up of each project provide significant insights into pressures that were being brought on the 'host' institutions.

*Case Study One: The Glendowie Project, 1979 – 1985.*

The Glendowie project was a theological education programme developed in partnership between a theological college, a local church and a community development agency, located within a local public housing project. Its purpose was to explore a different way of training ministry leaders from the traditional model used in the theological college. These ministry leaders would be able to engage and lead social action. During the life of this project the researcher held multiple roles, including negotiating and liaising with stake-holders, overseeing design, development and content of student programme, supervising students, and facilitating theological reflection.

*Case Study Two: Auckland Anglican Diocesan Training Programme, 1989 – 1998.*

By contrast with the Glendowie project, this project was an institutionally-based theological education and ministry formation programme. It was located within a building set aside, in part, for educational purposes and their supporting resources. The purpose of this project was the training of professional and lay ministry leaders with the skills for leading contemporary local churches in specific community contexts. This programme was an

alternative to full-time residential training in the Anglican Church's theological college. As Diocesan Ministry Educator, I had responsibility for design and content, facilitation of learning, and supervision of students. My accountability was directly to the bishop and his ministry committee.

*Case Study Three: Trinity Methodist Ministry Training Unit, 2000 – 2008.*

This theological education and ministry formation programme was designed from the beginning as an adult education programme that would allow the student group to participate in shaping the content and practice. It sought to be an experience of education for freedom, as hooks (1984) and Freire (1972, 1974) speak of this. It was a multicultural programme focused on current issues in society and the cultural concerns of programme participants.

Each of the case studies includes, where possible and relevant, consideration of:

- Purpose and motivation for the project.
- An overview of significant contextual issues impinging on the project.
- Points of tension including:
  - Accountability – both formal and informal
  - Relationships with teaching staff
  - Relationship to church structures
- Social, political, economic influences.
- A review and analysis of language and concepts used in minutes and other papers establishing the projects.
- Theological perspective, including those identified by participants.
- Markers indicative of pedagogical approach experienced by participants.

- Explicit/implicit philosophies identified and underpinning the programme at the planning stage.
- Specific literature that influenced the development of the projects.

Each of the cases being studied has its own identity and integrity, each is a 'bounded' system with an identifiable life and purpose, is context specific to its purpose, is limited in terms of numbers engaged as students and has a limited time-frame. For these reason, each is appropriate for consideration as a case study.

#### **4.2. Focus groups**

The foundational mechanism in which participants met for the purposes of data gathering and critical reflection in relation to their respective project was the focus group. The focus groups provided a social context within which reflection could take place, thereby encouraging a breadth of discussion and storytelling that might otherwise be limited in one-to-one exchanges between the researcher and interviewee. The focus groups also ensured the power differential was mitigated between the researcher as their former programme director and themselves as former students and now research participants, as this was a characteristic of the groups in which all had participated in previously. In this way, the collaborative nature of the research venture was demonstrated as focus group participants interacted and encouraged each other while also engaging with the recollections of the researcher.

Data collection methods used with the focus groups and the one-to-one interviews included semi-structured as well as unstructured conversations. Observations made by Williams and Lewis (2005) regarding 'convergent interviews' and 'convergent conversations' provided guidance for the

conduct of focus groups and interviews, enabling the unfolding of information and critical reflection in the focus groups.

Focus groups began with an explanation of the purpose of the group followed by the question;

‘... what aspects do you think we need to consider?’

Followed by;

‘What is/are the dominant memories that come to mind when you recall your engagement with the programme?’ (See Appendix 4, focus group guideline questions).

The participants in each focus group were asked to identify the components of their respective programme which they wish to reflect on, and those aspects they consider appropriate for in-depth critical analysis.

The focus groups determine what aspects of the conversations that developed should be recorded; this was done on flip sheets wherever possible. Graduates, teaching staff, and governing bodies met separately and participated in reflection and analysis of the projects with which they were associated.

The primary data-gathering focus groups comprised students who had graduated from the three programmes. They are invited to reflect together on their experience of the ethos, pedagogy, content and practice expectations of their respective programmes. The focus groups also engaged in considering the relationship of the initial educational experience with the current employment and social attitudes and actions of the participants. The participants, familiar with the action-reflection process of critical analysis, identified areas significant for discussion by the groups. Critical reflection aimed to expose aspects of each programme that worked against the stated intentions of that programme. One of the key tools in each of the education

projects was group reflection on the learning experience and subsequent actions. This was a core dynamic in the learning opportunity for each project. It is critical therefore that the methods used to gather data in this study allow the same pattern of critical reflection and thereby provided a continuing education opportunity, as well as enabling me as researcher to meet my own research priorities. Reinharz provides a cogent argument for this approach which includes the participants in the research, and offers them a continuing professional development opportunity rather than treating them as passive objects (Reinharz, 1992, pp. 175-186). The use of focus groups enabled this and is consistent with both action research and collaborative inquiry.

#### **4.3. Interviews**

Williams and Lewis (2005) in their work on 'convergent interviewing' as a tool in strategic change suggest the use of a semi-structured approach to focus groups and one-to-one interviews. Their comments on 'convergent interviewing' set out the flexible nature of the semi-structured interview that allows the conversation to emerge while respecting the boundaries of the research content. Their approach is open about the filters employed by the researcher during the interview to exclude data, and provides a helpful base for establishing the validity of the process being used. The cyclical nature of this style of interviewing enables an immediate clarification and refinement of information and is therefore particularly useful with focus groups (Williams & Lewis, 2005, p. 225). In keeping with the open, inductive and flexible approach of convergent interviewing the writers note, "questions should be as open ended as possible to ensure authenticity" (p. 225).

One-to-one interviews were used for group participation was either not possible or was inappropriate for any reason. For example, where a person wished to contribute but was unable to attend the focus group on the date agreed by the majority of the group or where they lived at a distance from the

meeting place. To provide some boundaries within which the individual conversation could take place and some consistency with the matters discussed by the focus groups, a series of guideline questions were used at the initial stage of the one-to-one interview. The guidelines ensured there were areas of discussion that will elucidated information pertinent to the study. See Appendix 4 for a copy of interview guidelines.

As this study seeks to contribute to the development of theological education and ministry formation programmes, so participants in the research were directly contributing to the development of a body of knowledge and to processes of potential change within theological education.

#### **4.4. Documentation**

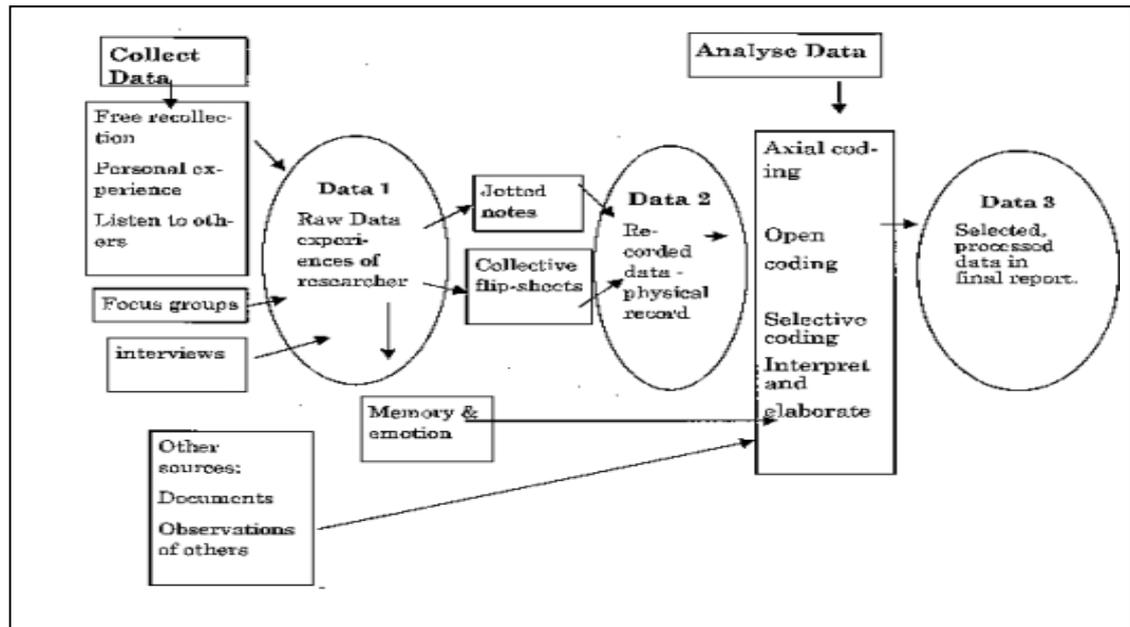
During the data-gathering phase documents pertinent to the establishment of each project, where these can be located, were examined by the researcher. Comment on these documents is provided in relation to the issues that emerge as the study unfolds. Documents available from reviews and evaluation of aspects of the various programmes are referred to, along with written material generated in relation to the programmes by students themselves and other stake-holders.

### **5. Managing the Data**

The personal recollections of the researcher were recorded prior to the focus groups. In this way they contribute to the group but are identified separately from the material generated by the groups themselves. Material gathered from the focus groups was recorded on flip sheets and considered by the group for accuracy of interpretation before the conclusion of each group session.

The following diagram, adapted from Neuman, was a helpful way of identifying the data collected and its relationship to analysis and reporting

(Neuman, 1997, p. 427). The diagram was useful also in keeping track of data and relationships during the research process.



**Diagram 2: The relationship of data collection to analysis** (adapted from Neuman 1997, p. 427))

### 5.1. A summary of procedures used for collecting data

While qualitative research provides the general methodological approach for the research, the case study method is central for the collection of data, using focus groups and interviews in ways consistent with collaborative inquiry.

Collaborative enables an ‘inside out’ reflection on each case studied by those who had been personally involved on the ‘inside’ of the case as a participant. This enables participants to be co-participants in the research about themselves and not the objects of research by an ‘outsider’.

In collaborative inquiry, the distinction between researcher and subject is eliminated. The goal in getting started is establishing a group of co-researchers/co-subjects who share a burning desire for new knowledge and a willingness to work with others to pursue new avenues of meaning (Bray et al, 2000, p. 50).



the governing bodies at the time of the establishment of the respective educational projects were interviewed, as were 18 other stakeholders from parish communities. Eight members of the teaching staff from two of the three projects and representatives of 'adjunct staff' who had acted as field work 'mentors' for the MTU programme were interviewed either in a group or one-to-one. No staff from the DTP were included as the Director (researcher) was the only teaching staff person employed in the project. Interviews constituted 11 focus groups, and 14 one-to-one interviews. In all, fifty-seven people were engaged in the data gathering phase.

## **6. Analysis of the Data**

Qualitative studies can run the risk of gathering diffuse material that make analysis difficult, and this study embodied that risk especially in the composition and style chosen to engage and facilitate the focus groups. However, being clear about the categories within which the gathered data would be clustered (Chapter 2, Section 7, p. 54) simplified the process. It also ensured that within each of the case studies comparable information was available.

In keeping with the general momentum of qualitative research, a sophisticated statistical analysis programme is not used for the language and motifs emerging in the data collection stages. Nor did I consider a software package to analyse the language appropriate as the storytelling and images were often 'coded' in group memory and feelings. As the sample was small and the data gathered emerged in dialogue, with no certainty about the material group participants considered relevant to be raised, a system was employed in which information was clustered within the categories of philosophical perspective, pedagogical approach, educational practice, social transformation and leadership. All the information gathered from the groups and the one-to-one interviews is analysed in order to identify any recurrent clusters of themes,

issues, images or feelings in relation to these categories. In particular the analytical focus is on indicators that imply or describe the philosophical, pedagogical and theological ideas experienced by participants as present in the underlying design and implementation of each of the projects. In terms of educational practice, the dominant memories of the students were particularly useful in identifying both how they felt about aspects of the pedagogy in practice, as well as what they found most useful in their ongoing ministry leadership. One aim of the research was to identify indicators pointing to leadership style, both as experienced in relation to programmes and in relation to their own experienced style.

Where it was feasible, the initial analysis was undertaken within the focus groups by the participants, as part of the spiralling conversation. In this style of conversation participants develop their comments in relation to their conversation partners and assist each other in developing analysis of the material discussed. The material gathered from a particular group becomes the subject of analysis for this study. In evaluating this experiential material contributed by participants and the initial analysis, comments by graduates about their current community engagement in both church and/or wider society are noted. Wherever this was clear, connections made by the narrator to their educational experience in the project are also noted. In addition to this aspect of 'outcome', and the continuing engagement in social transformation as narrated by graduates, publications such as newspaper articles and other corroborating evidence such as stories by their associates of social engagement are drawn on.

Theological comment by the researcher is kept brief, except when it is directly related to the motivation of institution or student, to help understand the meaning students make of particular learning experiences and the degree to which they consider personal substantive transformation occurred. This is

particularly so as most of the students were preparing themselves as practical theologians and were intending, at the time, to pursue ordained ministry leadership on behalf of a church denomination. Students also shared insights into theological shifts that had occurred for them which could point to the motivational drivers for their participation in ministry leadership and their post graduation engagement in social and personal transformation.

## **7. Outline of Research Process**

The principal stages undertaken in the study:

- ‘Free-writing’ by the researcher of each of the three cases to be studied as innovative educational projects in order to establish the perspective and remembered contextual impetus, along with the philosophical perspectives and educational approaches influencing the researcher at the time each project was implemented.
- The identification of information and data sources.
- The gathering of data.
- Retrospective analysis of the three historical educational projects: the Glendowie Project, the Diocesan Training Project, and the Ministry Training Unit of Trinity College, including the analysis of the data gathered from the different perspectives of representative participants in focus groups and the ‘stakeholders’ interviewed, including consideration of the intended outcomes, and graduate reflection.
- Analysis of and reflection on the philosophical and pedagogical markers for a transformative theological education within the discipline of practical theology. This leads to the identification of the markers that indicate effective theological education for the development of transformative ministry leaders.

The methodology for the research component of this study uses a collective reflection process that engages the participants in the identification of the learnings that arise out of their experience. This process was familiar to those who had been students in the respective programmes, and is consistent with an action-reflection approach to an educational practice intended to produce ministry leaders as reflective practitioners.

## PART TWO

### THE CASE STUDIES

#### 1. General Comments

The following three case studies provide the context for each of the theological education projects that are the core of this thesis. Each case study is located within the social context that shaped the emergence and development of the project. The key social factors, further relevant literature and structural issues that affect the case are identified. Writers on adult education (Jarvis, 1998, 2004; hooks, 1994, 2003) argue that the social environment is a significant factor in educational processes and priorities. As each of these projects operated ten years apart, I have briefly sketched the major influences on each project, such as church institutional pressures.

So while this study is not intended to be a comprehensive critical review, it has provided an opportunity to document some of the history of each project. In each of the projects I held a key leadership role, and much of the material that outlines the history of the projects is based on my recollection, supported by available documents and by my research conversations. Where information is not referenced, it will come from my own recollection. As the common figure in all three projects, my experiences will inevitably colour the interpretation of the historical story. Therefore there may be some level of bias in the recording of accounts even though I have, where possible, validated my personal recollections with material from other sources. However, especially in Case Study One, the Glendowie Project, the material we were working with was bubbling up in the wider social environment with regard to race and culture, education and feminism, and many of the experiences in Aotearoa-New Zealand had not documented formally at that time. Consequently, some of the comments and experiences can only be validated retrospectively.

In this Part of the study each of the case studies are in the main descriptive in relation to socio-historic environment, participants, intentions and outcomes. The analysis and implications in relation to practical theology will be discussed in Part Three.

In relation to the case studies, the term 'adult education' refers to education that is directed toward developing the skills for life-long learning in adult students (Chapter 2, Section 4.3, pp. 40-43). The adult education process developed over the period of this study includes facilitative teaching practices, small group work, personal goal setting, student presentations, group discussion for the clarification of knowledge and ideas, data gathering and synthesising, cooperative projects, personal feedback, one-to-one support, and supervision.

The philosophical perspective influencing the educational approach used in each of the case studies perceives education as a set of processes which aim to enable the transformation of individual persons, communities and societies. This approach aims to develop the capacity to recognise relevant contextual data, to reflect on experience, to critique, to challenge, to form concepts and set goals and articulate vision. In relation to this study, the educational projects that form the case studies were each designed to equip the students with the capacity to develop self awareness and transferable skills and to equip them with the confidence to share what they know and work with others in accumulating knowledge. This sharing and capacity building is part of the process of developing knowledge and wisdom in communities and enabling movement toward social justice and personal well-being: human flourishing, as I speak about that (Paul., et al, 1999; Spears & Looms, 2000).

The general pedagogical approach developed in relation to each of the projects is one of learning to ask questions: what, why, who, who benefits, what

alternatives? For the purposes of the educational projects described in the case studies these questions were applied to the experiences of the learning group and the social context of the group. The pedagogical approach is designed to move students toward an acknowledgement that there is always more than one perspective and that truth is never singular.

The general approach taken in the three case studies was to work with the experience of the group and its members. This approach includes where appropriate, mentoring and stepping the group through actions in order that the common experience of the action could be reflected on in the learning group. Always, social justice and the concern for those on the underside of the dominant power were taken into consideration as a 'rule of thumb' in considering the implications of any proposition or action.

As part of an integrative process, students were encouraged to bring to consciousness values and perspectives not usually present in the conscious mind and to consider if they were still relevant and empowering to the current location and changing perspectives.

## Chapter Four

### Case Study One: The Glendowie Project 1979–1985

#### 1. An Overview of the Social Context

The 1970s and early 80s were witness to a number of dynamics significant to the development of the Glendowie Project. The period 1973-1979 was a time of global oil crises. The impact was felt in New Zealand as a fall in living standards and a rise of unemployment. International movements of indigenous peoples gathered strength, in particular the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, with anti-racism work coming into focus in nations that had a colonial heritage such as Aotearoa-New Zealand (Snedden, 2005, pp. 39ff; Katz, 1978). Concurrently with the anti-racism work of Pakeha in this country, there began the development of what has subsequently been termed the 'Maori Renaissance' (Williams, 2010).

Within the churches, a loss of confidence was being experienced in relation to the place of church in society and in the theological precepts that underlay its life (Randerson, 2010, p. 2; Veitch, 1990). The moral authority and suasion, previously enjoyed by the institution of church, was losing ground, and a rethink by some church educators and theologians in Aotearoa-New Zealand and other western countries was in process (The Cornwall Collective, 1980; Groome, 1980; Ruether, 1981; Mud Flower Collective, 1983; Pelly, 1984). One aspect of this rethink was to be expressed in the debate between the traditional social service model of church with the provision of support to individuals and families in need, and what was becoming understood as 'community development' (Elliot, 1982). This community development approach focussed on social structures and the re-distribution of power in community in order that local people could participate in changing their circumstances (Snyder, 1978; Bluck, 1979). The theological imperative for this shift in focus from a

more traditional personal, pastoral model was drawn from the emerging liberation theologies of Latin-America (Gutiérrez, 1974; Reuther, 1972; Russell, 1974, 1976; Segundo, 1979; Schussler Fiorenza, 1983). Latin American liberation theology was challenging Western European theologians, and a 'political theology' began to emerge - especially in Germany, through the works of theologians such as Metz (1981) and Moltman (1974, 1977) - as a European response to this politicisation of theology. So from theologians in Europe and the USA there was a tentative response emerging.

The purpose of education in the churches and the pedagogical perspectives being used were not exempt from these theological and political challenges.

### **1.1. Changes in national education policy**

During the late 1970s and early 1980s there was considerable debate within New Zealand about the structuring, funding, curriculum and role of education. One impetus for this had been the UNESCO report of 1972, which called for changes in education that would embrace the whole of society and a person's total lifespan (Benseman, 2003, pp.13-14). New Zealand saw a focus on adult education and lifelong learning from the mid-1970s (Tobias, 1990, p.7), although the emphasis tended to move toward vocational training (Benseman, 2003, p.15).

The Muldoon-led National government (1975-1984), sought to introduce changes in education that included a business model for the management of New Zealand schools and devolution (including funding) to local communities. "In 1982 the Government called for a 3% overall reduction in state expenditure" (Tobias, 1990, p.7).

These moves resulted by the end of the 1980s, in 'Tomorrows Schools' as a Government response to the mood shifts of the previous decade (National

Council for Educational Research, 2008). The subsequent government failed to provide the financial resourcing or training that could have made involvement in local schools, in these early stages, a positive experience amongst the 'low achieving' communities where many church affiliated community development agencies worked at the time.

## **1.2. Challenges to church-based education**

Church education programmes were also under scrutiny. Both the programmes known as 'Christian education', focussing on congregational life, and the programmes delivering theological education and education for ministry for those seeking ordained leadership were reconsidered. Should Christian education re-inscribe the traditions of church and its mainstream theology, or should it prepare a questioning, discovery, environment in which young people and adults could grow their own theology and approaches for living? Similarly some ordination students were seeking to get involved with local communities and with social action (The Church and Society Commission, 1983; Gray, 1983; Davidson, 1993).

In 1974-75, there had been the demand by a small group of students for an alternative education from the traditional theological education offered at the College of St John the Evangelist (commonly referred to as St John's College, and identified in this thesis as SJC), the Anglican theological college that prepared people for ordained ministry in the church (Glendowie-1, 2007). In an unusual move, a household was set up off the college site and four students, Chris Tremewen, Peter Glensor, John Bonice, and Diana Tana, lived in community in the neighbouring suburb of Remuera. The priority of these students was to live in community rather than to attend classes, and to be more responsive to current social issues (Glendowie-1, 2007). This short-lived experiment in response to student demand did provide precedence when in 1979 another approach for a different model and living arrangement was

promoted to the governing board of SJC. The Rev'd Dr George Armstrong, lecturer in theology, and the Rev'd Dr Raymond Pelly, then Warden of SJC, note they were able to cite this precedence in the proposition to the Board of Governors for engagement in this new initiative (Glendowie-1, 2007).

From these general issues and sweeps of potential change, the background was set for the development of what became known as 'the Glendowie Project'. The social dynamics identified below added to the pressure able to be brought on the governing groups and stakeholders for the establishment and priorities of this project.

## **2. Changes in the Climate for Social Work**

### **2.1. Government contracts**

In the early 1970s a new direction was taken by the Labour Government under Norman Kirk, 1972-1974, and Bill Rowling, 1974-1975, to be enacted through the Department of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Recreation and Sport which, according to Wilkes (1982, p. 118), was a move "to achieve economic and social restructuring as a counter to the fiscal crisis".

As a result, partnership with non-government agencies was developed further in relation to local selected neighbourhoods and communities identified with "special needs".

The Ministry of Recreation and Sport, together with the Department of Labour, appear to be the most highly involved providing resources for community development in New Zealand ... It runs a Community Development fund, which aims to 'encourage and strengthen community life' (Department of Internal Affairs 1979) ... Perhaps most significantly the Detached Youth Workers Scheme, which sets up a network of social workers outside the institutional framework of Welfarism... (Wilkes, 1982, p. 125).

These partnerships included projects such as the development of the 1977 'Detached Youth Worker' scheme, the establishment of youth houses, and 'community houses', and, the setting up of locally based community workers

and social researchers (Wilkes, 1982, p. 118). These projects aimed to strengthen local communities and groups within communities.

The Muldoon-led third National Government of 1975-1984 was identified by a policy of decentralisation. This policy shifted responsibility for social wellbeing from government to local neighbourhoods and communities. An undated 'Information Sheet' for the new 'Community Development Fund', prepared around 1978 by the Department of Internal Affairs who administered this fund on behalf of the General Distributions Committee of the New Zealand Lottery Board, notes:

Assistance is available through this fund to promote the development of community life by encouraging the participation of local people in making improvements to their day to day lives (Department of Internal affairs, undated).

The funding necessary to support the shifts, while available through the 'Community Development Fund', did not automatically follow and had to be applied for by community agencies with documents outlining projects and outcomes that would satisfy departmental audit. The accountability for project funding was a constant tension and "we spent lots of time talking about it in staff meetings" (Rennie, 2010) and the goals of the agencies became clearer as the projects developed. There was an expectation, on the one hand, that the projects would enable individual divergent and troublesome youth and the unemployed to 'fit in' to social norms and expectations (Wilkes, 1982, p. 118).

In 1978 government approved a \$75,000 fund to subsidise voluntary agencies engaged in preventive work with families. In 1983 this was replaced by the Family Service Programme which seeks to promote and maintain support services offered by the voluntary sector which assist families and young persons (Grant, 1984).

On the other hand, agencies such as the Anglican-Methodist Social Services (AMSS) saw a responsibility for social action with critique of the prevailing

economic and social system and engagement with government in processes of change.

It therefore seems appropriate that the role of the agency is in effecting change in the economic and political structures in their widest sense in order that the dignity of each person is recognised and access to an adequate share of resources is ensured (AMSS 1, 1976).

In the Fourth Labour Government under the leadership of David Lange, 1984-1990, this new 'partnership' direction, which had initially seen the growth of contractual partnerships with not-for-profit organisations, became harder to access.

## **2.2. Issues affecting Para-Church agencies**

The AMSS agency was a key player in Auckland in developing projects for government contract funding. Staff members within the agency at this time (including myself) recall there were many debates on accountability and the ethics of undertaking contracts growing out of government policies causing distress in relation to social welfare, and to which the agency was opposed (Rennie, 2010).

The direction taken by AMSS until the mid 1980s, under the guidance of its Director, the Rev'd Jim Greenaway, was to identify AMSS distinctively as an agency that built positive relationships with local peoples and worked with them for change.

In New Zealand, a community work model of Christian ministry has emerged through agencies like the Inner City Ministry (ICM) in Wellington and the Anglican Methodist Social Services (AMSS) in Auckland, and in the case of 'the Aranui Sisters' in Christchurch, through a Religious order. In these and other initiatives, workers are organising the victims of society around such concrete issues as poverty, unemployment, housing and urban renewal (Elliott, 1982, p. 254).

Rennie (2010) also recalled that under the direction of Jim Greenaway the agency worked at a government level advocating change to social policies in order that the circumstances of people in local communities could be transformed in ways identified as desirable by the people themselves. In this commitment to people at a local level AMSS was 'walking a tightrope' between the people in the communities where it was present and the government departments from which it was drawing funds.

Community Development on this model is less visible to the Agency [and the funding agencies] than facility or programme oriented models (Greenaway, 1976).

It is a personal recollection of the researcher that many staff meetings argued the merits or otherwise of providing government with information built up from local community engagement. It was felt that the government funders often required access to information which would be used more for the benefit of the Government itself rather than the local people from which it was drawn. The staff of AMSS felt agency accountability to local communities of people was in danger of being compromised (Rennie, 2010).

Our primary concern must ultimately be for people, for their opportunities to obtain maximum enrichment of their spiritual, psychological, physical and intellectual well-beings. This therefore must involve a concern with every structure ... This means we cannot simply encourage people to learn to cope with their situation; our concern must be to actively attempt to humanise structures, and systems in order to liberate and enhance rather than limit and suffocate their fullness of life. An additional role ... is to assist the Church to be a positive force in the community for social change (Anglican Methodist Social Services, 1976).

### **2.3. Influences behind direction changes for Anglican Methodist Social Services**

In the background to a re-positioning of AMSS as it became more clearly focussed on community development rather than its historic social service priority, were the insights of Marxian social theory and the economic and class

analysis that identifies the relationship of the 'workers' to the holders of 'capital' and power, that were being picked up by a number of those engaged in development projects (Shannon, 1982, pp. 224-227). Marx's work was also reflected in the Latin American liberation theologians, such as Bonino (1976). Another influence was the work of Max Weber (1978), with his exploration of society, the clustering of people who comprise society, the nature of communities and social action as action that takes account of others (Worsley, 1973, p. 44). These sources were influential as the agency moved from a traditional individual person-focus to a focus on groups of people, their communities and wider social structures (AMSS, 1976; Greenaway, undated). Alinsky's book *Rules for Radicals* provided significant writings on community organising for social change that made an impact (Alinsky, 1972). These theorists influenced in some way the shape and direction of the agency (AMSS) (Elliott, 1982, p. 254).

*Development Tracks* is a significant edited collection of essays written by NZ academics and practitioners of that period, gathering together material that describes the tensions and current understandings and attitudes of the 1970s in relation to community development (Shirley, 1982). Issues identified include the tension between 'development from below' and 'development from above' (Walker, 1982, pp. 69-89) and the impact of feminism (James, 1982, pp. 232-250) that were affecting agencies such as AMSS.

#### **2.4. Questions of accountability**

As a church based agency there were two institutional hierarchies to which AMSS, as the holder of a government contract, was accountable: the institutions of national government and those of the Anglican and Methodist churches. Within the churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand and in ecumenical circles a debate was taking place on the nature of change and the role of the church in processes of change (Oh & England, 1972; Neal, 1977). This debate,

in most instances, found expression in debates around mission and the purpose and processes of theological education and formation for ministry.

Can the institutional church itself be liberated from tradition, security, and cowardice, to serve the cause of the poor? What moral standards apply to project leadership? (Oh & England, 1972, p. 18).

On the one hand these processes were seen as preserving the traditions and 'truths' of the historic church, accountable to its past, and on the other hand, it was argued, the responsibility was to prepare ministry leaders able to respond to the challenges to theology and church practice emerging from local contexts (AMSS, 1976; Snyder, 1978). In Aotearoa-New Zealand the Rev Dr Susan Thompson has documented this debate in relation to theological education in the Methodist Church of New Zealand in her now-published doctoral thesis, 'Knowledge and Vital Piety' (Thompson, 2010). She summarises it as a struggle with "the tensions between and emphasis on intellectual and academic scholarship on the one hand, and active piety and practical training on the other" (Thompson, 2010, p. 10).

### **3. Social Issues Impacting on Church**

#### **3.1. Increased awareness of social responsibility**

The Rev'd Michael Elliott, of the Ecumenical Secretariat on Development (ESOD), was instrumental in keeping before the churches at that time current debates on social responsibility and the responsibilities of the church. ESOD produced a number of broadsheets during 'Christian Action Week', which for a number of years in the 1980s provided information to support discussion on current issues for the churches and para-church agencies, for example *Poverty 1985-1987*. The aim was to stimulate informed debate and encourage engagement in processes of social justice in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Elliott describes the general milieu in which the churches' attention was being drawn to their social responsibilities (Shirley, 1982, pp. 251ff) and presents an

argument for Christian social activism. This chapter could be said to provide a general rationale that culminated in the invitation that ESOD extended to Father Filip Fanchette of the International Office of Development (INODEP). Fanchette (Appendix 12) brought with him the tools of structural analysis that he had been using and refining in his work in countries emerging from colonialism. These tools of structural analysis were explored by people engaged in community development and social justice work workshops around Aotearoa-New Zealand during the years 1980-1983 (Appendix 13). People engaged in this 'bottom up' community action way of working attended the workshops in order to develop tools for structural analysis and formulate further strategies for social change.

At a gathering of people (including the researcher) who had attended these Fanchette workshops, called by the Workers Education Association (WEA), Auckland, in September 2010, it became clear the workshops were attended by those who understood themselves to stand in the 'development from below' trajectory of social change engagement. This gathering noted there was a strengthening of relationships and networks up and down Aotearoa-New Zealand amongst people who saw themselves engaging in processes for social transformation that arose out of the circumstances of local communities of people (Structural Analysis, 2010). As far as I have been able to discover, there are no formal records of these structural analysis events and networks. Some participants have kept personal notes, but these are not readily accessed. Consequently, much of the information regarding the workshops and subsequent actions is based on personal recollection. The significance of these networks is not to be underestimated as they contributed to what later became understood as 'social capital' and an invaluable community resource to be drawn upon (Baron et al., 1984).

### 3.2. Bi-cultural commitments

As Aotearoa-New Zealand moved into the 1980s there was increasing awareness amongst Pakeha of the racist and colonial heritage that shaped Aotearoa-New Zealand, and a growing confidence in articulating the significance of this on social policy and race-relations (Metge and Kinloch, 1978; Blackburn, undated). Awareness was gathering momentum amongst Pakeha of the impact of this colonial history on the tangata whenua, Maori, the indigenous population. King notes “It would be a period in which New Zealand solved its race relations difficulties or exacerbated them beyond repair” (undated, but early 1990s, p. 175). In 1981 the anti-apartheid movement which included the independent and already active Action Committee on Racism and Discrimination (ACORD), the interdenominational Churches Action Committee (CAC), and the Women’s Action Committee (WAC), organised popular demonstrations against the ‘racist tour’ of the South African Springboks to Aotearoa-New Zealand (King, undated, p. 180). The churches were involved in these demonstrations with students and teachers (Davidson, 1993, p. 275) and in speaking out against racism within the churches themselves. In 1982 ESOD focussed its fourth Christian Action week study guide for the churches, 27 June – 4 July, on the issue of racism. Study material, *Racism ... a white problem*, was prepared. By 1986, the Anglican Church published a report, *Te Kaupapa Tikanga Rua*, setting out its attitude to bi-cultural relationships within the church in response to the Treaty of Waitangi and its plan to redress the power imbalance (*Te Kaupapa Tikanga Rua*, 1986).

Agencies such as AMSS engaged staff, including the researcher, in anti-racism awareness work and expected them to attend to issues of race and culture within the communities where they were engaged. This was ‘new’ and difficult territory for the mainly Pakeha/Palangi community workers employed fulltime by AMSS at the time. The engagement of staff in these

issues is reflected in plans and reports of projects such as the Glendowie project, where Maori Language classes and 'cultural trips' are noted in the plans (Plans of Action, 1983). The National Council of Churches (later to become the Conference of Churches of Aotearoa-New Zealand, CCANZ), an ecumenical body affiliated to the international World Council of Churches (WCC), sponsored the Programme On Racism (POR) which commenced work in Aotearoa-New Zealand in 1981, in keeping with the focus of the WCC on overcoming racism. The Rev'd Bob Scott, an Anglican priest, was appointed to the POR in 1982, and Mitzi Nairn, a Presbyterian lay woman, worked for the POR to shape the programme in relation to the situation in Aotearoa-New Zealand between Maori and Pakeha. The work of the POR focussed on anti-racism workshops, the Treaty of Waitangi, and Pakeha responsibility in light of the Treaty for the Churches and other social agencies through into the 1990s. They worked with increasing wisdom and skill in effecting change in the attitudes and behaviours of church personnel and other community leaders.

## **4. Theological Education**

### **4.1. Pressure from feminism**

King identifies "1972 as the year in which the women's movement became visible in New Zealand" (undated, p. 145). 1970 started with the publication of Greer's ground-breaking work *The Female Eunuch*, which challenged the self-perception of middle class women and their role in society (Greer, 1970). The decade following these events saw increased confidence amongst a section of women in the Anglican Church, especially those associated at the time with SJC (Davidson, 1993, pp. 268-273). The Christian Feminist Group was established in 1978 by Jo Pelly, wife of the SJC Warden (Nairn, 2010; Cook, undated), for the purposes of informing themselves on feminism and its impact on theology and the Bible. This group of women published the first edition of the Christian feminist journal *Vashti's Voice* in 1978. Another

outcome of this movement amongst women in the church was the development in women's consciousness, with the theological and ecclesiological foundations of church being challenged from within its own structures by women. At this time I recall participating in writing a study guide arguing for the ordination of women in the Anglican Church (no copies located), which was distributed as a resource for parishes. I was involved with others also in discussions around the use of sexist language in the Church.

An attempt in 1978 to get the General Synod to address the issue of "sexist language" was originated by a woman student at St John's College (Davidson, 1993, p. 270).

Women began entering ordained ministry leadership in the Anglican Church in 1977, bringing with them a challenge to male hegemony that was to shake the foundations of church. No longer was male power unquestioned, even the traditional language of 'God the Father' came under theological attack at the same time. The traditionally-accepted preparation of people for ministry was looked at with suspicion by women in the feminist movement in both church and society. They considered it to be the process whereby the age old power structures and hegemonic devices for theological and ecclesiological mind-shaping were re-inscribed from generation to generation. Something different was being required, they proposed, to break this male hegemony open.

The ordination of women as priests in 1977 was seen by some as the attainment of equality between women and men in the church. However, the critique coming from feminist theology recognised the way in which the patriarchal and hierarchal structures in the church were oppressing women and that the language and theology that had been taught for centuries reflected male voices (Davidson, 1993, p. 268).

In 1979 I was ordained to the Anglican priesthood.

#### **4.2. Education for justice**

Also during the 1970s and 1980s, new literature on education as social emancipation emerged, epitomised by the writings of Illich and Freire (Illich,

1971; Freire, 1972, 1974). Literature on the challenge of theology to social structures and systems in the interests of communal wellbeing was also emerging (Neal, 1977; Gutierrez, 1974). The argument that churches should be engaged in actions leading “toward a just, participatory and sustainable society” is traced by Elliott (1982, pp. 251-270).

Thomas Groome in his *Christian Religious Education* (1980), published early in the phase of re-working the direction and purposes of education in the churches, begins to nudge the endeavour toward responsibility for social justice. It is my recollection (as a member of the Anglican Church’s Board of Christian Education at the time) that the earlier work of Carl Rogers (1969), emphasising education as ‘facilitation of learning’ rather than ‘teaching instruction’ (Rogers, 1969, p 105), brought a shift in thinking to those working in Christian education in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Groome (1980, chpt. 8) explored ‘praxis’, with its reflection on concrete action as a way of knowing (Groome, 1980, pp. 152-177), and sets the agenda for change. Gradually these shifts in the attention of those engaged in Christian education, away from Bible stories and the teachings of academics of the past and distant places to engaged learning, start to impact.

In the early 1980s the Anglican and Methodist education agencies were beginning to show a concern for ‘justice education’, in recognition that Christian education had a role in enabling people to respond in local situations to perceived injustice. I was involved at this time in gathering stories from personal engagement in local communities, which led to the publication of a small book, *Being Just Where You Are* (Adams & Salmon, 1987). This book was intended as an encouragement to local congregations to engage in local issues of justice, with some practical tips on how to get started.

When debates on social justice surfaced within the church and were added to the experiences of women who were becoming aware of themselves as a distinctive group within the dominant social system, the hope that change was in the wind was fuelled. Many women (primarily Pakeha) who embraced feminism and feminist theology as an expression of justice and liberation were also committed to anti-racism at this time. There was a sense amongst feminists that 'we' could change the world, or at least our small part of it. *Towards a Reshaped Church* (Adams, 1991) discusses from a feminist perspective some of the institutional dynamics within the Anglican Church in relation to theological education, and the hopes for change during this period in the 1980s.

#### **4.3. The theological colleges**

Theological education for Anglican and Methodist students intending to enter stipendiary or paid professional ministry was at this time (and had been since 1973) predominantly residential and undertaken at the joint Anglican-Methodist College site in Meadowbank, Auckland (Davidson, 1993, p. 255). The course teaching was shared by faculty employed by the respective Anglican and Methodist churches and the qualification conferred was a Licentiate in Theology (LTh) (Thompson, 2010, p. 191). There had been the hope that the Colleges would be able to offer a degree in theology, but until the 1980s overtures to universities in Otago and Auckland had been unsuccessful (Davidson, 1993, p. 292). Talks with the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) were commenced in the early 1980s in the hope that SJC and Trinity Methodist Theological College (TMTC) would become an associated teaching institution accredited to teach the MCD degree as an interim measure until such time as a local degree in theology could be established (Davidson, 1993, p. 293). The Auckland Consortium of Theological Education (ACTE) was created in 1985 "to establish a primary degree in theology in Auckland"

(Davidson, 1993, p. 292). ACTE initially comprised three denominational theological colleges: Baptist, Anglican and Methodist.

Following an exploration of three options which included revisiting the negotiations with the University of Auckland, an arrangement was entered into with MCD (Thompson, 2010, pp. 196-197). As an affiliated institution of the MCD, SJC/TMTC would teach the Melbourne College Bachelor of Theology (BTheol). The degree would be conferred through ACTE on the successful completion of an agreed course of study, and teaching of the degree began in 1988 (Thompson, 2010, p. 196). Davidson notes (1993, p. 293) the concern from the dioceses of the Anglican Church and the 'reluctance' of Anglican Provincial Board for Ministry at the perceived separation of academic work from formation. He further notes that the Provincial Board for Ministry

Emphasised the primary purpose was to prepare candidates for ministry and that training should take seriously the New Zealand context (Davidson, 1993, p. 293).

At around the same time as the decision to go with MCD was confirmed, the long hoped-for approach was received from Auckland University. Things were beginning to change, including in relation to what was 'taught' and ideas about how and why were entering the conversation in an intentional and structured way (Davidson, 1993). Davidson also notes that it was in this climate of exploration and potential change that the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project was established and three students from St John's College moved into residence in 1981:

An innovation was the location of three single students in a state house in Glendowie in 1981. This was a pilot project linking the College, a local parish and the Anglican-Methodist Social Services in a new form of ministry and theological education. This was partly inspired by a student exchange with Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary in India, where their students spent some of their time living in the community amongst the poor. ...The Project however, tended to be on the edge of St John's life, and there was always a tension between the academic expectations of the College and the needs of the Glendowie community ... The Project represented an attempt to put theology into action, a challenge which the College itself has never satisfactorily resolved (Davidson, 1993, p. 284).

#### **4.4. Education for liberation**

Liberation theology and the work of Ivan Illich (Illich, 1971) and Paulo Freire (Freire, 1972, 1974) were having an impact on understandings of church and mission and theological education. In turn this theology was challenging what could be expected from church leadership. Latin-America was the hot-house for a significant number of the writers whose material was critical and influential at this time in driving the theological and educational challenge. The Medellin conference of Catholic Latin American Bishops in September 1968 provided impetus and confidence for these writers (Conference of Latin American Bishops, 1968). Freire's approach aimed to put knowledge at the service of those less-privileged in society to enable their self determination in the process of social transformation (Freire, 1972). Liberation theology, which linked the priorities of social transformation and liberation with the role of the church and its theology, was increasingly relevant (Segundo, 1976; Bonino, 1976).

#### **4.5. Impetus to contextualise**

Illich (1971), Freire (1972), Segundo (1976) and Bonino (1976), amongst others, emphasise the fundamental importance of praxis and contextualised reflected-on experience, as the starting place for a dynamic transformative theology. Segundo's 'hermeneutical circle' provided a way of relating biblical insights to

contemporary contexts (Segundo, 1976, pp. 8-9). This was a good fit with the style of education and formation some theological students sought to explore. There was a direct line between the need for critical awareness of the political dynamics of society and theological education.

The 'base communities' of Latin America were challenging preconceptions of 'being church', and the place of the 'social gospel', with an emphasis on the liberation of the poor and marginalised. The term 'preferential option for the poor' was entering mainstream theological discussion. The papers celebrating the work of Gustavo Gutiérrez noted the 'strategic element' of base communities. Ellis and Maduro argued for the;

... participation of the poor and oppressed as active subjects, doers, makers of history within the church. The poor were always passive objects in the church of Christendom: objects of gospel-preaching... objects of charity... Today the poor are irrupting into the church... [they] participate now as active subjects...this has been possible because of the political, social, cultural and religious awakening of the Latin American peoples over the last few decades (Ellis & Maduro, 1988, pp. 210-211).

The concept of base-communities (Dawson, 1999), with their popular appeal to people struggling to find a relevant and dynamic expression for their Christian faith, attracted interest beyond Latin America. It certainly captured the imagination of the small group of SJC students seeking to live in community while equipping themselves for church leadership.

## **5. Personal Commitments of the Researcher**

During this time feminist concerns had emerged pointing toward a need to mitigate the negative influences of the dominant patriarchal reading of theology and its potential to re-inscribe power differentials in both church and society. In 1983 Jo Pelly offered a conversation on feminist hermeneutics in The Christian Feminist Group (Chapter 4, Section 4.1, pp. 97-98), noting

conditions in which “interpretation of scripture are suspicious” in relation to women. She went on to say “sexism, racism, militarism: a complex and tricky relationship makes the co-option of women’s energy very subtle” (Pelly, 1983, n.p.).

For me, out of my feminist perspective and educational background, it was becoming apparent that a contemporary theological education required a multidisciplinary approach, able to locate theology within the meaning-making activities of civil-society. Rosemary Radford Ruether had broadened the feminist concern for the impact on women of social stereotypes and social policy into the political sphere by addressing American imperial power (Ruether, 1972). Letty Russell was continuing to resource early feminists with her work of re-interpreting the Bible using a feminist perspective (Russell, 1974, 1976). Broad integrated approaches such as these were helping to develop an alternative reading perspective amongst the new wave of feminist theologians. The Cornwall Collective published a small book in which the women shared a conversation between seven theological education programmes, and embarked on a project to develop new curricula and pedagogy taking account of a feminist perspective (The Cornwall Collective, 1980). Similarly, the group of theological educators calling themselves the Mud Flower Collective explored a variety of aspect of feminist theological education (Mud Flower Collective, 1983). This work was exciting to me, as I was exploring theological education, and it was instrumental in my later work on theological education that arose out of study leave (Adams, 1991).

During the mid 1970s I had been employed by AMSS, and during my employment with them had proceeded to ordination training despite, at the time, there being no ordination of women in the Anglican Church of New Zealand. Through AMSS I was actively engaged in community development work and discussions on social issues in relation to the role of agencies such as

AMSS with its commitment to social justice. I rejected the standard ordination training that was available at the time as there were no women on the faculty. The model of education as I perceived it, in the light of my feminist leanings, was a process of 'indoctrination' including hegemonic conditioning that I did not want to be part of. I was looking for a more life-changing model for myself and a more socially-transforming approach that engaged with communities.

My commitment to community development and processes of social change was deeply rooted in a theology of protest and prophetic responsibility. Alongside this, the work of liberation theologians and early feminists made a mark on my theology and my understanding of theological education (Oh & England, 1972; Ruether, 1972; Segundo, 1976; Russell, 1976). My previous experience in education as a teacher, and the material on education that was emerging from Latin America through the writings of Freire and Illich (Freire 1972, 1974; Illich 1971, 1975), stirred my imagination - especially after meeting Freire in Auckland in 1974 (Davidson, 1992, p. 252) - and challenged me to find ways to put these two movements together.

As a consequence, I argued for continuing engagement with AMSS while being tutored by selected staff persons I knew to be active in peace protest and anti-racism work. I was fortunate to be assigned George Armstrong of SJC as a tutor. Armstrong and I continued, along with Pelly as warden, to be actively engaged in the subsequent development and supervision of the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project as it took shape in the 1980s. Both these persons had a commitment, as I understood it, to listening to those on the 'underside' of social systems and supporting their growth and development as they came to articulate questions and seek answers not necessarily found in the text books in use at the time in mainstream or 'malestream' theological education.

### **5.1. Personal engagement**

It is pertinent to this study to identify clearly my personal involvement in the processes of theological education and ministry formation. My personal engagement is a significant component in the critical reflection which I am undertaking in this study. In Chapter 3 I have discussed this particular dynamic in relation to reflexivity and the researcher, noting the importance of establishing the recollections and motivations of the researcher prior to commencing interviews or other data-gathering processes when the researcher has been actively engaged in the work under consideration. I noted also the importance of open critical reflection on these recollections as the focus groups gathered their memories together and confirmed or challenged those of the researcher in ways that did not privilege the recollections of the researcher (Chapter 3, Section 3.1, pp. 60-62).

At the time of the Glendowie Project I was employed by AMSS as a community work supervisor and researcher. It was in that role that I became engaged as agency co-ordinator, student supervisor, and tutor in community work and theology. As a priest in the Anglican Church, I was a member of the Board of Governors of SJC and chairperson of the national Anglican Board of Ministry. These roles enabled me to participate in negotiations on theological education and ministry formation at this time. I was thus able to support the involvement of the College as a third participant in the Glendowie Project.

Those of us who designed and argued for the opportunity to implement the project were looking for a way to reflect, from an engaged perspective, on a number of issues relevant to the changing climate in theology, society and social understanding that we were experiencing. We were looking to implement a different mission initiative, where the local residents set the agenda and the pace. Concurrent with this, we wanted to explore a pedagogical approach in which both students and residents were learners and

'teachers' for each other. A report on the Glendowie Project made in 1983 in which some of the initial start-up history is reviewed, notes

Throughout the discussion at this meeting [March 1980] it was generally agreed that the basic principle was to work in partnership with members of the community, and that any workers coming to live there would be doing so at the invitation of at least some of the Madeleine and Esperance Avenue residents (Glendowie Project Participants, 1983).

We were also convinced that a long-term engagement where the workers were resident members of the community could make a difference to the quality of life for the local residents and be a mutually empowering experience. 'Conscientization' and 'empowerment' were concepts influencing our hope for the engagement of students with the people of the Madeleine Avenue and Esperance Road community.

## **6. The Beginnings of the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project**

In 1978 the relatively wealthy Anglican Parish of St Heliers under the guidance of the Rev'd Michael Houghton became aware that it was not engaging effectively with an area of government housing that lay within its parish boundaries. The Rev'd Joyce Marcon, then a student at SJC and on placement in the Parish of St Heliers, was asked to investigate the situation and report to the parish leaders. In 1979 she reported. To quote from a subsequent report written in 1983:

It became apparent that ministry other than traditional parish ministry was required if the housing area surrounding that church [St James, Riddell Rd] was to be effectively ministered to. The Madeline and Esperance Avenues in contrast with those in other parts of the parish, were obviously different. On the slopes of the basin are privately owned dwellings of the white-middle-class parishioners, where Esperance and Madeleine Avenues are Housing Corporation dwellings with predominantly Maori and Polynesian residents (A Report on the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983).

AMSS was approached to research the situation and to present a proposal to the parish as to a possible way forward. A proposal was developed that would see the theological college, AMSS and the Parish of St Heliers enter into a partnership under the supervision and coordination of AMSS, and funding partners were sought from amongst government departments. I was assigned this project. My background in education and my interest and experience in theological education, my emerging feminism, and my desire to see a greater engagement by church in the social and structural issues of local communities provided me with the skills and attitudes to engage in this project. At this time, I noted some key questions that would guide work in projects such as Glendowie:

1. How can/does our neighbourhood and group work lead to a style of work which produces change? What change do we look for?
2. Politicisation: How intentional are we at implementing this part of our philosophy? What is politicisation?
3. Methodology: How can we develop a flexible but intentional methodology to move work towards the philosophical goals?
4. With whom do we develop our analysis? Agency allies and support network? (Adams, 1979).

The same reflection paper also notes the following tensions that I observed were developing at the time:

Development / change - re funding  
Neighbourhood / regional work  
Tension between service provision / change agents  
Struggle with philosophy and practice (Adams, 1979).

This engagement with Glendowie, AMSS and SJC was to shape the next 30 years of my life.

The Glendowie Project, as it was known, was located in a low-lying area adjacent to wealthy suburbs. It was an area bounded by low rising hills and a local 'mountain', Mt Taylor. Madeleine Avenue and Esperance Road were the

key residential streets upon which the blocks of 'flats' and semi-detached houses were located. The flats were built in blocks of four, each flat two storied, attached to its neighbour and with its own front and back garden. The Estate was made up of approximately 300 state rental units, the majority being semi-detached and lying on the floor and south facing side of a basin.

The Estate stands in contrast to the surrounding dwellings which are detached and are in the private property of the residents. One side of the estate is bounded by a large playing ground.

Based on average tenancy the population of the area is estimated at 1500 residents. However this does not take into account two factors:

1. Care of extended family is a cultural norm amongst Maori and Polynesian families
2. The housing shortage in Auckland is resulting in overcrowding.

Therefore 1500 may well be a conservative estimate. Proportionately this is 40% Maori, 40% Polynesian, 2% Asian refugee and 18% Pakeha. The age breakdown shows the majority of tenants to be 25-35 years old plus some grandparents and with a youth bulge at 7-13 years. 10% of the local secondary school come from this area but within 2 years of leaving school (at whatever age that might be) they have moved on, giving a noticeable absence between 15-20 (A Statement of Hope, 1982).

The New Zealand Housing Corporation owned the properties and was during the 1980s considering alternative designs for houses and neighbourhood layout as a response to different demands due to changes in family size and composition. There was awareness that these 'neighbourhoods' of sponsored housing were areas of social discontent and increasing alienation. Government agencies, such as Housing Corporation, Social Welfare and the Internal Affairs Department, were willing to consider partnerships with agencies from the not-for-profit sector in an effort to explore if or how such neighbourhoods could rebuild a sense of community and self worth for the residents.

### **6.1. The agencies**

The primary initiator of the Glendowie Project, the Anglican Parish of St Heliers, was located 'up the hill' in one of the adjacent seaward wealthy suburbs. The leaders of the parish were aware of their inability to extend effective ministry in this low income multi-ethnic 'deprived' neighbourhood within the parish boundary. This was commented on by the two focus groups that were interviewed (Glendowie-3., 2008; Glendowie-4., 2008). The parish group approached AMSS in 1979, recognising AMSS to be engaged in community development initiatives and with a clear theology of social engagement. This initiative was a 'new direction' and a 'refocusing' for traditional church social service work. AMSS, as one of the early not-for-profit organisations engaged in contracting with government agencies for the provision of social services, was in a position to create partnerships with the local church and with relevant government services. The hope for cooperation with other agencies is signalled in the initial funding application objectives:

(i) ... developing a team approach with Social Welfare, Health, Justice Department and Education Department workers in the area;

Liaising with Housing Corporation officers in matters of maintenance, rent and working toward achieving the re-development or refurbishment of the housing stock in line with other areas (Greenaway, 1980, p. 3).

### **6.2. Stakeholder hopes and expectations**

The project had multiple purposes. Each of the two initiating partners, AMSS and the Anglican Parish of St Heliers Bay, had a set of intentions, and alongside these were the purposes and intentions of the various government agencies that had agreed to participate and to provide some of the resources.

The project was intended by AMSS and the students to provide holistic community development support that was, according to a report of the AMSS Director, to provide for community development initiatives, including

leadership development and the overcoming of “the sense of isolation and misunderstanding expressed by many residents” (Greenaway, 1980). There was to be an intentional ‘spiritual dynamic’ to the presence of the students in this multicultural area that was understood to have multiple deprivations and alienation from many Maori cultural protocols.

Parish leaders continued to work at how they could engage with this part of the parish. They had been inspired to attend to the imperative of the gospel to work amongst those most disadvantaged in the community by a Lenten study group led by the then Bishop of Auckland Paul Reeves and Professor Lloyd Geering (Glendowie-4., 2008). Joyce Marcon’s 1979 report set out some options for engagement using the resources that had become available by the sale of the St James property in Riddell Rd. It appears, from the interviews of parish representatives (Glendowie-3, 2008), that it was intended the project would raise the level of basic social functioning and the sense of wellbeing of the residents of the area, including the schooling of the children.

Parish participants, however, reflected that in retrospect they felt the intentions of AMSS and the government agencies involved did not match their more individually-focussed intentions. It was clear from the focus group meeting with the parish leaders from that time that the decision to initiate a ‘ministry project’ in the area had more personal and pragmatic goals for them. They wanted to ‘support’ the women of the ‘streets’ by “teaching them how to cook and grow silverbeet so they could feed their families healthy and economically affordable meals” (Glendowie-3, 2008). Their motivating idea was for more personal engagement between themselves and the residents, where the greater ‘social survival skills’ of the parish people involved would be transferred to those who were struggling. They hoped to be able to meet with the women over morning tea and develop personal relationships (Glendowie-3, 2008). It was a ‘service’ model of ministry that came directly

from their Christian commitment to help those less fortunate than themselves. It was a genuine desire to 'help'. It did not, however, reflect the 'new liberation theology' they had been introduced to by Houghton, and later by Reeves and Geering in the study groups that had caused them to consider what they could do in this low-income area. As a consequence of their expectations not being met, as they noted in the same interview, they came to feel distanced from the project and rather hurt that their 'good idea' had been taken over and grown too big (Glendowie-3, 2008). It had grown away from their individual and personal focus and was now part of a social change agenda and a venture into theological education and ministry formation.

SJC saw the project as an opportunity to provide an alternative option for some theological students as part of their theological education and ministry formation. It was a way to explore the idea of 'theology in action' that the Warden, the Rev'd Dr Raymond Pelly, was committed to, and that grew out of the World Council of Churches 1971 mandate that "emphasised contextualisation in mission, theological approach, educational method and structure" (Davidson 1993, p. 251). An indication of this commitment of Pelly's is reflected in the recent interview with him for the purposes of this research (Glendowie-1, 2007). In that he notes:

Theological education is also about social transformation and students should be in places where they can engage with this ... we were influenced by South American base communities and what people could do to change their own situation (Glendowie-1, 2007).

In addition, a 1984 paper prepared for the Board of Governors by Pelly, notes:

Fourthly and lastly there is another issue which is largely to do with class and poverty. Here again, I believe, that Spirit of the Lord is upon us. The white-settler church is largely middle-class and well off. There are, however, some brave and prophetic spirits in the pakeha church who are hearing the call of God (I believe) to break out of the class-captivity of their church and to reach out in a real and personally costly way to

the poor, the unemployed, the dispossessed of our society. This exodus movement has gone beyond the realm of rhetoric and has become concrete in action ... Its theology and philosophy goes beyond City Mission-type operations.... The kind of things I have in mind are the Glendowie Pastoral Project; the community around Sister Pauline O'Regan in Parklands/Aranui in Christchurch; the St Clare's group in Auckland. All these in their different ways live out a serious option for the poor and are actively exploring community-based alternative styles of ministry in low-cost housing areas. We have talked a great deal about Glendowie in this Board so I won't elaborate. All I want to say is how important this exploration of alternative, community based, non-middle-class ministry is for the integrity of the College and for the future of the church ... (Pelly, 1984, p. 4).

The College had agreed to locate a group of students as residents in this low income area of Auckland and to provide joint supervision and support for their work. They hoped this was an 'experiment' in combining ministry formation with the social responsibility would be a response to those from the wider church who were seeking such an option. Davidson notes the concern of the PBM for the College to focus on 'ministry preparation' and not separate theological study from ministry formation (Davidson, 1993, pp. 293-294). The students who chose to participate hoped to engage in a 'real' contextual theology project that provided an approved alternative to continuing institutional study. It would provide a different learning environment and pedagogy.

Parish leaders approached AMSS, as a para-church agency with which they were familiar and which was moving intentionally toward greater involvement in community development initiatives, as noted above (Greenaway, 1980, p. 3). AMSS was willing to be involved and able to network with government agencies to provide the start-up resources.

New Zealand Housing Corporation made the property at 87 Esperance Rd available at a nominal rental, Internal Affairs and the Social Welfare Innovative Scheme Fund provided some funding toward the cost of the 'community-work' students, and social workers in the area were available to support the students with the issues they were facing amongst the residents. The hope was that there would be a positive shift in the sense of social isolation and an 'improvement' in the general attitudes in the streets.

### **6.3. A new initiative**

The project was a new initiative intended to provide community development with an intentional 'spiritual dynamic', in a multicultural area perceived to have a complex layering of deprivations. At the same time it was engaging theological students in a form of theological education and ministry formation that was expected to equip them to engage in the redirected priorities of ministry leadership and theology in practical ways.

For AMSS this was an opportunity to coordinate an initiative that brought together Church, local government and national government ministries with the people of a local neighbourhood, putting into practice a new and different mission initiative within the parameters of a local church boundary. By engaging the theological college in the project it was able to explore the theological issues supporting community engagement, thereby enhancing understanding of its own practice. AMSS was participating in the equipping of a new generation of ministry leaders, although this was not its primary purpose, and engaging with local neighbourhood people in the development of community resilience through selected actions to 'improve' the conditions of living in this area.

At commencement, three students from SJC moved into residence at 87 Esperance Rd. And the local residents were curious about what was going on.

The initial 'listening' phase of the project identified that the residents were living with the knowledge that the then national government, personified in Prime Minister Muldoon, "identified it as an area to get rid of... and residents were terrified of losing their homes" (Glendowie-4, 2008). Local residents in the streets were willing to engage with the new student residents in their midst hoping that maybe this would stall the sell-off of the area.

The parish leaders who formed a focus group for the purposes of this research were able to recall clearly that, by the time the project began on the ground in 1981, the parish had resolved to provide emotional and prayer support, some expenses for the student workers, and resourcing in practical ways such as the provision of photocopying, typing, meals and back up letters of support when required (Glendowie-3, 2008). They had also planned for a group of parishioners to meet with the students from time to time to explore what was happening and what was the best way of supporting the work. In return, the student workers were expected to furnish reports to the Vestry of the Parish about their work in the neighbourhood. This group further commented

Our intentions were misunderstood [by the students]: we were judged and no recognition was given to our past experience of having little money and struggling. We were not wanted as an active part of the project and this was a disappointment (Glendowie-3, 2008).

The parish focus group reluctantly agreed to be a 'hands off' partner (as requested by the students), making few demands except to be kept informed and to have the opportunity to learn from the work of the students through reports and discussion (Glendowie-3, 2008).

## **7. What Happened?**

The graduate students remembered that, as anticipated, it took some time for the household to find their feet in the neighbourhood, and to be accepted as more than fly-by-night do-gooders. In anticipation, based on past experience,

we had negotiated for the project to be in place for an initial period of two years. This caused some difficulty for SJC as they operated within a budget policy of annual funding, so costs had to be applied for yearly. Despite the spoken agreement to support the project, this was yet another group that required persuasion as the members of the Board of Governors, apart from Pelly and myself, did not have direct engagement in the project and to their mind it was an untested innovation. The strength of feeling about this is reflected in an interview comment: “All the bishops, 25, had few clues about theological education” (Glendowie-1, 2007). Nevertheless, SJC agreed to prioritise the Glendowie Project, in their annual funding application to the SJC Trust Board. The SJC Trust provided funds for the working of the college, its day to day operating and programme costs, and capital development costs.

### **7.1. Credentialing**

Despite the hope of those of us who were working with the college (myself, lecturer George Armstrong, and the students) that a way would be found to give recognition to the students through academic credits for the work they were doing in theology and ministry, we were unable to achieve this (Glendowie-1, 2007). The lack of an exam base for assessing work in the project, or attendance in what was deemed acceptable class work within the college, seemed to exacerbate the fear that academic excellence was being eroded. This was a time of educational uncertainty and change in relation to the emerging consortium (ACTE), and SJC seemed afraid it would lose credibility in the struggle to recognise the validity of practical engagement versus the traditional theoretical focus (Glendowie-1, 2007). This put extra pressure on the students, who were required to take taught classes in addition to the self-directed practical ministry work and supervised theological reflection undertaken weekly as part of the project, if they wished to receive credit toward their qualification.

Various theological students came in and out of the household over the eight-year life of the project. Most had a term or two available for this type of theological experience without prejudicing their graduation or ordination dates. Some stayed and provided roll-over continuity and all enabled the house to keep three people in residence during the term of its life.

## **7.2. An 'open door'**

The students in the first household established the character of the house as prioritising hospitality. This was manifest through an 'open door' policy. In the early days, the open hospitality was somewhat troublesome to the students in residence as they 'lost' personal items and household goods (Glendowie-2, 2007), but before long the open door brought guests from the neighbourhood day and night when situations got difficult. The 'trust' the student workers hoped would be built with the people of the neighbourhood, and which was necessary before they could 'work together', developed more rapidly than anticipated. Reflecting for the purposes of this research, the students interviewed from this household believed the open door was very significant in building this trust. However, it also brought its down-side: the students became extremely tired and needed time away to sleep and gather emotional energy and this affected the pace and the issues that could be addressed. Over time the local residents became fully engaged in negotiating the community-work of the household and participating in supervision and planning (Glendowie-2, 2007), which was a shift from the original hope that the local residents would set the agenda (above, 5.1). In return, the local residents received support for entry into work programmes and with creative action initiatives they wanted to undertake to improve the fabric of life in the area. In 1984 a local resident was employed as a youth worker (Cardy, 1985), and a further three local residents were supported through a job-sharing application (Cardy, 1986).

## **8. The Place of the House in the Neighbourhood**

It is my recollection, borne out by supervision notes, interviews and student reflections written at the time, that at the very heart of the approach to theology and learning this project espoused was the active participation of the student residents in the neighbourhood and the issues of their neighbours (Adams, 1981, 1984: Glendowie-1, 2007; Glendowie-5, 2007; Glendowie Project Participants, 1983; A Statement of Hope, 1982; Glendowie Student Reflections, 1985). This willingness to participate in the life issues of the neighbourhood provided material for reflection in the open group supervision held weekly in situ and attended by the emerging local leaders. This same group noted actions that could be taken. The detailed planning took place in a different forum.

At the heart of the weekly supervision sessions was the use of the hermeneutical circle to reflect on actions and on the link between issues under consideration and biblical and theological insights. This hermeneutical circle that had its genesis with Segundo's work in Latin America (Chapter 4, Section 4.5, pp. 102-103) soon evolved into what I called the 'hermeneutical spiral' (Adams and Salmon, 1988, p. 18), in order to indicate that there was progressive change in each of the components: the issue, the understandings of biblical and theological resources, and possible further actions toward change. In this way, direct links were created between current local issues, theological insights, and specific actions in the neighbourhood. This movement became apparent as we returned week by week to the reflections.

Gradually during 1981 and 1982 a group of neighbourhood residents, from teenagers to grandmothers, began to coalesce around the household. This group functioned as a litmus test of acceptability and trust. In various combinations, with friends and neighbours, different groupings took shape and attended to different issues. Some were concerned to engage with

children and young people, some with the housing quality and repair needs, some with preschoolers and their mothers, some with race and identity and some with the need for a community motor vehicle.

In 1983 a report to the SJC Board of Governors, made as part of the accountability and future planning of the project, noted the significance of the household being in residence in the community:

Local residence is essential to the style and commitments of the project. This is reflected back to us from the community in no uncertain way. Unless we are immersed in the life of the community and accountable to it we run the risk of being an optional extra, i.e. we become “people you don’t get too close to because they’ll be gone soon” like so many others who are peripheral to the life struggle and celebrations of the people ...

Much of the work of the project builds upon the past, extending activities, urging self-reliance, sharing issues and concerns (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983).

A margin note, made by one of the presenters of the report (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983), indicates the “leadership support role made possible” because of the trust and immersion of the students in the neighbourhood.

The approach taken in the project was as far as possible to engage in issues that affected groups in the neighbourhood and to engage the residents in these actions from the initial discussion to later reflection on the action. By 1984 local residents were taking a leadership role in the supervision and reflection sessions (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1984, p. 2).

### **8.1. Learning together**

All supervision was a mutual learning occasion, as the neighbours were our teachers about living on benefits, with their educational backgrounds and employment aspirations, and the students were able to provide critical

reflection and language in which to talk about events. There was real concern expressed in supervision from time to time that I, and other supervisors appointed by SJC, would not understand the relevance of the issue or proposed action or the language being used to express what we came to understand as deep theological insights. One of the students noted

The engagements there gently removed the image of God as an English gentleman toward an understanding of Papatuanuku - towards a living spiritual presence (Glendowie-5, 2007).

Daily prayers were part of the household routines, and as this practice became known it became a gathering point for neighbourhood residents who began to bring concerns for family and friends to be included in the prayers. At this point, students felt they were able to add something different to neighbourhood life. Initially student engagement in local issues began by attending to the concerns expressed by the neighbourhood residents for the children of the community. Local schools were visited and homework and recreational activities commenced, and student workers attended preschool groups in the local hall and 'morning tea' groups with local residents. Responding to the children's need was a positive point of entry that responded to local resident expectations; homework support and holiday programmes were enthusiastically welcomed.

We grew to discover that the community focuses significant proportion of its hope within the lives of its young people. They expresses on numerous occasions that they would be well satisfied if we took their children seriously and worked for a positive future with them (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1984, p. 2).

Over time other issues began to emerge that pointed towards structural engagement. Local residents and students worked together to develop sufficient skills to identify the relevant social agencies who had an impact on the quality of life in the neighbourhood and how these agencies could be addressed in order to bring about change. Scanning the supervision reports

and students' reflection notes on supervision that were made available to me, it is clear that the concern to work with groups of people on issues that could bring change, transformation, remained in focus as a goal. Notes from a supervision session, undated but probably 1984, ask:

- What groups have been empowered that were not empowered before?
- What structural changes are evident in associated bodies and in the community?
- The community must hold the power and speak for themselves (Supervision notes, Undated).

Supervision sessions were recorded on flip sheets: "I remember note taking, notes written by the group on newsprint, public and shared" (Glendowie-5, 2007).

On one supervision agenda there are six 'structured' groups identified with the 'significant actions and non-actions' identified for discussion and the people engaged with that group listed. By November 1983 nine issues were brought to the reflection day agenda for attention:

- Naming themselves/ ourselves: group identify,
- Being role models: hospitality, valuing
- Skill development: using the system
- Political consciousness: networking, owning the public
- Systems and affecting their decisions, social awareness
- People's gifts: eldership, growth in perception, acceptance
- Valuing
- Education: video tapes, church institutions, secular institutions
- Multiculturalism: racism, biculturalism
- Economy: unemployment, cost of activities, cost of living

On the same day five priorities were identified for the coming year, 1984:

- education (including about Waitangi),
- outreach,
- the hall shift,
- Maori sovereignty and
- The community's involvement with the house.
- (Reflection Day, 1983)

Supervision sessions were structured, in part, as the student group reflected on the various neighbourhood groups and their actions and learnings. It was also unstructured, in part to allow for new issues to come to light. Always there was reflection on skills required and processes identified for action that would need further planning (Glendowie Student Group, 1983). Through all this, students kept journals and logs of their personal journeys and issues for discussion. They noted their pains and joys and challenges.

## **8.2. Taking action: some remembered stories**

A process for engaging with Housing Corporation was developed and rehearsed over a number of weeks with local residents, as they developed confidence in asking their questions and setting out their demands. It was their hope to secure renovation and repairs to the properties in which they were living. So far they had not had any success in achieving the repairs through one-to-one contact. The action included representatives of the community, along with the students and myself, attending a meeting in the office of the New Zealand Housing Corporation regional manager. In the event, a large and unanticipated crowd from the community attended and the meeting was moved to the cafeteria to accommodate them all. This was a very successful initiative and repairs and modifications to properties resulted. It was a mutual learning opportunity.

A further initiative, arising out of residents' concern for the safety of their children, was to engage with the local council for the provision of a pedestrian crossing. The rejection of the local community's request for the crossing resulted in a decision being taken by residents to act in non-violent protest. Over a number of weeks a group of residents painted a pedestrian crossing on the road people had to cross from the playing fields and housing estate to reach the community hall. Each time it was painted it was removed by the

council. The children had to cross this busy road and there was a determination that they should be safe. One of the students reflected,

I think the protest was very successful. It was visibly cheeky, in that we were willing to break the law, and the council saw a determination and decided to move the hall across the road (Cardy, 2011).

Reflections on this action indicate the emergence of consciousness of the power of the 'white man in the system' and a project to re-locate the hall to the side of the road adjacent to the housing.

As local leadership needs began to emerge, the students supported a request to assist residents to apply for funds to employ a local youth worker. The neighbourhood had identified the person they wished to employ in this position from amongst themselves. Funds were obtained and the worker was employed.

The initiatives noted are indicative of a number of engagements at a structural level by the local community as they began to identify what would help them 'improve' their lives and speak about their needs. They were developing confidence to make contact with those who made decisions affecting their wellbeing as a local community. Each action required an assessment of need, local consultation and coordination, interface with local and national government agencies and the development of the skills to support and sustain the outcomes.

An indication of the initial concerns for the students as they began work in the community and the emerging issues that engaged the household in the first few years is outlined in the 1983 report to the various stakeholders made by the student household. The scope of this report outlines engagement in the life of the community around issues as diverse as running holiday programmes to discussions on cultural identity. In all instances, local residents are part of the

groups and engaged in the decision-making and running of the activities. The activities/issues listed in the report are: the Hall Committee, the Holiday Programme, the food Co-operative, the Play Group, The Video Group, House Life, the Reaffirmation of Cultural Identity (A Report on the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983).

### **8.3. An active bi-cultural commitment**

The multi-cultural mix of the neighbourhood, with a significant proportion of solo mothers and Maori residents, meant issues of the day such as unemployment, racism and sexism were very personal and were a part of everyday life experience. The growing awareness of racism and Pakeha responsibility that was gathering momentum nationally propelled the students from the household into anti-racism work.

This multi-cultural community confronts us with unfamiliar situations in which we feel acute inadequacy. But even in this sense of inadequacy we have been constantly brought to an awareness of the power we have. As white, educated, financially secure males we are in a very privileged position (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983).

They became associated with actions being undertaken more widely within the churches. In 1981, students and residents from the neighbourhood were engaged in actions protesting the Springbok Tour, along with students and staff from SJC (Newnham, 1981, pp. 16-17, 27, 28). The anti-apartheid movement gathered many people associated with the churches, especially from the Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and the Society of Friends. Many of the leaders of protest action, including in the storming of the field in Hamilton, were led by people associated with the Christian churches (Newnham, 1981, pp. 26-28). For example, the Rev'd Andrew Beyer of St Matthew in the City chaired MOST (Mobilisation to Stop the Tour) in Auckland, and George Armstrong was prominent on the field in Hamilton (Davidson, 1993, p. 276). This movement provided significant experience

when the call came for action in relation to honouring the Treaty of Waitangi and the growing pressure of the bicultural movement in the Anglican and Methodist Churches.

This anti-racism commitment and action on the part of the church and the growing awareness of bicultural responsibilities impacted on the life and work of the project and contributed significantly to the agenda of supervision sessions and priorities for action by the household. For example, the struggle to gain access to SJC video equipment for the mainly Maori youth Video Group that sought to document their life in Glendowie (A Report on the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1983), and actions by students to take their learnings into specific action.

So, in 1983 the student group from Esperance Rd and a small group of residents travelled together to Waitangi to participate in protests in support of honouring the Treaty of Waitangi. 'Honour the Treaty' was a rallying call that year with a large crowd converging on Waitangi to press their demands on government representatives. Two of the students from the project, with others from the Churches Action Committee (Lear, 1983, pp. 38-42), attended the traditional dawn service on the upper marae. As the service was to begin they revealed they were wearing sackcloth and ashes as a sign of repentance. They were arrested along with others from the church group that had undertaken this symbolic action. Student Glynn Cardy, who was one of those involved in the protest, wrote a reflection on the events of that day, which was published in the account *What happened at Waitangi 1983?* (Cardy, 1983, pp. 21-24).

I ripped open my shirt allowing my tunic to fall down and burst the little bag of ash on my chest. Two large men walked me off, one informing me of my true position in life. Sack cloth and ashes... We spent ten hours that day in our sackcloth robes watching a spider struggle with a web in a Whangarei cell (Cardy 1983, p. 24).

## 9. Towards the End of the Project

A 'reference group' of local residents had coalesced after about 18 months of the students moving into the neighbourhood. This group engaged in reflection with the students and their tutors on the actions undertaken with people from the neighbourhood. It is my personal recollection that they also engaged in reflecting and providing feedback on the growth and development of the students' insights and awareness and the planning for future local activity. Their participation is reflected in personal supervision notes and action plans (Plans of Action 1983; Reflection Day 1983; Full Day Supervision, 1984). Residents participated in reflecting theologically as well as participating in planning and leading resident interface with government bodies and social service agencies. They had become very articulate about structural analysis and the power dynamics they saw, asking questions about funding and management of the project as well as the 'work groups'. A guiding theological motif had emerged: 'hope'. Up till now hopelessness had seemed to be the underlying dynamic for the people of that neighbourhood (A Statement of Hope, 1982).

The engagement of the students in the life of the neighbourhood and the inclusion of local residents in reflection and in monitoring the group seemed to enable this to shift from hopelessness to hopefulness. The resulting challenge was to discover how an understanding of 'hope' could be embodied in this depressed and despised neighbourhood. It had become apparent that hope needed to be able to be realised daily if it was to carry motivational power in individual lives and in neighbourhood groups. Things hoped for needed to be planned for, and goals set that could be achieved in the foreseeable future. Hope, as was talked about by the group, came to be understood as needing specific and realisable results if it was to capture the imagination and energy of the people. The poem *Learning Hope*, published

some time later (Adams, 2006; Appendix 15), sought to express these learnings.

In 1984 there were a number of letters of support gathered from the community and associated agencies as the project went into the next phase of its life in 1985, and sought extended tenancy in the Esperance Road house, continuing student engagement, and further funding for the costs of the project. Over the next few years St Philips parish employed one of the graduating students, Philip Richardson on its staff. As a Vestry, they were satisfied their goals were being met. Another of the students, Glynn Cardy, was similarly employed by St Philips, and later became employed by the Glen Innes parish. He also continued some participation in the project in support of the local youth worker. The parish had taken up the overall management and fundraising of the project.

As the participating government agencies continued to fund the work and to resource it according to their commitment, it appears they were satisfied with the ability the project gave them for positive interaction with residents and the changing identity that was emerging in the neighbourhood. Some residents even elected voluntarily to remain in the area when the offer of alternative housing was presented.

AMSS was satisfied its commitment had been worthwhile and its skill base enhanced through reflection on its participation. AMSS was satisfied that it was making a contribution to the transformation of the lives of people in a multi-disadvantaged community.

The students were excited about the learnings and challenges in ministry and pastoral practice they were accruing to give heart to their theology.

SJC withdrew from this (for them) 'experimental' project in 1985. They had not pursued the credentialing issue, they did not seek to build the project into their ongoing programme options, and they did not seek to continue the relationship with the residents of the community after the students were pulled out of the project despite a letter of affirmation having been written in 1984 by the Archbishop of New Zealand and Bishop of Auckland the Most Reverend Paul Reeves.

I have admired the work of the Glendowie Neighbourhood Project. It has helped the local people identify their issues and make use of their own resources and strengths. You cannot minister in this way unless you are committed to the people amongst whom you are living. The Glendowie Neighbourhood Project has shown patience, sensitivity and commitment. It has been a good experience of ministry and also a good preparation for ordained ministry (Reeves, 1984).

The project closed 6 years after it commenced. Local residents attempted to maintain something of the ethos and momentum for a few years longer, led by the youth worker they had chosen supported by St Philips parish and involving some students of their own volition. But the turnover of migrant residents and endemic racism made this too hard in the long term without specific targeted support.

On reading a draft of this story, a previous student of the project felt a mihi was appropriate. I am glad to include the following mihi that he provided.

*The Glendowie Neighbourhood Project was first and foremost about people. The people of the GD neighbourhood, the students who lived at number 87, and the lecturers and local priests who supported, questioned, and encouraged them. As one of those students, and later a local priest, I have an overwhelming feeling of gratitude to all who shared their lives in that place.*

*I am grateful to Dr Susan Adams not only for her involvement at the time but for beginning to tell the Project's story to a wider audience. She has related a few stories but of course there are many many more. Humorous stories, sad stories, hopeful stories... They are etched in my memory, a reservoir of encouragement.*

*The Christian God, with its tell-tale signs of justice, love, and transformation, was always present in that community. As students we met that God there in a very powerful and life-changing way. I used to say that we didn't convert our neighbours, rather they converted us. Nowadays I would say that together we worked, laughed, cried, and planned for ways that justice, love and transformation would become more real in all our lives. It was the best preparation for priesthood I've ever known.*

*Today the old GD neighbourhood no longer exists. To the relief of many in the surrounding district, the state housing residents were moved out, bulldozers came in and demolished all our homes. They were replaced with million dollar residences. The local newspapers applauded the removal of this community of violence, abuse and crime. I wrote at the time giving a contrary view. While not ignoring the destructive behaviour GD was also a place where people cared for each other, frequently offering unbelievable support and aroha, acting compassionately even when the giver was just as needy as the receiver. It was a place here I have seen hope come alive, lasting change happen, and divine love at play. Indeed I was a recipient of, and a participant in, these things. And I am deeply grateful.*

*The Venerable Glynn Cardy BA, LTh, BD, DipSocSc*

The study of the Glendowie project highlights the significance of issues such as the role of communities of practice, the importance of engaged action-reflection, processes to identify areas for transformation and place of institutional support.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Case Study Two: The Diocesan Ministry Training Programme 1990 - 1999**

#### **1. An Overview of the Social Context**

Aotearoa-New Zealand had come through the 1970s with its 'suburban-neurosis', focussing on the deprivations of women living in the bleak, suburban, first-home developments surrounding major cities, Auckland and Wellington in particular. As the country moved into the 1990s, we were still facing significant social disturbances. The freeing up of the economy by the 1984 Labour Government, in what became known as 'Rogernomics' after the Minister of Finance at this time (Kelsey, 1995), had increased the gap between rich and poor, and contributed to the impact of the stock-market crash of 1987, resulting in considerable economic upheaval and hardship. The demands of Maori to 'Honour the Treaty' were increasingly being heard, along with their calls for equity and greater access to resources, and for participation in places of influence (Kelsey, 1985, p. 23). We had become aware that things were changing; change was being demanded. There was national debate on the processes for the election of the government, and in 1993 the system known as MMP or 'mixed member proportional' representation came into place. This recognised in the parliamentary context the demand for the greater inclusion and participation of minority voices in our institutions and places of policy making.

Aotearoa-New Zealand had made its mark on the world stage during the 1980s with the anti-nuclear stance. By refusing to accept the United States of America's (USA) military policy of 'neither confirm nor deny' in relation to naval ships and submarines visiting Aotearoa-New Zealand ports, New Zealand was adopting a 'David and Goliath' stance toward the mighty USA.

The Labour government of David Lange refused to capitulate, even in the face of threat from the USA to exclude New Zealand from the 'information' network and the development of favourable trade agreements. Aotearoa-New Zealand rode a wave of hope, believing that we could claim our independence as a nation and claim our place in the world.

The Ecumenical Decade of Solidarity with Women was established by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1988 and churches of the mainline denominations in Aotearoa-New Zealand agreed to participate. The establishment of such a named decade reflects the buoyancy of the women's movement internationally during the 1980s and into the 1990s. There was a growing awareness that women were 'coming ready-or-not' for active participation in the structures and institutions of our society. The late 1970s had seen women "mobilising around campaigns on abortion, pay equity, health, peace and anti-nuclear issues" (Kelsey, 1985, p. 21). Women's strategies for change however "remained outside, but generally vulnerable to the power of the state" (Kelsey, 1985, p. 21). This became important in relation to the changes in theological education which were taking place in this period.

## **2. The Situation in the Church**

The growing quest for national identity and place in the world was felt in the churches too. In the Anglican Church, it was seen in the growing numbers of women ordained to the priesthood, the ordination of a woman as a diocesan bishop, and the development of a new constitution expressing the three tikanga (cultural ways) structure of Maori, Pasifika, and Pakeha, which together began to reshape relationships within the world-wide Anglican Church. The stance that Aotearoa-New Zealand had taken in 1981 against South African policies of apartheid caught the imagination of others around the world and fuelled optimism at home that change in race relations was possible - even while it split families and caused a change in social relations

that still reverberate. The Anglican and Methodist Churches had provided leadership in the protest marches of the 1980s and continued to work at raising awareness of the bi-cultural journey of both church and society.

### **2.1. Changes for women**

This mood of optimism during the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, with the sense there was a willingness to embrace limited change, was again demonstrated in the institutions of the Anglican Church. For example the church cautiously responded to the demand for women to be appointed to the staff of the theological college. In 1988 Enid Bennett and Janet Crawford were appointed: Enid to a position in TMTC (Trinity Methodist Theological College) and Janet to SJC (St John's College) (Davidson, 1993, p. 299).

### **2.2. Changes in bicultural relationships**

Maori demands for change were being voiced in relation to the Anglican and Methodist churches, and as a consequence bicultural education initiatives were developed in both denominations. In 1984 the General Synod of the Anglican Church established a Commission to explore the effect such a move might have on its life and structure. Following the Commission's recommendations in its 1986 report to General Synod (*Te Kaupapa Tikanga Rua*, 1986), it was agreed that the Constitution of the church should be revised and that the "principles of partnership and bicultural development are expressed and entrenched" (*Proceedings of General Synod 1986*). At that time Muru Walters (later to be ordained priest and then bishop) was appointed to teach Maori language and to assist students of SJC and TMTC to engage with cross cultural studies. A Bicultural Education Commission was also set up and five educators were appointed. These bicultural educators were to help the Anglican Church move toward greater understanding of partnership and of institutional racism. These actions assisted the church as it moved toward a revision of its constitution that finally came into effect in 1992, giving greater

autonomy in the church to Maori with the establishment of *Te Pihopatanga*, and to Pacific peoples in the Anglican Church with the establishment of what became known as *Tikanga Pacifika*.

### **2.3. Changes in the economy**

On the surface, the general optimism of the nation that was being expressed in constitutional reform, the gathering of momentum around bicultural development, discussion around the place of the Treaty of Waitangi, the emergence of women in places of leadership, all seemed to signal change was well underway. Another dynamic was the rush to embrace economic globalisation that was gathering momentum. In 1991 the National Government's Minister of finance, Ruth Richardson, brought down what became known as the 'Mother of all Budgets' (Kelsey, 1995, p. 5). This budget continued the redesign of economic policy, begun under the previous Labour Government of David Lange by Minister of Finance Roger Douglas. The 1984 budget was to signal a breakdown of the social consensus that had given shape and identity to our self understanding since the first Labour Government's response to the depression of the 1930s and the Social Security Act of 1938 that provided for all an income in times of unemployment.

The Social Security Act of 1938 was the policy framework for a comprehensive, modern welfare state that provided social security and protection for generations of New Zealanders. The ability to afford a comprehensive set of social and health services was assured by the Government's active role in the nation's economy (Knutson, 1998).

Kelsey outlines the distancing of the public from the changes, which she calls 'cultural deficit' (Kelsey, 1995, chpt. 13). The redesign sought to discount pressure from interest groups, to reduce taxation, and to increase a 'user-pays' approach to the provision of services (Shaw & Eichbaum, 2005). Our identity as a nation up to this point had included a 'cradle to the grave' policy of care. This was available to all in the face of hard times and included 'free' access to

health-care and education along with the unemployment benefits. The lurch to the economic right during the 1980s created general uncertainty around Labour party economic policies particularly in relation to social-service provision. We were in an arena that church financiers and church agencies were neither accustomed to, nor theologically sympathetic to.

The Richardson budget of 1991 brought a significant cut to the rate of benefit payments, with the resulting widening of the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Commentators reflecting on this period such as Kelsey (Kelsey, 1999) and Jesson (Jesson, 1999), provide a clear picture of the economic uncertainty and apprehension of this period.

Despite a superficially optimistic national mood, a number of ideological and theological debates were gaining momentum and were showing the fraction lines that would emerge. Such issues indicate the broader social context at the time in which I moved into a diocesan position in theological education in 1990. The issues and debates outlined are those that, in retrospect, seemed to impinge on my role as the Ministry Educator for the Auckland Diocese. In many respects it was the changes that unfolded following decisions made in the 1980s that led to the issues I contended with in the Anglican Church during the period of this second project.

### **3. The Situation within the Anglican Church**

Davidson notes that in 1984 and 1985 SJC "gradually moved away from active involvement in social and political issues" (Davidson, 1993, p. 290). The decision not to renew the teaching contract of the George Armstrong in 1983 (Davidson, 1993, p. 300) and the resignation of Raymond Pelly in 1985 (Davidson, 1993, p. 332) were clear representations of this move. Armstrong had long been active in social and political issues from the anti-Vietnam war protests of the 1960s, through leadership of the Peace Squadron protesting

against the visit of nuclear submarines in the 1970s, to leadership of student protest action in the anti-racism movement in the 1980s. He had enabled students preparing for ministry leadership (myself included), to pursue a different educational agenda from that prevailing in SJC in relation to theology and the engagement of the church in social and political issues. The withdrawal of SJC from engagement in the Glendowie project in 1986 (Chapter 4, Section 9, pp. 126-129) signalled the shift in institutional focus that was taking place.

### **3.1. Money for theological education**

During this time moves were also being made by the seven dioceses that made up the New Zealand Anglican Church. The dioceses sought to achieve greater access to monies for theological education. A report on the training needs of the Wellington Diocese noted their requirements needed more resources available to them locally.

Rather than expand, say, SJC, regionalised training for at least part of the time seems a better use of resources. We envisage an increasing need for local training/retraining programmes (Ordination Committee, Diocese of Wellington, undated).

At the time, the SJC Trust Board managed the funds designated for this purpose by an Act of Parliament, *The St John's College Trusts Act 1972*, and distributed the income to SJC as the primary beneficiary of the Trust. Smaller amounts were distributed (according to provision in the Act) to the Church in Melanesia and Polynesia in continuity with the missionary heritage of the Anglican Church, and to Maori church schools. Some provision was also made for individual students wishing to pursue a course of university study, as long as that course included some papers in theology. In 1984 the SJC Trust Advisory Board was established by Statute of General Synod (the body governing the seven dioceses), following a bill brought to General Synod by the Anglican Board of Ministry, which I chaired at the time. The responsibility of the Trust Advisory Board was to make recommendation to the Trustees on

the distribution of the Trust funds. The establishment of this advisory group resonated with wider social changes that sought access to decision making, and signalled the desire for change from around the dioceses in terms of distribution of funds from the Trust and the way theological education was being undertaken. No longer was centralisation in Auckland for the theological education of all Anglican Church students acceptable. The Advisory Board was disestablished in 1992, but during its lifetime it was instrumental in opening up the Trust's distribution and enabling development of diocesan programmes such as the one to which I was appointed in 1990.

#### **4. Theological Education in the 1990s**

I had completed doctoral studies through the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge Massachusetts, in 1988, with a thesis titled 'Towards a Reshaped Church'. In it I explored theological education from a feminist perspective and the potential impact of a such a programme on church education (Adams, 1991). I was appointed to the position of Diocesan Ministry Educator, responsible to the Bishop of Auckland for the management of the processes through which candidates were selected for training as ministry leaders. This position was also responsible for developing and teaching the ministry formation programme for students in the Auckland Diocese.

The programmes that were being developed in the various dioceses at this time following the opening up of access to Trust funds, provided alternatives to the national 3 year residential course offered at SJC. Davidson (1993, p. 322) indicates the tension that existed in the Church with some seeing a theological college as an 'anachronism' in meeting contemporary ministry leadership needs in the church or community engagement. Until this time this had been the normative course of study for students preparing for ministry leadership in the Anglican Church. The college's theological education course, at the time of my appointment, was the newly designed and inaugurated BTheol,

credentialed through MCD (Melbourne College of Divinity), and administered by ACTE (Auckland Consortium for Theological Education). In 1988 the Melbourne BTheol course had replaced the LTh (Licentiate in Theology) that had been the qualification provided by the churches since 1968 (Chapter 4, Section 4.3, pp.100-102). These shifts in the church's education programmes parallel the shifts in public education that were being sought during the 1980s for accreditation and higher education in order to 'improve competitiveness in global markets'. This impetus came to fruition with the New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) established in 1990 (Davies, 2004).

The general context outlined here indicates key changes that gave impetus for the development of local ministry formation programmes in each of the dioceses of the Anglican Church. Within the church, these wider societal changes were seen in the refocusing of SJC away from social and political issues and into a more traditional view of church and theology. This was evidenced in the withdrawal from the Glendowie programme, the non-renewal of Armstrong's contract, the increased cost of relocating students and their families for three years to SJC in Meadowbank, and the uncertainty of securing paid appointments for ministry leaders as parish finances diminished. It is important to note that Anglican adherents declined from 24.2% of the total population in 1986 to 15.64% in 2001, as identified from data provided by Statistics New Zealand (Peter Lineham & School of Social and Cultural Studies, 2009).

## **5. Changes in Theological Education**

As noted, ACTE, combining theological education activities of the Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and Baptist Churches, began teaching the MCD BTheol in 1988 and also began conversations with the Auckland University.

### **5.1. Some concerns**

These developments were not received without concern by those responsible for theological education and ministry formation from within the dioceses. In particular, concern was expressed by the PBM and various diocesan ministry and education committees that emphasis was moving away from the formation for ministry leadership to an academic focus with the BTheol. Perhaps a more serious concern was that control over the content and ethos of theological education would shift from the churches to the university. It was also of concern that the new degree would have the potential effect of extending the preparation period from 3 years to 4 years, if ministry-practice skills were to be included alongside the academic requirements of the university (Adams, 1991, pp. 29-30).

### **5.2. Change resulting from bi-cultural commitments**

Other changes were also having an impact by the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1992 the General Synod of the Church of the Province of New Zealand (of which I was a member at the time) had agreed to become a three tikanga church. That is, it would organise its governance and management to recognise the cultural differences of the three dominant cultural streams: Maori, Pakeha, and Pacific. Each of these 'tikanga' would develop ways of expressing life and mission and administration that reflected the cultural roots and aspirations of the particular tikanga. This was part of the power sharing intention of the Anglican Church and was reflected in a name change for the Church: 'The Church of the Province of New Zealand' became 'The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia: Te Hahi Mihinare'. This significant change reflected the shifts taking place in wider society, as people in Aotearoa-New Zealand were coming to terms with the challenge to take account of the Treaty of Waitangi and the place of Maori as tangata whenua. In practical terms for the Anglican Church, Maori and Pacific ministry leadership students were now to be trained within their own cultural groups

and tikanga, coming together with students from the other tikanga for the academic subjects of the BTheol. In the Methodist Church, Maori had chosen not to send its people to SJC/TMTC for theological education since the late 1970s. Their formation programme was intentionally marae based, and with the perspective that all church members were potentially ministry leaders. Considered retrospectively, while this separation enabled the growth of Maori identity and strength in the churches, simultaneously with the growing strength of Maori in society in general, it could be seen to have contributed to a form of 'parallel multiculturalism'. In the Anglican Church, the three tikanga were becoming isolated from each other, in the Methodist Church a similar pattern was emerging.

### **5.3. Changes at Saint John's College**

One college since its inauguration in 1843, the SJC, became by 1992 the umbrella institution for three colleges, representing the Maori, Pakeha and Pacific components of the church each with its own head of college and administration office (Chapter 7, Section 1.1.4, p. 201).

### **5.4. Changes in the Dioceses**

Concurrent with the changes at SJC, dioceses were beginning to develop alternative local programmes, made possible by the increased availability of funding from the SJC Trust and the structural changes at SJC. The Auckland Diocese took up the opportunity to develop a full three-year curriculum, taught in rotation, with entering students commencing in any one of the three years. As the Diocesan Training Programme (DTP) was an ongoing programme, rather than one in which I participated in the design and set-up, my contribution was primarily in the design of a new curriculum and the development of a pedagogical approach that I considered relevant for the changing needs of those seeking ministry formation in the Anglican Church at that time.

In outline, the programme emphasised active engagement by students and a focus on context (Appendix 7). The contextual focus included the historical context of biblical material and the church's tradition and the contemporary context of social issues and ministry leadership. Students in years two and three increasingly became resource people for new students in knowledge, experience and programme ethos.

### **5.5. Change in candidate expectations**

The general economic uncertainty of the time contributed to the numbers of students (women and men) who wished to study part-time, or in ways that enabled them to remain in paid employment and maintain other family commitments. The diocesan unwillingness to guarantee paid employment on graduation exacerbated this situation. Part-time study was the preference for most of the increasing numbers of women students this time (Derbyshire, 2010). Initially many of these women saw their ministry leadership to be in their current location, so they were not available to move elsewhere. In addition, reflecting moves in Europe amongst the growing base-communities there (Cox, 1984, pp. 107-125), increasing numbers were not seeking formal ordained church leadership but were still seeking access to quality theological education that did not require fulltime attendance at college. The ratio of men to women in training was shifting, with more women entering the system and this was putting pressure on curriculum offerings and how they were made available. This growing momentum for non-residential, part-time training amongst women was clear by 1990: in the period from 1978 to 1988 the numbers of women had gone from 5 to 14 and men from 11 to 5 in non-residential education through the DTP (Adams, 1991, p. 26).

## **6. Change Emerging in the Structures of Ministry Leadership**

In the late 1980s there was a growing interest in 'Local Shared Ministry' (LSM) or Total Ministry, as it was sometimes called. This followed the work of

Bishop Wesley Frensdorff followed by Stewart Zabriskie of the Diocese of Nevada, USA. Their work supported small local churches that wished to keep their actively engaged in their geographic neighbourhoods, with ministry leadership emerging from amongst the local church (Borgeson and Wilson, 1990). In Aotearoa-New Zealand, LSM was seen as a further development of the non-stipendiary (non-paid), local or non-itinerant (that is not available to move to other areas) ministry leadership that had been part of the New Zealand Anglican Church since the episcopate of Bishop Paul Reeves in Waiapu in the 1970s, beginning as *minita a iwi* (East Coast Anglican Parish).

The Methodist Church had its own version of this form of non-itinerant local ministry leadership which was equipped through the 'home setting' ministry formation programme of TMTC. In contrast, the formation programmes for the non-stipendiary ministers in the Anglican Church, were the responsibility of each diocese and took place locally.

### **6.1. Non-stipendiary ministry**

History had shown that while some entered the ministry formation process specified as 'non-stipendiary' or 'non-itinerant', this specification was not sustained long term, and there was considerable mobility between the various ministry leadership categories (Derbyshire, 1999; 2010). The mobility of people from local non-stipendiary ministry to itinerant stipendiary ministry was more frequent than anticipated, so by 1990 students were required to show comparable competencies as ministry leaders irrespective of the formation programme they engaged in or the intended form of ministry leadership. It was difficult to argue for differentials in the nature of ministry leadership, especially with respect to authorised by the church through ordination, and communities expected similar competencies from those in leadership. In order to overcome a growing tension between those whose formation was in the residential three year academic programme and those whose formation was in

the diocesan programme, the development of a more structured, and comprehensive programme with clear purpose and learning outcomes was needed for the diocesan programme. The Handbook for the DTP states:

The Auckland Diocese seeks to provide appropriate preparation for people training for ordained and lay ministry whether it is stipendiary or non-stipendiary. At present there are two ways this is made available. (Adams, 1998, p. 1).

In addition, it was becoming recognised that removing students from their homes to a residential college was, for the majority of Auckland candidates, removal from one part of Auckland to another. This was neither a cost-effective nor a family-friendly process, and in times of economic stress this relocation was questioned.

## **6.2. Local Shared Ministry**

As LSM gathered pace in the USA, Canada, England and Aotearoa-New Zealand, experience highlighted the importance of developing well-educated personnel as critical to the movement. The inclusion of people training for intentional lay ministry in the DTP alongside those training for ordained ministry was one response. Simultaneously 'local' education programmes were developed 'in situ' in parts of the diocese where LSM units were taking shape. These in-situ education and ministry formation programmes were aimed at all church members, who could support both the lay leadership and those selected by them (and approved by a wider church process) for ordained ministry leadership. This significant development was embodying the view that ministry belonged to all the people of God and that all could exercise ministry leadership in their local contexts (Parish Statute 1986, #17, pp. 13-17). Cox's (1984) insights from a decade earlier, in relation to the emergence of a postmodern response to being church finding expression in small local gatherings, were beginning to have an impact in Aotearoa-New Zealand. This was a local expression of the base-community movement being

focussed in a local context and led by local people in order to enhance life and wellbeing in the local situation.

## **7. The Diocesan Training Programme**

By the time I was appointed to the position of Ministry Educator for the diocese of Auckland in 1989, the diocesan ministry formation programme was in its third phase.

### **7.1. An educator not facilitator or administrator**

The previous two ministry officers had also had responsibility for the DTP as part of their job description, but had neither developed a systematic curriculum nor attended deliberately to a pedagogical approach. In my appointment process it was indicated that I was to develop and teach in a revised programme that would reflect some of my experience and educational perspective. My recently completed doctoral study with its emphasis on theological education and feminist liberation theology was soon to be published as *Toward a Reshaped Church* (Adams, 1991). I had also collaborated on two books that gave clear indication of my theological perspective at the time, including the place I saw for the contemporary church within social issues (Adams & Salmon, 1988; Salmon & Adams, 1986). These books indicated the importance I placed on group process in developing contextual theology and social action. At my appointment interview, the selection group which included the then Bishop of Auckland, the Right Rev'd Bruce Gilbert, who had previously held a national education position responsible for aspects of distance education or theological education by extension (TEE), made clear that I was being appointed primarily as an 'educator' and not an administrator or coordinator. To this end, I proposed a redesigned diocesan programme for the Auckland Diocese and presented this to the bishop and his ministry advisory group (Adams, 1989).

## **7.2. Developing a programme**

The proposal (Adams, 1989) identified the three different tracks (SJC, DTP and LSM) for theological education in the diocese at the time, and the difficulty this produced in maintaining diocesan cohesion and cost effectiveness. It also set out various current partnership responsibilities for the Anglican Church, including the tikanga responsibilities. The proposal noted the importance of engaging in the prophetic task of calling the people of God to social responsibility, and made reference to the work of John de Gruchy out of the South African experience (de Gruchy, 1987). The proposal set out the perspective that the DTP would be focussed around contemporary issues and grounded in concrete action, using an action-reflection process designed to support transformation in persons and in both church and society.

## **7.3. Pedagogical approach**

Based on my own study and reflection, I contended that a key priority was to develop in students a capacity to 'do' theology rather than simply learn about it. I saw this as requiring development of the habit of active and rigorous reflection by students on their experiences in life and ministry, and to this end I intended to pursue a 'student led' programme, using the best emphases of 'adult education'. I declared my intention to equip people to be 'reflective theologians', who would be able to move between stipendiary and non-stipendiary ministry leadership with equal effectiveness, equipped with skills for theological reflection in relation to contemporary issues, and with skills for developing personal self-awareness.

It seemed obvious to me at the time, following my experience in the Glendowie project, that such programmes have the capacity to equip people to be leaders in communities as well as in the congregations of the church. I sought, therefore, to model in the manner and processes of the DTP the group cohesion and collective vision I saw necessary for community action. This

included the capacity to reflect critically on actions and to receive and give critical feedback aimed at personal growth and learning. It seemed appropriate to me to build on my experience with the Glendowie Project and my recent study to take the opportunity to shape what might comprise a “feminist theological education” (Adams, 1991). This required being clear about the purpose and transparent about the scope of the programme and its expectations, while being flexible with regard to issues students engaged with and their preferred ways of learning.

#### **7.4. A feminist influence**

The term ‘feminist theological education’ does not imply a focus on the theological education of women to the exclusion of men, nor does it prioritise ‘women’s issues’. Rather it highlights an approach to the style and purpose of theological education that differs from the traditional approach developed over the centuries by European men. From my perspective, feminist liberation theology represents a political awareness of the structures of both church and society, in which the structures of power and authority are demythologised. Although it is not solely about women, the increased proportion of women engaged in theological education at the time did make feminist insights sharply relevant. The concept of feminist liberation theology requires the capacity for rigorous critical thinking and pushes toward engagement in issues of justice-making, in community-building and in a concern for those who are most dependent and vulnerable. This perspective influenced the approach I brought to the Bible and theology and to the purposes of ministry leadership development.

My recent studies had added ‘weight’ to my resolve to prioritise this approach, and I was much influenced by the work of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and in particular her book *In Memory of Her* (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1986). Carter Heyward’s *Our Passion for Justice* (Heyward, 1984) and Beverly

Wildung Harrison's ground-breaking work on feminist social ethics (Wildung Harrison, 1985) were also influential. I was personally interested to test what, if any, difference such an approach could make to 'being church'. The position working in the DTP provided my first intentional opportunity to incorporate these emerging critical components in a relevant contemporary theological education programme. The DTP handbook set out the approach that would be taken:

When planning a process of theological education there are many things to be taken into account:

The setting in which we minister or will minister

The setting in which theological learning occurs

The process of our learning

The goals we set in Biblical, theological and ministry areas

The personal growth we anticipate.

In the Diocesan Training Programme we take seriously the setting of ministry and the process. We always try to build on the experiences and knowledge of participants.

Theological/ministry education is not learning 'about' things or having the answers; it is developing an attitude to life which seeks to ask questions about meaning and purpose in the face of present issues and personal attitude.

It is our belief that an adult education model which takes seriously the personal needs and experiences of the participants, encourages sharing of knowledge, and develops a range of learning skills e.g. research and facilitation skills for outward facing ministry engagement is the kind of training most appropriate to our present church mission (Auckland Anglican Diocese, 1989, p. 3).

In this way, the core intention of the programme design was set out, and was followed by ten points summarising the adult education practice that would influence the educational approach. To quote from the Diocesan Programme Handbook in 1989, my final year:

1. Skill in the interpretation of texts in their contexts and in their canonical setting
2. Reading skills, not simply in the narrow linguistic sense, but as a modern reader interpreting a “classical” text and generating meaning in the process.
3. The development of a theological as well as a historical understanding of the text.
4. The ability to interpret modern contexts, whether secular, linguistic or pastoral, in the light of scriptural tradition, and to develop appropriate critiques of cultural factors and assumptions.
5. The cultivation of disciplined reflection on the process of interpreting scripture, including its relevance to faith and life, and its cognitive and affective aspects.
6. The ability to work creatively and critically within a historical tradition of interpretation.
7. Participative learning: making an oral presentation to the seminar group, and engaging in discussion and exploration of its implication; being open to different perspectives and interpretations.
8. A willingness to be vulnerable, to develop self-knowledge, to grow through interaction with others and to work out a more informed and consistent position.
9. A readiness to check and counter dogmatism, especially in oneself, and to accept the notion of life-long learning and therefore the provisional nature of the stage one has arrived at.
10. Openness to the connection between scripture and devotion, in one’s own and other traditions. (Auckland Anglican Diocese, 1989, pp. 3-4).

In retrospect, the opportunity was somewhat constrained and inadequate! I found the general church climate becoming once again more introspective.

## **8. Engaging with the Diocesan Training Programme**

The programme, as I shaped it, maintained the existing weekend residential component established by my predecessor. Access to BTheol papers taught in SJC, to supplement the DTP curriculum for non-residential students were added. Both the weekend and SJC components were funded by the diocesan

ministry training budget drawn from the distributions of the SJC Trust. This required an annual application to the SJC Trust Board by the diocese.

### **8.1. The make-up of the Diocesan Training Programme groups**

As a result of the recent changes in tikanga organisational structure, which has already been alluded to, including changes in SJC with regard to ministry formation, the Auckland diocesan student group, in both contexts, was by 1990, all Pakeha. This removed, for students in the DTP, direct bicultural engagement with tikanga Maori students, which affected the way in which the church's bicultural commitment could be addressed within the programme.

During the next 11 years, 1989–2000, there was a shift in the balance between men and women in the programmes, though the majority appointed to stipendiary (paid, normally full-time) positions remained male. Noel Derbyshire, from the office of the Auckland Diocesan Bishop, has identified there were a total of 71 people ordained during this period: 31 male and 40 female (in the previous decade the figures were 54 male and 33 female). As far as can be deduced from the data available, 30 people appear to have trained in a diocesan programme, (most likely the DTP), of which 21 were female. LSM appears to account for 15 ordained people who were most likely trained in-situ, leaving 20 people trained in the traditional residential course at SJC, of which six were women (Derbyshire, 2010). Of the total 71 people ordained, 26 were in stipendiary ministry in 2000.

### **8.2. Pedagogical influences**

The DTP provided a three year comprehensive ministry formation course for people intending to exercise authorised ministry leadership in the Auckland Diocese, ordained or non-ordained. The training was undertaken on a part-time, non-residential basis, and included independent study supported by a

monthly residential group over 10 weekends each year during each three year cycle.

The programme was designed to equip students with biblical insights, theological awareness and acuity, and pastoral and ministry leadership skills. While it appears from a traditional perspective that these skills were primarily addressed to the community of the church, the aim was to assist students to move from a previously-embedded reading of texts and theology to a critical, personal theology with a vision that could be articulated. In addition, it aimed to develop awareness that learning is a lifelong process and that prior experiences could be brought into the learning group. I promoted the perspective that at no time could learning be considered 'complete'. My experience with new groups of students over the years of the DTP (and after with MTU students), was to suggest this perspective appeared to require a transformation of personal expectation of the prescribed course.

Many seemed initially to expect that a formation programme would provide all that was necessary for ministry leadership. In this respect the work of Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984) and Whitehead & Whitehead (1985), with regard to educational pedagogy and adult education, was influential for me, along with the work of Browning, de Gruchy, and Freire who pushed toward an engaged political reading of theology and of church engagement in social issues (Browning, 1980; Freire, 1972, 1974).

### **8.3. Educational practices**

The new curriculum was designed on a three year cycle, as set out in Appendix 7. The same core themes were offered each year, but with different emphases in each of the years. At the heart of the programme, as I designed it, was the intention to develop skills and confidence in the processes of theological reflection and self awareness that leads to active engagement.

*Being* a theologian was the priority, not simply learning about theology (Green, 1990). To this end, students brought to the monthly residential weekend issues they were reflecting on personally. They then presented these issues to the group and the group engaged with the issues in ways that extended the thinking of the presenter and challenged traditional theological perspectives. Always, there was the intention to push to the edges of comfort and to link the theological reflection with local situations.

The programme's approach was to work with material that generated the energy of the presenting student, who also facilitated the dialogue and the group's critical reflection. The aim was for students to develop competence in identifying theological themes in current issues and experiences, in working with differences, in presenting their ideas and perspectives to an audience, in facilitating groups and meetings, and in receiving critical 'sympathetic-feedback'. As no prior indication was required by the presenting student as to the issues that would be presented, this methodology taxed the skill of the teacher. It required teaching staff to work with a wide general theological awareness, and to have knowledge of resources and networks available to students, so they could be directed to further research where appropriate. In this way, students were encouraged to work with their own life experiences in relation to current social issues.

#### **8.4. The learning group**

Significant self-awareness was developed through interactions within the learning group, and participants learned to give and receive feedback according to the principles of 'sympathetic-criticism'. 'Sympathetic-criticism', as I developed this concept, was a group responsibility focussed on helping group members be the 'best ministry leader' they could be. The process shifted the focus from individuals to group, and from highlighting shortcomings to recognising strengths and growth points. The quality and

usefulness of this feedback developed over time, and became part of the ethos of the group that was passed on as the group re-formed each year (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007; Diocesan Training Programme-3, 2007). One evaluation report from student comments in 1997 noted:

The most valuable part of the programme for me this year has been specific feedback within a supportive environment, and the freedom to discuss information so I can convert it into new learning. I have had an increasing awareness of how important the process and environment is for my learning and my integration of information (Confidential Report 1, 1997).

### **8.5. The shape of the weekend component**

During each residential weekend, the group engaged in theological reflection on the issues brought by a student, arising from actions or issues that were of concern. Input was provided on the core theme. Frequently this was offered by a guest tutor in the field. Reflection on shared experience, and input was provided in the skills of worship leadership and preaching. This included visits to parishes around the diocese to experience the worship leadership of others and to hear and critique the sermons of the students who preached. These visits enabled experience of diverse ministry leadership styles and perspectives. Where possible conversation with the local leaders took place on local priorities and responses to current issues and contextual needs. The result of such visits was experience of differences in local situations and in the kinds of issues and ways of responding to them.

## **9. Additional Comments**

The revised programme began in 1990 and ran through its three year cycle three times during my time as Ministry Educator. Students expressed considerable satisfaction at the relevance of the material dealt with, the cohesion that developed in the groups, and the practical skills of ministry leadership that were developed. Student assessment comments for the years 1990 to 1997 show a high level of satisfaction across the content fields and

educational practice (DTP Students, 1991-1999). These assessment comments were in terms of personal satisfaction and personal learning, and were not numerically tabulated, so I have not sought to quantify the comments. The following are representative of the general tenor that emerges from the reports.

1996:

- I don't feel disappointed in any way
- I have started to learn that the DTP is not about having answers, but the willingness to struggle with the questions.
- I find some difficulty with guests who lecture all day
- I know where I stand with you, I like that, you are honest and encouraging.
- I appreciate the effort put in to creating the group
- It would be easy to look at the course outline and view it as a totally intellectual pursuit... it necessarily has content, but it is much more than that.
- The greatest change I have noticed is the willingness to speak my mind on issues and express my point of view.
- I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with others to participate in seminars.
- I appreciate the leadership and skill in challenging me to think through what I say.

1994: A co-ordinated student review

This year's programme has been well balanced, well presented, and there has been ample time to explore and discuss after each formal session.

The weekends in which the group were involved in "workshop" type teaching were more stimulating. Learning by teaching has been very helpful to me. There are really no black and white answers. I found this learning helpful ... it encouraged me to share my thoughts and ideas.

As I recall it there were two reviews of the DTP during my time, by persons appointed by the bishop. Both were satisfactory and neither indicated areas of significant change, though I have been unable to locate any reports from these reviews.

Toward the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of my appointment it became apparent that a way to credential student work was needed. Students were noting that on completion of a course of study, that required significant commitment and personal integrity over a sustained period, there was no satisfactory way of recognising their effort. One student noted in her assessment “I am also concerned that there be some recognition that this course has been completed” (DTP Students, 1991-1999). Conversations were held with staff from the UNITEC Community Studies Department in order to identify if we might have enough common curriculum elements to consider some joint activity and the possibility of coming under their credentialing umbrella. These conversations showed some possibilities and a second round of conversations were planned. In the meantime, the diocese began to withdraw support for such a move, and in the ninth year of my appointment coinciding with the election of a new bishop, there was pressure for change. Such change would impact on the style and emphasis of the programme as designed and implemented, so I resigned. No review was undertaken at this time and no explicit dissatisfaction with the programme was expressed, rather the means to function effectively were withdrawn and as an educator and theologian my integrity was compromised. I presented a paper based on this experience at the women’s conference on ‘Violence toward Women’ that immediately preceded the 1999 World Council of Churches meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe (Adams, 1998).

The programme continues today under the direction of a different person and carries some marks of the original curriculum design. However, it is still without a recognised credential for the satisfactory completion by students of work over a period of three years. The study highlights the importance of factors such as diversity of learning styles, the role of a learning group and the impact of social change.

## Chapter Six

### Case Study Three: The Methodist Ministry Training

#### Unit 2000 – 2008

##### 1. An Overview of the Social Context

Changes in fiscal policy, such as indicated above in Chapter 5 (Section 2.3, pp. 134-135), were in part a response to international pressure for a more deregulated financial market and a refocusing on financial growth through partnerships with private capital, new trading partners and free trade agreements. Kelsey (1995, chpt. 4) traces the two 'phases' through which these changes took place and suggests the social climate was changing as phase two, the consolidation phase unfolded.

Consolidation also required considerable 'social learning'... This provides a constituency of support among private sector beneficiaries. Citizens and firms are encouraged to lower their expectations and make individual, non-political adjustments (Kelsey, 1995, p. 70).

The changes moved us into an era of 'global economy': 'globalisation' (Scholte, 2000). There were job losses in Aotearoa-New Zealand as local manufacturers and services moved offshore. The flow-on effect of the 1991 budget was still being felt as we moved into the new millennium. It was particularly felt in relation to reduced social welfare benefits and the deregulation of education providers. There was a boom in private education providers at the tertiary level and a high demand for registration as a provider. With registration came access to government funding. Into this mix came an influx of migrants and international students from the Pacific and Asia, especially English language students from Asia. *The English Language School* was established in 1984 and was one of the first set up to cater for overseas English language students ([www.StudyGlobal.net](http://www.StudyGlobal.net)). By 2010, 122 English language schools were identified in Auckland City (English Language Businesses in Auckland, 2010).

The 1990s intensified issues that were already signalled in the late 1980s, and by the turn of the millennium pressure was being felt in the areas of economy, education and social cohesion (Kelsey, 1995, pp. 324ff). These changing aspects of life in Aotearoa-New Zealand were to have an impact on the emerging Ministry Training Unit (MTU).

Within the Methodist Church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, which is the primary church institution responsible for the project covered by this case study, there were differences emerging in the purpose and focus of ministry. A paper prepared for Methodist Conference 1999 in relation to TMTC (Trinity Methodist Theological College) and theological education notes:

During 1998 the Trinity College Council looked at possible options for the future. The responses also highlighted the variety of perspectives and interests in the church. No clear way ahead emerged in detail, and the council recognises that this calls for a flexible approach which enables a diverse set of options and educational paths and styles ... Pressure for change in the activities of the College is coming from three directions: the growth in diversity and new patterns of ministry in the Methodist Church; worldwide shifts in education including education for ministry; and reduction in available funding (Trinity College Council, 1998, p. 1).

This situation encouraged an openness to new partnerships and different ways of 'doing things'. There was less money available from the traditional source, the Connexional budget (budget of the church as a whole), for development and programmes (Salmon, 2001, p. 30). So it became important to seek different partnerships from those of the past.

This opened the way to new alliances and new styles in theological education and along with the impact of Pacific migration became important for the MTU as the next decade unfolded.

### 1.1. Immigration and migration

Both the economic pressures and the rapid increase of immigration (Chapter 1, Section 1, pp. 6-11) into Aotearoa-New Zealand produced new dynamics for the New Zealand churches to come to terms with. Migration enabled some churches, notably the Roman Catholic Church and the Methodist Church to hold their numbers in the 2001 census.

	1996	2001	2006
Methodist Church of New Zealand	121,650	120,546	120,806
Roman Catholic Church	473,112	485,637	508,437

**Table 2:** Migration and Church Affiliation (Statistics New Zealand 2006d)

The 2001 census revealed that, although there was a small decline in the numbers of Aotearoa-New Zealand-born Tongan and Samoan people claiming religious affiliation, 92% of Tongan people reported an affiliation with a Christian denomination. Of those, 45% identified as Methodist. The Samoan profile is similar, though the percentage of Methodists is considerably smaller: 90% report Christian religious affiliation, with 10% of those identifying as Methodist.

	Religious affiliation 2001 (2006)	Methodist 2001	Methodist 2006
General NZ population	64.4% (61%)	3.4%	3.2%
Tongan	92% (90%)	45%	45%
Samoan	90% (86%)	10%	11%

**Table 3:** Religious Affiliation (Statistics New Zealand, 2006d)

### 1.2. Pacific influence in the Methodist Church of New Zealand

Pacific migration to Aotearoa-New Zealand brought with it Christian communities strong in the moral and ethical values of 19<sup>th</sup> century missionary

activity. This moral conservatism has found expression in the Methodist Church in New Zealand through responses to the official position of this church on homosexuality, for example. In 2008, Tongan Methodist women boycotted a national church women's convention on the grounds that Tongan Methodists had stated that homosexuality was contrary to the bible and that no gay or lesbian people should be ordained or give leadership to Tongans (Titus, 2008b).

Pacific church communities appear to function in this 'new' land in ways that are similar to the village 'back home', frequently providing the initial community of contact for new migrants and locating the communal activities of the village on church property (Tiatia, 1998; Pope, 2010).

In the post-Christian, post-colonial society of contemporary Aotearoa-New Zealand we are seeing the break-down of many of the positive influences these 'diaspora village' structures previously exercised. The break-down is exacerbated by the influence of a western styled education on the New Zealand born children of these migrant 'village' communities. The census data for 2006 reports 56% of the Tongan population is born in New Zealand, with a median age of 19 years. The median age for the total population is 36 years.

In the early days of Pacific migration these 'church-villages' exercised a role that maintained the culture of 'home', with the authority structures and cultural protocols kept in place (Frith, 2010a; Pope, 2010). These 'village structures' assisted new migrants to settle; ensuring identity and cultural values as well as language was kept alive. However, as we moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century the once strict adherence to cultural and church traditions as previously maintained, especially by the churches, was being questioned by those who have been educated in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Tongans when they arrive here they use the church as a village community. That's why it is hard to engage them in wider

community issues that take them away from the church (Pope, 2010).

The work of writers such as Albert Wendt (1973) and Jemima Tiatia (1998) have exposed in novel and in research data this shift taking place amongst New Zealand born and educated Pacific peoples. And the Methodist Church recognised the need to support the development of theology that was emerging from critical reflection on issues identified by New Zealand born and educated Tongan and Samoan people (Tasker, 2008; Caygill and Grundy, 2006, p. 6).

The director of Pacific ministries of the Methodist Church suggested when interviewed that one of the results of this developing questioning of culture and bible, was a strong insistence by the elders on 'the ways of back home' - that is, the place of cultural origin. This insistence frequently results in a censoring or silencing of those who question the elders, through the exercise of structural authority and spiritual suasion (MTU-7, 2006).

Male 'stewards' in Tongan and Samoan Methodist churches exercise powerful leadership roles in social organizing and in maintaining cultural protocols (Frith, 2010, p. 49). Frequently, they are the 'gateways' by which newcomers are included or transgressors excluded from the church-based communities (Finau, V, 2004; Finau, T. 2007)). A number of ministers, and particularly those exercising oversight, have up until 2009 been seconded from 'home' by church communities. This was a common practice in Vahefonua Tonga (see below), in order to provide a style of leadership and social organisation for the New Zealand congregations that were familiar to the Tongan born generation, and to ensure 'traditional ways' were maintained and passed on to the next generation. Ikilifi Pope, a Tongan Methodist presbyter trained for his ministry leadership role in Aotearoa-New Zealand, puts it like this:

It is hard for some of us ministers to change what we grew up with [in Tonga]. Older ministers are not so happy. We lose hierarchical power (Pope, 2010).

This practice of bringing ministers from the Islands began to be challenged in the latter part of the first decade of the 21st century from within the Methodist structures of Vahefonua Tonga and Sinoti Samoa. Vahefonua Tonga and Sinoti Samoa are, respectively, the official structures and the decision making forums of the Tongan and Samoan ethnic membership of the Methodist Church of Aotearoa-New Zealand (Te Hahi Weteriana). In 2009, for the first time, the large Auckland Tongan parish appointed to their oversight position a person who had undertaken their theological education and ministry formation within the structures of the Methodist Church of New Zealand (Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa 2009, pp. O-21).

## **2. Within the Field of Tertiary Education**

The other major social factor impacting on theological education in 2000 as the MTU began was changes in the tertiary sector leading to the development of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which was established in 2003. Its stated purpose was to regulate universities and other providers at the tertiary level.

The Government sees the tertiary education system as a key national asset, which enriches New Zealanders' lives, increases their employment opportunities and helps to build a productive skills base to drive economic growth (Tertiary Education Commission Strategy, 2010-2015).

TMTC and the MTU were to come within the purview of the TEC as a Private Training Establishment (PTE) delivering qualifications through the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) in the Christian Theological and Ministries Education Sector.

The influx of overseas students, responding to the development of PTEs exacerbated the need for quality control and regulation of both providers and qualifications. NZQA became increasingly involved in setting qualification standards for private providers and in ensuring the transferability of qualifications through a regular audit system. The following is a quote from their Strategy Document, and describes the purpose of the NZQA as it had evolved by 2009:

- to enable working New Zealanders to complete nationally recognised qualifications
- create clear pathways towards advanced trade qualifications at levels four and above
- build and maintain strong support from the industries they serve.

#### **Adult and community education**

Adult and community education has three core roles:

- to serve learners whose first learning experience was unsuccessful
- to assist those seeking pathways into tertiary learning
- to assist people who lack the literacy, language and numeracy skills for work and further study.

The Government expects adult and community education to:

- engage learners who have not been well served by education in the past
- increase literacy, language and numeracy skills for individuals and whānau
- contribute to the overall cohesiveness of the community.

(Tertiary Education Commission, 2009, Part 3).

Students in programmes such as the MTU were looking for an equivalent recognition for their efforts to that awarded to those who undertook a university based programme. It is my recollection that during the first 12 months of the MTU this was a frequent topic of conversation. Pressure was being brought to bear on independent theological colleges, such as TMTC, to find ways of awarding recognisable credentials to those students engaged in non-degree programmes. The significance of a move toward credentialing was

recognised in a Methodist Board of Ministry paper outlining directions for ministry education as the Church moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Salmon, 2001).

With registration as a PTE, and the registration of 'a local programme', accredited colleges gained access to funding for operational costs and their students to student allowances. TMTC registered as a PTE and developed the MTU course, initially based on a flexible use of NZQA Unit Standards. The MTU subsequently developed and registered a 'local course' which enabled greater flexibility in content and assessment processes.

NZQA accreditation required careful attention to administration processes and pushed colleges to develop financial management systems, curricula and assessment standards in more rigorous ways than ever before (Trinity Methodist Theological College, 2000). Access to the limited funds available to independent PTEs through TEC was time-consuming and competitive. For a small college such as TMTC, which was simultaneously involved with the School of Theology of the University of Auckland while offering a local programme as a PTE, this eventually became a difficulty. Nevertheless, TMTC was well positioned to meet the strategy of TEC as it was stated at the time.

From the Tertiary Education Strategy document

Private training establishments have two core roles:

- to offer flexible and responsive education programmes
- to focus on specific areas of study.

The Government expects private training establishments to:

- enable students to complete high quality qualifications that lead to employment or higher-level education
- deliver tailored learning opportunities, such as marae and iwi-based provision and Pasifika learning environments
- provide specialised qualifications and training.

(Tertiary Education Commission Strategy, 2010, Part 3)

TMTC took seriously its responsibility to provide theological education in ways that Tongan and Samoan students could access and in which they could succeed. The MTU was to provide the core of this approach (MTU-4, 2009).

Pacific people are coming into the Church in numbers and they are not so comfortable in the University setting. (MTU-5, 2008).

It was against this background that the MTU was developed, commencing its first teaching programmes in 2000.

### **3. The Emergence of the Ministry Training Unit**

A report prepared in 1991 by a Methodist Church of New Zealand Commission on Theological/Ministerial Education, had made clear that the emphasis of its theological education was to equip ministry leaders. This Commission reported to the annual Methodist Church Conference in 1991, 1992, and again in 1993. It was seeking “integration of theological education and ministry skills” (Commission on Theological/Ministerial Education, 1993, pp. 710-712), but until the establishment of the MTU in 2000 no significant change had been made to the content, delivery, or learning expectations of the church’s existing theological education programme.

One factor was that the academic course within Auckland University made it difficult to press for the inclusion of denominational ministry formation courses. These were not appropriate to a university setting - hence a significant impetus to develop the MTU. TMTC no longer saw the university based programme as providing everything that was required to be a ministry leader within this denomination (Trinity College, 1998a, pp. 364-365).

Internationally, there was a repositioning going on in the field of theological education and ministry formation, with a struggle between the academy and

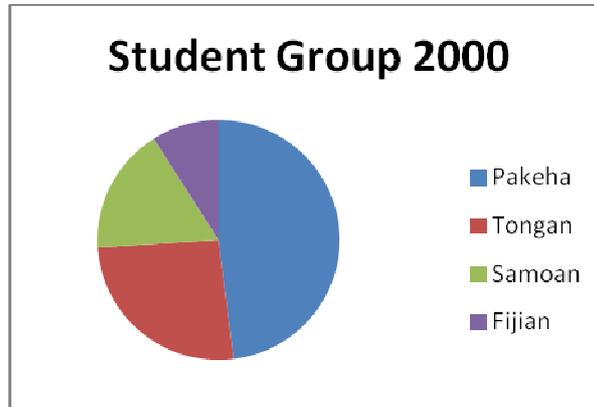
denominational church schools; between conceptual theology and theory and 'field based' reflective practice (Salmon, 2001a). Davidson, in his history of SJC, identifies something of this struggle as it affected SJC in the mid 1990s, in his comments regarding the future direction of SJC as it sought to provide for academic excellence and to respond to the challenge from the wider Anglican church that such a 'semi-monastic seminary model was an anachronism' (Davidson, 1993, p. 322). Ormerod, from the Catholic Institute of Sydney explores the needs of theological education in Australia and New Zealand for secure funding and support for the institutions of theological education from the 'grassroots' constituency. He argues that more needs to be done by these institutions to generate support and raise the profile of theology by the church constituency and 'society at large' (Ormerod, 2002, p. 12).

### **3.1. Pressures for the Methodist Church**

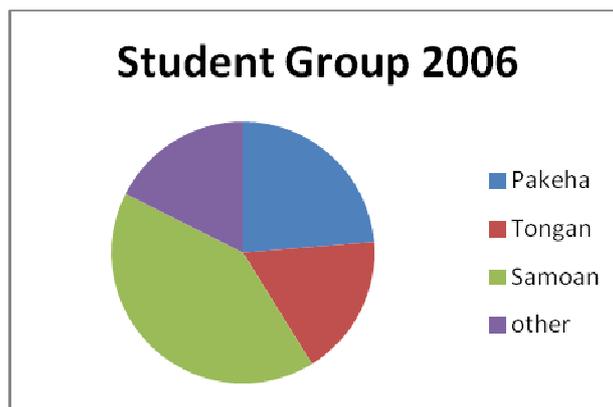
The Auckland based theological education 'stakeholders' within the colleges of TMTC and SJC were caught in the struggle. Up to this time the majority of students across the various denominations were Pakeha/Palangi and included an increased number of women. At the same time, the Methodist Church of Aotearoa-New Zealand was becoming increasingly Pacific in membership with the largest congregations being Tongan and Samoan. Between 2004 and 2005 there was a 6% increase in Pacific Methodist membership (Caygill and Grundy, 2006). Traditional Pakeha/Palangi congregations were over all becoming smaller in membership numbers from 11,117 in 1992 to 7,093 in 2005, a 56% decline.

### 3.1.1. The changing demography of the student group

It also became clear at this time that those offering for ordained ministry leadership in the Methodist Church of NZ were increasingly Pacific in origin.



**Graph 1: Ethnic diversity of student Group 2000**



**Graph 2: Ethnic diversity of student group 2006**

(Source: Methodist Church of New Zealand, 2007)

The data prepared by the Connexional Office of Methodist Church of New Zealand as a power point presentation showing trends between the years 1992 - 2006 also clearly indicates the significant number of male and Tongan ordinands. There is a 50:25 male/female ratio over that period not classified according to race, with 38:32 ratio of Pacific/New Zealand European not classified according to gender. The same data presentation showing figures for the seven years 2000 - 2007 shows the proportions to be further exacerbated,

19:7 male/female and 16:6 Pacific/New Zealand European with the single largest number, 11 being Tongan (Methodist church of New Zealand, 2007).

By 2000, it was clear that people offering for ministry leadership were, in the main, coming from Tongan and Samoan backgrounds with a much lesser number from the European traditions of the past. Questions were being raised as to how best to engage them in training (MTU-4, 2009; MTU-5, 2008).

### **3.2. A new partnership**

In the mid 1990's, with this situation in mind and recognising the reducing financial viability of TMTC, TMTC together with an inner city parish, The Auckland Methodist Central Parish and Mission (Central Parish), jointly inspired by a visit to Auckland by John Vincent from the Sheffield Urban Training Centre in the UK, began to dream. This dreaming was given urgency by the need of the Central Parish for ministry leadership in the five congregations, each with a different geographic location, for which it had oversight responsibilities.

In a report to Conference 1998, TMTC noted:

The Auckland Methodist Central Parish and Mission has this year been consulting with the College Council and others throughout the Connexion with a proposal to establish a 'Student Training Unit' within the Parish and in partnership with Trinity College (Trinity College, 1998a, p. 365).

Methodist Conference in 1998 decided that a "Student Training Unit" be established "between the Board of Ministry and Auckland Methodist Central Parish and Mission, to be operational from February 2000" (Methodist Church of New Zealand, 1998, p. 775).

The parish leadership saw this joint venture with TMTC as a way of providing student ministers for work in the congregations of the parish. TMTC saw the

possibility of providing effective ministry experience for its students as this dimension of ministry preparation was no longer included in the BTheol course of the University of Auckland. Publicity material circulated in 1999 prior to the start of the MTU programme in February 2000 states:

Trinity College hopes that this partnership will enhance its provision of ministry formation within the Methodist Church of New Zealand. The Auckland Central Parish hopes that this partnership will provide supplementary ministry within its life, assisting its stationed presbyters and furthering its mission goals (Joint Working Committee, undated).

#### **4. Original Intention**

During 1999 representatives of Central Parish and TMTC shared their visions for the proposed new unit and discussed ways of implementing the Conference decision (Joint Working Committee, 1999). Part of the vision was for a more 'hands on' approach to preparing people as ministry leaders, as an alternative to the academic university degree. This alternative would be made available to some students. Students would be engaged in 'field placements' in various locations in the Central Parish under the joint oversight of the parish superintendant and MTU director who would act as supervisors and mentors. In this initial stage it was imagined that students would supply the basic ministry needs of pastoral care and worship leadership within the five congregations of the Central Parish (Joint Working Committee, 1998). It was seen as "... an opportunity of challenge. A chance to develop something new and exciting" (Auckland Methodist Central Parish and Mission and Trinity Theological College, 1999).

Beyond this, there appeared to be nothing recorded in available records of the MTU Joint Working Committee that could be said to constitute a curriculum or clearly defined learning outcomes. The planning group was aware that it would need to appoint someone to give shape to their dream and bring to

fruition a viable programme. The director's Description of Responsibilities identified.

Key Functions:

- Programme establishment
- Programme Development
- Programme Maintenance
- Programme Management

(Auckland Methodist Central Parish & Mission, 1999)

## 5. A different Place a Different Style

Space was to be provided for this new venture by the Central Parish on a disused floor in the Bicentenary Hall on its inner city property. The Hall was a three story block adjacent to the Pitt St Church.



**Photo 1: Bi-centenary Hall, Pitt Street**

There were church offices on the ground floor, but beyond that the building had been disused apart from providing storage for the parish since the Unemployed Peoples Rights Centre had vacated the second floor. This venture in ministry education would, it was hoped, enliven the building once more, and re-energise the congregations with more youthful ministry. One plan was to accommodate students in a property on the Pitt Street site owned by the parish. This comprised a 4 bedroom, 1 1/2 bathroom apartment in the grounds of the church complex (Joint Working Committee, 1998). Provision of a half stipend and allowances was also to be made available towards the cost

of the director of the MTU in recognition of the parish responsibilities the role contained. Considerable goodwill and generosity was afforded this embryonic new venture by the parish, expressed through money and resources made available.

On the other side of the partnership, TMTC would provide the other half stipend and allowances and the expertise in theological education and ministry training, in particular the academic requirements. The person appointed as director would become a member of both the teaching staff of TMTC and the ministry leadership staff team of the parish. TMTC would supply the teaching supervision and infrastructure for the administration of the Unit and through the college the Unit would come under the governance responsibilities of the Methodist Board of Ministry. The MTU Steering Committee became the Joint Policy Group comprising representatives of both the Board of Ministry and the Central Parish and would oversee the working relationship between the parties (Auckland Central Parish and Mission, 1999).

It was intended that this joint venture forge a new direction in ministry training for TMTC and the national church while meeting the needs for congregational ministry and oversight for the Central Parish.

### **5.1. Next steps:**

In December 1999 I was appointed to the position of Director, Ministry Training Unit, bringing with me my experiences in education, theology, community development, and ministry formation from my previous appointments, along with my experience and growing interest in the place of practical theology. I was challenged to take up the dream, still in embryonic form, supported by the enthusiasm of the members of the Joint Working Committee that had brought the dream to the place of enactment (Ministry

Training Unit, 1999), with a view to developing and running the MTU and initiating a long term vision for the Unit (Ministry Covenant, 1999).

#### **5.1.1. Getting the space ready**

As envisaged, a floor, yet to be renovated and refurbished as educational space, was set aside for the location of the MTU in the building in Pitt St. Preparing the space was to be my immediate first task, along with taking up responsibility for the pastoral wellbeing and worship life of one of the congregations of the parish. Three students were to commence training with me in February 2000, so there were two months to design an initial programme, refurbish the space, and establish a routine for the joint venture.

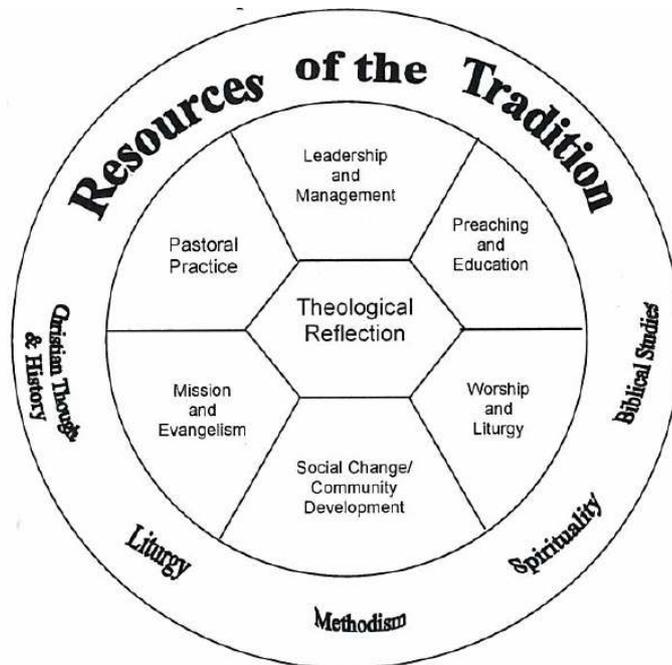
#### **5.1.2. Drawing on the past**

The project provided me with an opportunity to draw together the learnings from the Glendowie project and the DTP, as well as my commitment to adult education and practical theology which I had explored in relation to the DTP. I was committed to developing a programme that would hold together both theory and practice and, in pedagogical terms, use a reflective feedback loop process, with the intention of integrating the different dimensions of the programme.

As a component in the feedback loop, the hermeneutical spiral developed in the Glendowie project quickly evolved into what became known as OARs - a process of observation, analysis and reflection. This OARs process became the core of the weekly reflection process, which drew together the various dimensions of the programme (see below).

During December and January of 1999-2000 a concept design for the curriculum structure of the Unit took shape based on what were called the three dimensions (Diagram 4). These dimensions ran concurrently in both

semesters of the academic year. Dimensions 1 (Theological Reflection), and 2 (Ministry Practice), I would teach and supervise personally in the initial set up stage. In the early years Dimension 3 would be accessed by enrolment in selected papers in either the Bachelor of Theology degree of the University of Auckland or through distance education papers offered by the Ecumenical Institute Distance Theological Studies (EIDTS), based in Christchurch. This structure was maintained through to what proved to be the final year of the MTU and its teaching of the diploma programme that expressed this curriculum (Trinity College, 2007, pp. 12-17; Appendix 8).



**Diagram 3:** The concept design of the DipPTh. (Trinity College 2007, p. 14)

## 6. Intentional in Every Way

The first floor of the Bicentenary Hall was refurbished: it was painted, the floors polished and carpeted, heating and air-conditioning was installed. The soft furnishings were carefully selected to enhance the learning environment that was being purposefully created. It was my intention to provide a colourful, stimulating environment with seating and facilities suitable for

mature students. Every aspect of the decor from colours to chair design, from the absence of desks to the provision of floor cushions was carefully planned. I took seriously the opportunity to build an adult learning environment for a multicultural group. The research into educational environments and pedagogy which would support the learning of multicultural groups of adults as presented in the works of Peter Senge (1990), Jack Mezirow (1991), Paulo Freire (1974, 1992), Peter Jarvis(2004) and David Kolb (1984), influenced the spatial design as well as the curriculum design and pedagogy.

### **6.1. Being 'at home'**

It was important that students felt at home, that they took ownership of the space. Decorative items from the different cultures of the learning group were used in the furnishing of the space in recognition that students who felt acknowledged and respected would more readily feel at home and relaxed and therefore able to share with others and take responsibility for the place and its developing ethos. Floor mats and cushions were used by Pacific students and families, which encouraged participation in social gatherings and celebrations.

Feeling 'at home' led to increased learning capacity and this is very important for Tongans.

Meals were reflection of Pacific hospitality and were important for social bonding and the conversations challenged our thinking.  
(Appendix 10).



**Photograph 2:** Multi-cultural peer support.



**Photograph 3:** Social time

The above photographs illustrate the informal surroundings in which the formal group work of the MTU took place.

## **6.2. The local community**

The first year saw the continuing development of the physical environment and the curriculum. These took shape along with the building of a relationship with the local congregation on the edge of the inner city for which the MTU and its students would be responsible. There was an urgent need at this stage for the articulation of a mission strategy for this congregation that would support the learning needs of the students.

Early in the life of the MTU it became clear that the congregational life of the parish as it was at that time could not support learning needs or provide practice opportunities for innovative contemporary ministry such as the students were exploring. It also became clear that the energy of the parish was at a low-ebb; ministry leadership was changing and congregational numbers had fallen. In the congregation which was the concern of the MTU, there was no mission strategy or vision in place to guide and shape our ministry leadership engagement. People in this local congregation were aging and went to look back with nostalgia over 50 years to a previous time when they were a parish in their own right, boasting a choir and a Sunday school of about 200 young people plus a full programme of social and educational opportunities for the wider neighbourhood.

The leadership of the parish, under whose oversight this small congregation now came, was somewhat conflicted about what should happen to it: chaplaincy till the doors closed on the one hand, or regeneration costing more time and therefore money on the other. In a conversation with the parish superintendant early in the appointment of the MTU director in 2000, this situation was acknowledged and the suggestion made that not too much time should be put into re-developing the ministry in this place. However, simply by being present the student group raised the energy and the profile in the community. The oscillating dynamic amongst the parish leadership between doing little beyond care for the elderly people still associated with this local church and the exercise of ministry leadership was to become a significant difficulty for the MTU as it began to generate energy and hope amongst the local people.

Early on in the association with the local church, students saw the need to create the beginning of a new story which could be grafted on to the tradition the remaining people were so proud of. This began to enable them to see a

continuing role in the local community for the property resources and tradition they had held in trust. Members of the congregation quickly came to see themselves as contributing to the learning of the students and participated willingly in providing encouragement and feedback. They supported enthusiastically the activities of the students, so long as their limited energy and physical abilities were recognised and respected.

### **6.3. Some things were overlooked**

As I remember it, there were a number of possibilities to settle in relation to both the parish's expectations and hopes, and TMTC's plans for what could become a significant alternative theological education and ministry training programme. My experience was that these hopes and expectations were not always matched, which was evident in the difference between the exercise of student ministry in support of the parish staff and the learning requirements of TMTC. Some decisions needed to be made on both these fronts early in the life of the MTU, particularly in relation to time allocation and emphasis. The 2003 revised partnership agreement reflects an intention to resolve these differences (Methodist Church of New Zealand, 2003, p. 2). A significant factor that had not been taken into account at the time of the establishment of the MTU by the negotiating parties was the changing environment of tertiary education and the increasing regulation taking place in the sector.

## **7. Taking the Opportunity New Zealand Qualification Authority Provided**

The question of credentials was as important to this programme as it had been for Glendowie and the DTP. By the time the student group had been meeting for the first semester of 2000, and the programme was taking a more defined shape, expectations of current students and enquiries from prospective students made it clear that recognition for satisfactory achievement should be available in some form of transferable credential. As this was consistent with

the experience in the DTP, it was not a surprise. Once the NZQA and TEC possibilities became known, TMTC accepted the challenge and prepared to seek renewed registration as a PTE in its own right: TMTC had allowed a previous registration to lapse. The MTU director was charged with developing the curriculum in such a way as to be eligible for NZQA course accreditation. This would ensure students were eligible for student allowances and student loans as well as providing a recognised credential.

Both PTE status and NZQA accreditation for teaching a Diploma in Practical Theology (DipPTh) were completed by the end of 2001.

### **7.1. Unit Standards**

The initial hope had been to commence teaching with Local Programme status which would enable TMTC to offer registered courses of their own design and content, rather being fixed to the NZQA Unit Standard base in the Christian Ministries Sector. However, the time constraints imposed by the need to start teaching an accredited course immediately due to student funding requirements meant Unit Standards were used to shape the initial course that was registered. The DipPTh was to be a 2 year fulltime course based on a selection of level 4-6 Unit Standards (years 1-2 of a bachelor degree). These NZQA Unit Standards were selected, packaged and taught in ways that met the learning outcomes established by the MTU, alongside the student's personal learning goals (Trinity College 2007, pp. 15-16). This approach, pursued as a compromise to meet the constraints of TMTC and following careful negotiation with NZQA advisors, proved to be flexible enough to meet the diverse educational needs of the mature multicultural group of theological students who commenced study at the beginning of 2002.

## **7.2. Becoming a local programme**

From the outset it was the intention of the MTU programme to offer a well structured programme and content that was designed to meet the needs of those who would exercise ministry leadership in local communities. The MTU was intentional about using an adult education approach, and one that addressed management, economic, educational strategies and community development ideas as well as the traditional areas of theology, pastoral practice and worship.

As the course continued to develop in response to student and other stakeholder needs, it was important to be responsive to feedback. The Ministry Education Group (MEG), a stakeholder consultation group for TMTC, was set up to receive feedback from stakeholders in the MTU annually. In 2005 the feedback necessitated a move to secure Local Programme status for courses that would be shaped internally to meet the church's and student needs. Local Programme status would ensure greater flexibility in designing courses, their learning outcomes and the assessment tools. Local Programme status provided a real opportunity to design courses and control content and learning outcomes in ways that were directly relevant to the needs of students from Pacific communities and to embed the contextual approach we were taking to theological education. This was in place for the commencement of 2005.

### **7.2.1. Future development possibilities**

With Local Programme status there was also the possibility of extending the course to enable credit to be given for the third year of study. This third year, while not necessary for the diploma, was a normative church requirement for those who were to be ordained. The third year enabled a full and serious formation programme to be incorporated into the learning cycle of the diploma, as well as establishing the foundation for the diploma to be

developed into a degree by giving credit for the work undertaken in this third year.

The programme was designed to take a full three years to complete all nine components which made up the full programme. However, the successful completion of any two years, or six components, was sufficient to be awarded the diploma. Extending the two year diploma to a three year degree option would be a positive response to stakeholder feedback (Board of Ministry, 2006, p. 9). This feedback had consistently reflected the preference by the Pacific communities for a degree. Within Tongan and Samoan communities at the time a particular attitude to a degree was held: a degree is preferable, virtually irrespective of the relevance or quality (MTU-7). While this was not the primary motivation for moves in 2007 toward the development of a degree in practical theology, the preference of the Pacific community for a degree was, as I recall, taken into account alongside student opinions and funding issues.

## **8. Development Constraints**

A set-back came with the resignation of the TMTC principal responsible for the establishment of the MTU. The appointment of a new principal was made in 2003. While the out-going principal had a background in educational and financial management and long experience in church politics and cross-cultural negotiations, the incoming principal intended to continue to be a lecturer in the School of Theology of the University of Auckland while managing TMTC. She had not previously acted in the role of educational manager, principal, nor did she have a background in educational planning. At the time of her appointment, her teaching was focussed in areas of pastoral practice. The incoming principal was caught in the tensions between the academic focus and demands of the university's higher education priority and the MTU, with its different adult-education pedagogy focus on equipping

practical theologians for ministry leadership in various and diverse community contexts as a response to Conference 2001 (Board of Ministry 2001).

### **8.1. Further constraints**

In the early years of the MTU and its diploma programme there were several attempts to discredit the style of the MTU from people resisting change in the church (MTU-4, MTU-5). These were people who appeared not to be ready to recognise the increasing Pacific influence in the Methodist Church, with the consequent need to equip these Tongan and Samoan leaders in both theology and cross-cultural confidence (MTU-5). Much of the attack was subtle innuendo passed verbally, together with an unwillingness to engage with the possibilities of this 'new' form of theological education in the committee process of Methodist Conference, despite the Conference as a whole approving the establishment of the MTU at Conference in 1998 (Methodist Church of New Zealand, 1998, p. 775). I was present in the committees during the period of my employment in the Methodist Church and, although no official record of the hesitations expressed in these committees was made, the memory is clear of the blocking techniques that asked for further reports and programme justification. A private conversation with the acting principal in 2001 informed me that there had been 'a complaint' at the style of the MTU (Dine, 2001). There seemed to be no awareness of the challenges being brought by teachers in the 'new universities' of England and in Europe, on which SJC and TMTC were modelled, to the 'traditional' approaches to theological education despite a study leave report on the matter by the principal (Salmon, 2001a).

Challenges were also being brought to the appropriateness of higher education for 'professional ministry' by those developing adult and multicultural education (MTU-3; MTU-4; MTU-5). Neither did those who

were hesitant about the development seem cognizant of the changes in the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In conversation with the principal and the chairperson of the Board of Ministry at the time, I have been able to verify my recollections (Tasker 2008, Salmon 2008).

After the first 2 years the hesitations lessened, as graduates from the programme took their place in ministry appointments and in which they received positive responses to their style and competency in ministry and community leadership (MTU-7; MTU-12). Notwithstanding, questions continued to be raised about the need for two theological education programmes within a small church. This challenge highlighted the lack of understanding that only one of the programmes was in fact church-based (the MTU) and so able to provide the leadership formation that Conference had set out as a priority for TMTC (Salmon, 2003). The other programme provided a university degree, with access to the degree course purchased by the church, but with content and methodology out of the direct control of the church. In the MTU, we were clear that we had set out to equip 'practical theologians' able to reflect theologically on the life circumstances of their congregational contexts and to engage in relevant and life-enhancing ministries in their neighbourhoods and communities.

## **9. As the Years Unfolded**

By 2003 there was growth of numbers in both the MTU and the related local congregation. The tension created by the demands and responsibilities of developing a congregation and attending to the pastoral and worship dynamics of its members, alongside the responsibility for developing a sustainable education programme able to meet the demands of a multicultural group of adult student learners, together with ensuring compliance with statutory requirements of the tertiary education sector, became overwhelming. A revision of the partnership agreement and the job description in 2003 sought

to recognise the changes, and the MTU director's responsibilities were no longer split between the parish congregation and the MTU but focussed fulltime in the MTU and its student group (Partnership Agreement, 2003).

### **9.1. Growth brings change**

By 2002 the congregation had grown from 17 regular worshippers to an average of 45 on a Sunday (Draft Performance Review Report, 2002). This exacerbated tension between the senior parish leaders and the congregation as to the way ahead. Students and I raised funds and embarked on a small, fully-funded building project in order to provide kitchen and toilet facilities and access to the facilities for people with disabilities. As part of this project, the church hall was reclaimed from the Opportunity Shop that had served the community well in the past but now was only open from 9.30am till 3pm one day a week for a decreasing number of patrons. The ongoing presence of the Op Shop had made the hall facility unavailable for use any day of the week, thus limiting the capacity of the congregation to respond to other community needs or initiatives and which would provide broader experiences for the students.

The difference of opinion regarding the property and the future of the congregation became a block to the smooth running of the programme. The effect of this difference of opinion was to close down the mission and development plan that had emerged in consultation with the local community, and which was gathering momentum amongst the congregation.

Again, the problem was exacerbated by a change in appointment. In response to the growth of the congregation and the pressure on the MTU director, which led to the redirecting of responsibilities, a retired presbyter was appointed half time to 'look after' the congregation.

## **9.2. Renegotiating the partnership**

The Joint Policy Group, (previously the Steering Committee, and then the Joint Policy Committee) had to reconsider the partnership relationship between parish and college in terms of future planning. There were financial implications in any change to the terms of employment conditions and responsibilities of the director. There was also emerging the need for greater clarity regarding responsibilities and authority where the two parties had an interest in common. It was the Joint Policy Group that was responsible for proposing the changes to the respective bodies and steering them through the processes of implementation which it did following the performance review of the director in November 2002 (Draft Performance Review, 2002). The appointment of a half time presbyter to take up the congregational responsibilities of the director had implications for TMTC. It was now faced with finding the other half of the stipend, previously paid by the parish, in remuneration for parish responsibilities (Partnership Agreement, 2003). And, there was the need for new negotiations in relation to student engagement and oversight in regard to the parish ministry they had undertaken previously under the oversight of the MTU. The impact of presbyteral change on the local congregation was not considered ahead of time nor in relation to the implications for student practice and oversight.

The appointment of a half-time presbyter in 2004 to attend to the congregation enabled the MTU director to focus on the development of the MTU and its DipPTh programme. It did not, however, solve the problem of providing the students with active community engagement and project development with appropriate lines of oversight clearly spelled out.

## **9.3. Local programme possibilities**

Local Programme status was achieved and the next stage of the development plan began to take shape. By 2006 the outline of a 3-year curriculum and

assessment tools had been shaped in response to continuing student and stakeholder feedback and the Board of Ministry had agreed in principle that a Bachelor's credential could be explored. While this met the hopes and aspirations of the increasing number students, it raised tension amongst the members of the teaching staff of TMTC who were primarily engaged with the University's School of Theology. The MTU was now faced with the question as to the status of the TMTC's MTU programme in practical theology: was it an alternative to the School of Theology, which by 2006 was offering courses in 'Practical Theology'? These university courses were initially taught by the principal of TMTC.

## **10. The Educational Approach of the Ministry Training Unit**

It is important to note that students of the Unit were succeeding well in the adult educational environment the MTU provided. MEG, the consultancy group of stakeholders in theological education and ministry formation from the wider Methodist Church, reported students responded positively to the programme in terms of personal awareness, skill development, leadership capacity, pastoral insights, biblical and theological competencies (Ministry Education Group, 2003). The Superintendent of Sinoti Samoa reported to the same MEG "high satisfaction with the Diploma in Practical Theology". In 2004, graduate students were surveyed about the DipPTh and they reported a high level of satisfaction in relation to the purpose for which they had enrolled and its effectiveness in preparing them for their ministry leadership (DipPTh Post-Graduation Survey, 2004).

I believe I had the best training possible that has set me up for a very effective & fruitful ministry. I have fond memories of my time at MTU (Down, 2007)

The adult education pedagogy and the multicultural needs provided for by the MTU seemed to satisfy the needs of the learning group. It was culturally-aware and student-led; the issues and concerns addressed and used as core

subject material were selected by students themselves; and intensive one-to-one tutorial support and supervision was programmed for each student. Weekly feedback sessions were held at the conclusion of the core group learning times. During this session all aspects of the programme were critiqued: content, process, facilitation, interpersonal relations, as well as personal behaviours and attitudes, in a process that used 'commendations' and 'recommendations' predicated on 'I offer...'. This was a process of sympathetic criticism (Chapter 5, Section 8.4, pp.150-151), designed to identify necessary points of growth while not undercutting the confidence and self-respect of the adult students.

The particular needs of the group as adult students were taken seriously: respect for prior learning, food requirements, furnishings, family commitments and the multi-cultural composition of the group where English (which was the language of tuition) was the second language for the majority. Additional language support was available where required and peer groups worked in the primary language of the group.

At the beginning of each year a week long Foundations Studies programme was held. This week was designed to give a common experience within the group of differing social contexts around the city. Each sub-group was given a disposable camera and each person \$5 with which to purchase morning tea. The task was to observe and report on their experience in the social context. The experiences were reported to the whole learning group, which engaged in a process of reflective analysis. This introduced the action, reflection and analysis cycle as the foundation for the working style of the programme (above, Section 5.1.2, pp.169-170).

The wide range of tertiary educational backgrounds provided a challenging and exciting mix of ingredients for director and teaching staff and was highly

valued by the majority of students as they grew to trust each other and share their backgrounds.



**Photograph 4:** Students and tutor.

## **11. The Growth of the Ministry Training Unit**

By 2006 the teaching year commenced with one fulltime director who also taught in the programme, two half-time teaching staff who provided one to one supervision, and one fulltime administrator. There were 10 students in the core DipPTh programme, with an additional four students from the Meadowbank site of TMTC. Members of the Meadowbank group were enrolled in the University BTheol programme, as the core of their programme. The Meadowbank group joined the MTU student group for the Foundation Studies course (above, Section 10, pp. 182-184) and the weekend intensives that supported the Dimension 2 (Ministry Practice) components of the DipPTh course (above, Section 5.1.2, pp. 167-168). In 2006 the majority of TMTC students were enrolled with the MTU and we were ready to launch into the next phase of development that would see the College proceed toward the implementation of a degree in Practical Theology. The Board of Ministry's Strategy 2006-2009 included completing "the curriculum development of the Diploma of Practical Theology towards a three year degree programme" (Board of Ministry, 2006, p. 9).

In each year since 2002 there had been one or two students, plus some teaching staff, who came from denominations other than Methodist. My experience was that this added positively to the 'cultural' diversity of the group and ensured that ministry leadership aspirations and theological perspectives were broadened out beyond the confines of Methodist Church culture. It appears retrospectively, however, to have raised anxiety in the wider church (MTU-5, 2008).

### **11.1. Frustrations begin to bite**

By 2006 the inadequacy of the structural location of the MTU within the Mission and Ministry structure of the Methodist Church became apparent to me as director. Toward the latter months of 2006, the MTU staff began to experience some frustration in relation to advancing the plan toward the degree and in responding to student and stakeholder feedback. In my December 2006 performance review, I noted the "lack of strategic direction" and the difficulty of "multiple 'authorities' with which to negotiate" (Board of Ministry, 2006a). Early in 2007, staff requested "to speak directly to the Board", but "it was felt that in order to avoid confusion between governance and management ... no meeting would be planned" (Board of Ministry, 2007a). With no direct access to the governing board and limited access to the principal, who was becoming increasingly unavailable due to pressure of work in the university and the increasing complexity of relationships within the Meadowbank cluster of colleges, it was more and more difficult to present material for discussion and decision and to get clear responses to work with.

By 2007, my recollection was that both director and teaching staff were feeling impeded in their efforts to provide quality learning. Financial constraints were introduced unexpectedly, and as director, for the first time, I had not been consulted on the MTU budget. The lack of appropriate consultation on decisions affecting the operation of the MTU made for awkward relationships,

and the non-action on other decisions which had been made in consultation, exacerbated the problems that were beginning to accumulate. It was clear to me that changes were being discussed, but no consultation occurred about the situation: neither the proposals for change nor the impending constraints that the board and principal were experiencing. The following email received from a graduate student at the time illustrates the sense of disquiet and lack of transparent consultation around the decision to discontinue the MTU and its programmes. I have included it as it was written.

Malo e lelei Susan

Thanks for the email and I am still confused by this whole decision and I am wanting to ask a lot of question but what and who to - is my problem. One of those question is why they (who ever they are) did not approach us ex student regarding this matter. At the moment one part of me is wanting to concentrate on my preparation for all of my Christmas and new year services but I can not really concentrate when I am disturbed and distress. So the other part of me is wanting to see some clarifications about this matter but I do not now how, where and when.

I find it hard to understand the email from the president for I do not believed that financial constrain of the MTU programme is a good enough reason to close it. Because these irrelevant materials (Value and Belief) that we have been receiving from Trinity College cost a lot of money but it is a waste of money. The Worship Materials from Trinity College is also a waste of money - because the content is irrelevant and only present one perspectives.

Please help me and clarify to me what is going on behind the schene - Who is behind this whole thing? Is it the principal or is it from this so call Evangelical Baptist movement that is starting to take over our the Church today.

I had big hope for the church because of MTU and those who will be train in it, but at the moment I lost that hope because I cannot see the other programme provided and train minister that will cater for what the church need. *All* I can see now that the future ministers of the Methodist Church will either be ALL WHITE or ALL BROWN with a WHITE MAN'S brain in it and that is not very Christian at

all. For that matter I felt sorry for the Pasifika ministry and I can not see any change in the near future for they will be USED by these so called *ACADEMIA WHITE MEN* for their own benefit and that is making me very, very disappointed.

Keep me in touch and hope you can be able to still have some time to laugh. Hope that this complicated email makes you laugh.

Heaps of love and care  
(Personal email correspondence received 18 December 2007)

## **12. International Insights**

At this time I was, as director, engaged with the International Academy of Practical Theology (IAPT), and developing international contacts in this discipline. The exposure to what was happening internationally, and the conversations with others directly engaged in programmes offering practical theology as a course, were enabling me to begin a bench-marking process for the MTU practical theology programme. I had begun to make contact with similar programmes in Manchester and Chicago. These programmes, while significantly different and larger, nevertheless were also exploring the way in which practical theology influenced teaching practice and leadership actions. The writing of Elaine Graham (Graham & Rowlands, 2005; Graham, Walton & Ward, 2005), Paul Ballard (Ballard & Couture, 1999), Robert Banks (Banks 1999) and Don Browning (Browning, 1996) were providing indicators that showed where the MTU needed to place emphasis in the next phase. In particular, they provided support for the integral place of theological reflection in the formation and education of the practical theologian.

## **13. Keeping Practical Theology in Focus**

All significant writings on practical theology point to the importance of the local context for doing theology in ways that are congruent with the concerns and people of that context. They point away from applying theological answers or responses to an identified situation. Swinton and Mowat in

establishing the parameters of practical theology for their work on qualitative research provide a useful indicator to the conceptual framework of practical theology, while acknowledging the complex and diverse approaches to the discipline (Swinton and Mowatt, 2006, p. v). They suggest that the common theme that holds this complex diversity together is the desire to reflect theologically on human experience in specific situations and contexts.

As we were considering the next phase of development of the MTU, it was important to refocus on this critical marker and not slide toward a more theoretical emphasis and an approach to theology as a body of content to be learned. During my study leave in 2001, in the early days of establishing the practical theology programme and MTU ethos, I had been confronted with the prospect of packaging the programme in discrete courses that could be studied independently of each other, with the courses accumulated over time until the requirements were completed for the awarding of a diploma. This approach, it was felt, would attract more students and make it easier for part-time students. I discussed this approach with the director of Peterborough Ministry Training programme in England in 2001. Kathy Nicholls had taken this direction as a requirement of her board, but advised holding the integrated programme as long as possible (Study Leave, 2001).

In our conversation we agreed that an integrated programme engaged in full time and employing a range of educational practices was more likely to bring substantive change in student learning and development. Approaching the subject matter in ways that engaged the whole person, body mind and spirit was, we agreed, essential to giving students the best opportunity to integrate the learning in ways that would affect values and attitudes as well as leadership style and vision.

As the MTU struggled for recognition and credibility in relation to the Practical Theology department of the School of Theology at Auckland

University, adding more theory-based content was a risk we faced. The MTU staff team and student feedback was all-important in ensuring the MTU programme held to the integrated, reflexive model which balanced theory and practice.

The style was dialogical and integrated by contrast with the didactic style of places of higher learning where I have taught. I saw that we were preparing people as effectively as possible for engagement – the relationship of ideas and skills was constantly in the frame.

The action reflection model produces questions and reflection on those questions by groups and weaves together three strands: biblical/theological, change management, critical /radical education models. We saw these woven together in the Unit, it really did work, it generated power to change the institution. (MTU-3, 2008)

I use OARs all the time to integrate  
When running groups we share knowledge and reflections contributing to the theology and change together.  
Always putting theory and practice together (MTU-8, 2007)



**Photograph 5:** MTU, 2004, a culturally diverse learning group

## **14. Closure**

During 2007, tensions became clear between the university programme and the MTU, exacerbated by the difficulty members of the Board of Ministry were having in managing what were perceived as competing programmes in a time of reduced funding. Late in that year, following a Methodist Conference decision in November to replace the Board of Ministry with a commissioner, moves were taken that resulted in the closure of the MTU at the end of January 2008 (Titus, 2008a). Although the church appeared to have moved against the MTU at a number of levels, arguments *were* put forward in its support, and some anger was expressed over the closure of what others perceived to be a relevant and successful programme (Appendix 14).

The study of this project highlighted the significance of issues such as multicultural learning, appropriate credentialing, integrative curricular and process, and resistance of traditional institutions to substantive change.

## PART THREE

### ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the previous Part of this study, I described the three projects which were the subject of the case studies that provide the core data for this research project. In this Part I focus on the data that emerged from the three projects in relation to the research question: *What markers in theological education characterise practical theology as a process of equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation?*

The initial task was to overview the emerging field of practical theology and to identify the critical dynamics in this field (Chapter 2). Secondly, I undertook the task of telling the story of the three educational projects with which I had been personally engaged over a period of thirty years, and gathering data relevant to each of the cases from those who had been engaged in each and from available documents (Part Two).

In this Part, I identify expressions of the philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, and educational practice that evolved over that time and as they emerged from the respective focus groups, the one-to-one conversations, the interviews, personal recollection, and documents. The data is analysed in order to locate markers it provides to the development of practical theology, as both the content and the process of a transformative theological education.

In Chapter 7, material that emerged during the research period has been organised according to the four areas that indicate the distinctiveness of practical theology which were identified in Chapters 2 and 3:

- Philosophical perspectives

- Pedagogical approach
- Educational practice
- Social transformation and transformative leadership.

Appendices 9 and 10 provide the initial sorting of the raw data that emerged from the research phase.

Chapter 8 draws from the focus group and interview material the comments and information that indicate the difficulties encountered in establishing and maintaining the several projects. This comment is from the perspective of the students, the stakeholders, and the teaching staff. From this material, common themes are identified that appear in some way in each of the projects, together with my personal comment.

Chapter 9 identifies the markers which persisted in helpful ways over the time the educational model evolved, and during which a particular approach to practical theology emerged. These markers suggest key components that provide for the education of practical theologians as ministry leaders able to engage with goals of social transformation. I contend that such education can contribute to the future design and practice of theological education in the contextual situation of Aotearoa-New Zealand in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. I contribute the approach to practical theology which the markers identify into the ongoing development of the field of practical theology. Chapter 10 then draws these threads together.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Emerging From the Case Study Data**

#### **1. General Comments on Emergent Themes**

Analysis of the various interviews and other available documents relating to each of the three case studies (Chapters 4 to 6), identifies a range of emergent themes. This chapter summarises these key themes and categorises them in relation to the areas identified in Chapter 2 (pp. 17-54). The study set out to answer the question, “what markers in theological education characterise practical theology as a process of equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation?” (p.1). The analysis is directed towards responding to that question, and to identifying insights and perspectives that will enable a contribution to the field of practical theology.

The review of literature in Chapter 2 provides the framework for categorising the research data and outlines the literature that supports and resources practical theology (Chapter 2, pp. 18-53). In relation to that literature, the case study material identifies core themes and major emphases that shape the approach to practical theology for which I am arguing.

There were, however, two themes that arose in various ways that do not fit readily into the four areas used to sort the data. These themes indicate a general sense of dissatisfaction both with theological education and within the social climate at the time each project was established. This dissatisfaction provided the impetus for the development of the projects but in the recollection of the writer was not identified sharply as ‘dissatisfaction’ at the time the projects were instigated, rather ‘time for something different, a new opportunity’. Identification of this dissatisfaction and the areas in which it impacted on theological education is thus a contribution of this study to the

understanding of theological education in Aotearoa-New Zealand in this period.

Material pertinent to the sense of dissatisfaction is considered prior to consideration of the areas of philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches, educational practice and socially transformative leadership. As noted previously (Chapter 3, Section 3.5, pp. 67-69), leadership emerges as a link between the general area of social transformation and the educational process. The issues of dissatisfaction do not fall readily into these four identified areas, instead the sense of dissatisfaction, relative to this study on theological education and practical theology, falls into two primary clusters: theological education and social change. The material is, however, intertwined around the two clusters and so is often difficult to separate clearly.

### **1.1. Theological education**

The research identified that there was, in each instance, a growing dissatisfaction in the churches with the status quo in relation to the institutions of theological education (Part Two). In relation to the Glendowie project, this was commented on by those interviewed, including the students who had sought an alternative education to support their vocation to the ordained ministry in the Anglican Church. One interviewee noted that “the change sought by students in the Glendowie Project was preceded by the mid 1970s student rebellion at St John’s College” (Glendowie-1, 2007). Participants from the Glendowie Project suggested that the theological education available was

No longer serving us well as theological students, nor as church ... there was dissatisfaction with the College’s model of education – the banking model. We were introduced to Freire and Illich. It was a really good orientation to the practical theology that we wanted and ‘revolutionary ideas’ (Glendowie-2, 2007).

At the time of the development of the MTU (Ministry Training Unit) there was dissatisfaction within the Methodist Church regarding theological education and ministry formation. This was expressed in a report to Conference in 1998 (Trinity College Council, 1998a). That same report also indicated a tentative hopefulness that something different could emerge to shift the weight of the theological and ministry paradigm toward more contextual considerations.

In tertiary education circles at the time there was a growing tension between the traditions of the university model of 'higher education' and that of 'adult education' (Chapter 2, Section 4.3. p. 40). This tension was reflected in the same report to Methodist Conference 1998 cited previously, quoting an even earlier report to the 1993 Methodist Conference (Trinity College Council, 1998a). The development of what was called 'the enquiry model' was re-emerging, with an emphasis on the student and the 'problems' requiring attention (Chapter 2, Section 4.1, pp. 37-38). Postman and Weingartner's *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (1969) was influential in these early stages of thinking 'outside the normal framework'. They noted by way of caution that

What all of us have learned (and how difficult it is to unlearn it!) is that it is not important that our utterances satisfy the demands of the question (or reality) but that they satisfy the demands of the classroom environment (Postman & Weingartner, 1969, p. 33).

At the time of the DTP (Diocesan Training Unit), the Anglican Church was establishing its three tikanga model. Students were separated into cultural schools within SJC (St John's College), and within the diocesan programmes there was little direct impact of this work apart from the use of te reo, Maori language, in the liturgy and units of study on Te Tiriti O Waitangi (see Appendix 7).

### 1.1.1. Social change

There was “a lively debate about racism, feminism, and contextual theology in relation to theory and action” through the 1980s (Davidson, 1993, p. 283). Davidson goes on to report the change that was happening and that “Students were generally positive about the change, commenting on the greater encouragement given to participation in learning” (p. 283). It was in this climate of experimentation and change that the Glendowie ‘innovation’ was developed.

Awareness of and attitudes to racism were changing in the late 1970s and 1980s, and this had an impact on the Glendowie project as it took shape. The growing and urgent demands of the Treaty action groups kept anti-racism work in high profile, with increasing awareness that racism was not tolerable. One participant from the Glendowie Project notes tellingly in relation to Maori who lived in the neighbourhood:

‘I went to convert the people, but they showed us Pakeha the silver cage we live in...in connecting with other people who have a tradition I learned I had a tradition too’ (Glendowie-2, 2007).

In the late 1970s and early 80s, the anti-apartheid movement and calls to honour the Treaty of Waitangi brought protest movements out onto the streets, with members of the Anglican and Methodist Churches taking significant leadership roles in protest movements and information sharing, and students from the Glendowie project being arrested during a church service at Waitangi in 1983 (Chapter 4, Section 8.3, pp. 124-126).

Members of the Methodist Church also provided leadership in the anti-apartheid movements and protests around Aotearoa-New Zealand from 1981 to 1983, and were present at Waitangi in 1983 (Lear, 1983). Methodist ministers Geoff Tucker and Barry Jones provided significant leadership in the Methodist Church and the community in the protest movement. Leaders such

as these provided models for students who were exploring their ministry leadership options. The Methodist Church offices in Auckland were also home to the POR (Programme on Racism) (Chapter 4, 3.2, pp. 92-93), staffed by Mitzi Nairn and the Rev'd Bob Scott, along with other ecumenical groups. This set of offices was a focal point for generating work in bicultural education and leadership during the anti-apartheid protests and the calls to honour the Treaty. Students from the Glendowie Project took part in groups and activities initiated from these offices. These offices continued to house the POR and the Anglican and the Methodist Bicultural Education programmes into the 1990s, providing a reference point and resource centre for students from both the Glendowie Project and the DTP.

The theological education projects of this study are threaded through with the desire to act responsibly in relation to bicultural issues in Aotearoa-New Zealand, and drawing on a view of education as engaged with social issues (Chapter 2, Section 4.2, pp. 38-40). Issues of equity in relation to resources, power-sharing and a compassion for justice appear time and again. Every dimension of each of the projects reflects issues arising from the impact of this wide social response to issues of racism and the implications of commitment to bicultural partnership.

#### **1.1.2. From bi-cultural to multi-cultural: power sharing and recognition.**

During the mid 1980s and into the 1990s calls for power-sharing and structural reform saw both churches vote to give Maori self-determination alongside Pakeha, in decision-making and in theological education. In 1983 the Methodist Church at its annual Conference had committed itself to being a bicultural church (Turner & Salmon, 1984). In 1984 the Anglican General Synod set up a bicultural Commission and in 1986 agreed to revise its constitution in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty (Chapter 5, Section 2.2, pp. 132-133).

At national level, in Methodist Conference, Maori and Pakeha Methodists met as partners with equal weight in decision making, regardless of numbers, and business was restructured to concern itself with those matters that affected the partnership and the organisation as a whole entity (Salmon, 1989; Turner & Salmon, 1984). Comment on the structuring of the bicultural relationship can be noted in the 'Blue Pages' of each Methodist Conference agenda, where the procedures for decision making by consensus between the two cultural partners are set out, together with processes for monitoring the impact of decisions on the Maori partner. This monitoring is a feature of Methodist polity.

By 1989 the Anglican Church had revised the Constitution of the church and made constitutional changes that formally brought the three tikanga into being. Alongside these moves, dedicated 'bicultural education' programmes and workers were established to assist parishes and church members to better understand the reasons for the constitutional changes (Chapter 5, Section 2.2, pp. 132-133). The bicultural education work also engaged the theological reasoning behind the changes, in the hope people would find deeper understanding for these changes. In both the Anglican and Methodist churches, theological education and ministry formation for ministry leadership students shifted from a course common to both cultural groups, with separate courses developed as within Maori and Pakeha structures.

The Anglican Church was faced with responding to calls from Pasifika peoples for greater independence and attention and recognition. In 1999 the Revised Constitution of the Anglican Church saw the beginnings of the move to establish the College of the Diocese of Polynesia as part of the SJC framework.

### 1.1.3. Methodist responses

By 1991, Te Rau Kahikatea was responsible for the education of Maori Anglican Students and Te Taha Maori was operating a dispersed marae-based programme for Methodist Minita a Iwi (Methodist Maori Division, 1981). At the same time, the Methodist church was grappling with the significant numbers of Samoan and Tongan people who made up the Methodist Church in New Zealand. People were arriving from the Pacific as both legal and illegal immigrants (Samoan Policy Committee, 1983), many of whom were attached to Methodist churches.

The impact of this growth was reflected in comments by the chairperson of the Methodist Board of Ministry:

Influencing us at the time [of the establishment of the Ministry Training Unit in 2000] was the numbers of Pacific students who were not comfortable in a university setting. We needed to unblock doors and give them the success they deserve. They are the church leadership in the future (Ministry Training Unit Interview-5, 2008).

The Principal at the time of the set up of the MTU identified a number of contextual influences affecting Methodist education options, including the shift in the balance of Palangi (European) and Pacific student numbers entering training (Ministry Training Unit Interview-4, 2009). Change was also being experienced in the 30-year-old partnership with St John's College as SJC moved into a three tikanga model.

This change was significant because the difficulty within a culturally diverse structure of reaching agreement over appropriate approaches, methods and outcomes for educational programmes became evident (Ministry Training Unit-4, 2009).

The Director of Pacific Ministries in his interviews commented that

Qualifications are all important to Pacific people, how and what is taught is not so important. Performance of the people is largely ignored in measuring effectiveness of training but

this is beginning to change as graduates from the MTU begin to make a difference.” (Ministry Training Unit Interview-7, 2006).

Comments reflecting the same concern were made in interviews with other stakeholders representing policy-makers (Ministry Training Unit-4, 2009; Ministry Training Unit Interview-5, 2008). In another interview, educational staff commented that;

The increased number of Pacific students added pressure to developing appropriate learning styles. We needed to shift the understanding of education so these students could be offered ways to fully access learning. This was risky and difficult as stake holders representing Pacific groups and Asians saw the educational model as a challenge to culture and to truth and to ‘proper theology’ (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2008).

These pressures made continuing the independent NZQA accreditation of the courses taught by the MTU an important issue.

By 2000, the strength of the Pacific voice in the Methodist Church had tipped the balance of power, and the former bi-cultural power-sharing dynamics between Maori and Pakeha had to respond to a third major player in the structure. The establishment by Conference of Sinoti Samoa and Vahefonua Tonga as formal structures to represent the interests of these cultural groups formalised this multicultural dynamic (Methodist Church of New Zealand, 1994; Sinoti Samoa, 1996; Vahefonua Tonga o Aotearoa, 2000). In 2001 at Methodist Conference the following was presented by a committee of detail on the last day:

A statement was presented to Conference from Vahefonua Tonga O Aotearoa, Sinoti Samoa, and Bose ko Viti e Niu Silada, [the Fijian and Rotuman committee] expressing support for the Bicultural Journey of the church and encouraging exploration of how multicultural concerns can be fully and appropriately addressed in our journey together. Issues of education, the marginalization of Pacific voices and contributions from Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji in the life of the Conference and Tauivi and how we might progress as one

church were raised in the statement. The statement asked the church to review the church's bicultural journey and life over a two year period (*Tonga Samoa, Fiji Committee of Detail Report, 2001*).

#### **1.1.4. Anglican responses**

In the Anglican Church during this time the three tikanga dynamics had spiralled into troubled waters, and it was very difficult within SJC to hold together the aspirations and priorities of each of the three separate colleges that now constituted SJC (Chapter 5, Section 5.3, p. 139). These separate colleges were the College of the Southern Cross (Pakeha), Te Rau Kahikatea (Maori) and the College of the Diocese of Polynesia (Pacific). Alan Davidson reports that "the Anglican Church entered uncharted waters as it began a new journey to give cultural differences full and equal importance in its life" (Davidson, 1993, p. 317), as no agreement had been reached at this time on the suggested management structures. Davidson further commented:

Balancing the needs of theological education, ministry training and spiritual formation presented considerable tensions for those involved in work at St John's-Trinity. Concerns such as contextual relevance, commitment to bicultural partnership, cross cultural sensitivity and regard for gender issues added to the complexity of theological education. It was impossible to get the balance right so that all the contending voices in the churches were satisfied (Davidson, 1993, p. 315).

#### **1.2. The impact on theological education**

Each of these features reflects changes that were in some way destabilising to the 'establishment'. The resulting change that began as traditions and practices of the dominant Pakeha society came under scrutiny has been slow and hard won. Similarly, the two churches in the study have separated the different cultures in tikanga, and are only in this first decade of the new millennium grappling with the impact of this move.

Within the Methodist Church, as noted by the chairperson of the Board of Ministry when interviewed, it will be Pacific leadership that takes the church into the future. The 'reverse' exposure to cultural norms quoted above is important therefore for developing change-motivated leaders who can work cross-culturally. Familiarising Maori and Pacific students with pakeha/palangi social norms and expectation seems to have given them confidence in critical reflection on their engagement in social structures and in initiating social conversation and exercising leadership among pakeha/palangi. Samoan and Tongan students of the MTU commented on this growth in confidence in relation to such things as forms of address, chairing meetings, leadership styles, understanding social roles and expectations. One Tongan student commented specifically that:

The programme gave me basic exposure to Palangi culture that I have never had. I feel much more comfortable and confident now. I am able to stand my ground and initiate conversation with Palangi (Ministry Training Unit-10, 2007).

## **2. Philosophical Perspectives**

In Chapter 2, a series of philosophical perspectives relevant to the emphases of practical theology were identified through the literature (Section 3, pp. 30-37). The areas considered were: the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, and experience and practical wisdom in education. Within these areas, knowledge understood as arising and being shaped by human communities was seen as most relevant, together with a stress on social change as the purpose of education, and with experience and practical wisdom as significant components of educational process.

Here the data from the three projects is considered in relation to the way participants perceived the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, and the place of experience and practical wisdom. Together, these form a

distinctive philosophical framework for practical theology as transformative theological education.

### **2.1. The nature of knowledge**

Students identified the growth of knowledge as a constructive activity in which everyone had something to contribute to the development of what could be known about matters. They noted they were expected to contribute what they know to the data gathering and reflective processes and not wait to be told in a 'banking' model. "We could learn from each other, and think for ourselves" (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007), "We don't have to have all the answers, we can find it out together" (Ministry Training Unit-1, 2007). Another MTU group commented clearly, "We were responsible for co-creating knowledge and not just being told information. We did a fair amount of finding out and sharing" (Ministry Training Unit-13, 2008). One student from the Glendowie project remarked that, "I am still pushing to the margins of unknowing. It is good to go places where you know you don't know" (Glendowie-5, 2007). These understandings reflect a social or communal constructivist approach to knowledge (Chapter 2, Section 3.1, pp. 30-33).

Across the three projects, student comments identified an approach to the development of knowledge that was based in group awareness and contribution, and critical questioning of the dominant and received wisdom without there being 'a truth' to find. Rather, they sought a common understanding, with consideration of the implications of any 'truth' perspective on the lives of people and communities. "What is truth?" and "learning to reflect on questions and answers emerging from daily life situations" (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007), were ways of expressing this approach to the nature of knowledge. There was an understanding that nothing is excluded from the questioning and reflection process; "relevance of everything" and "didn't learn 'a' theology - one that fits all situations or one

to apply” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). “Knowledge is not what you are taught but what you come to understand” (Ministry Training Unit-10, 2007).

Because knowledge is understood as arising from particular communities in relation to their traditions and experiences, hermeneutical processes of interpretation (Chapter 2, Section 3, pp. 30-37) are important in surfacing the significant components of knowledge held by the community. The use of a critical hermeneutical approach in the consideration of issues and actions was remarked on in each of the projects: Glendowie students observed “The hermeneutical spiral we used is still important to me today” (Glendowie-2, 2007) and MTU students commented “We learned a critical reflective approach”, we asked “Who benefits?”, and “I am still using the analytical questions we used”(Ministry Training Unit-1, 2007). A further comment identified the importance of being “a thorough and reflective practitioner, linking [past] tradition, present, and possibility” (Ministry Training Unit-13, 2008).

## **2.2. The purpose of education**

The MTU focus group voiced the purpose of education as “promoting ethical and equitable ministry” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). Across the projects there was no question that as students they were engaged in developing insights, knowledge and skills that could assist in the processes of social change: “We learned to analyse what we had [knowledge] and use that to change things” and, “to help people put the pieces of their lives to good, to make something of it, [while] discovering what structural supports are available” (Glendowie-2, 2007). Each of the projects also reflected an awareness that the education they were engaged in was assisting them to develop an awareness of and respect for the ‘other’: “It was a time of learning to be open to the ‘other’ and to learn from them ... collaborating on the story of everyday living in ordinary situations” (Glendowie-5, 2007). The DTP

comments reflect the expectation of growth in awareness of social dynamics and the confidence and capacity to engage in these structures: “We were becoming aware of church politics, structures and systems... and learning how to be more engaged in church leadership in society... we were being part of the solution” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). This engagement in the liberative action for social change was described by one group in the MTU as “supporting human flourishing and sustainability as a measure of ‘goodness’” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). They noted the transformative nature of the education involved:

Turning around from inward [looking] to outward, from broken to whole, from darkness to light, hopelessness to hope, unhealthy to health, unsustainable to sustainable (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

### **2.3. Experience and practical wisdom in education.**

The significance of the experiential base of each project was evident from the student interviews and focus group responses as well as from stakeholder comment. Experience as a starting point for the educational endeavour was understood as a differential from other education programmes that students had been engaged with up to the time of their participation in the relevant project. “I experienced dissatisfaction with college education; the banking model ... what developed in supervision [in the Glendowie project] for reflecting on what we had done was profoundly helpful and altered the course of what I have done with my life ... ” (Glendowie-5, 2007). One MTU student noted, “This was a hugely different educational experience for me ... a contrast” (Ministry Training Unit-9, 2007). There was a growing awareness that experience and prior learning critiqued each other and must be kept in an interactive tension with actions that supported transformation:

It is a continuous process of asking why and thinking outside the box. We learned to observe, to take time to reflect and engage in structural analysis and to know ‘I’ can make a difference ... to lift the vision of possibility (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007).

In the following sections the philosophical threads reappear and are woven in relation to pedagogy and educational practice, contributing to the overall integrated nature of the approach to practical theology developed from the material of this study.

### **3. Pedagogical Approaches**

An overview of the data from the interviews shows each project arose out of concerns relating to theological education that reflected aspects of the wider issues noted above. In each project there was a dominant motif that influenced the core emphasis and direction of the pedagogical approach that was taken, and shaped programme development. These motifs were *context*, in relation to the Glendowie Project, *diversity* in relation to the DTP, and *learning styles* in relation to the MTU. In relation to each of these motifs, the pedagogical approaches identified through the research reflect those considered in the review of literature in Chapter 2 (Section 4, pp. 37-43).

#### **3.1. Glendowie**

##### **3.1.1. The project motif**

Reflecting on the data in relation to the Glendowie Project, *context* was the primary motif that characterised the emphasis of this project and influences its pedagogical approach. Tensions had arisen within SJC between traditional approaches to theology and education and approaches that prioritised context, locally and in the social issues of Aotearoa-New Zealand (Davidson, 1993, p. 284). Chapter 4 scopes the general tension and disquiet that was present in society at the time of the Glendowie project. Alongside this social tension dynamic, there was internal pressure within SJC, with some students seeking innovative educational models that would offer something different from the traditional 'classroom' model (Glendowie-1, 2007). Pressure for 'contextual relevance' and for a connection with 'real people' was building amongst some students and teaching staff of the college. The opportunity to offer an

educational experience in-situ was an opportunity “not to be missed” (Glendowie-9, 2007), that enabled a holistic response to the cluster of factors that shaped this project: it was full immersion for an extended period in the issues and activities of a local neighbourhood with the expectation that change would occur for the individual students and that they would contribute to change in the local context. Questions were raised in supervision that reflected this local contextual concern, “What can people do to change their own situation?” (Glendowie-9, 2007). Issues rising from the local context shaped the supervision sessions and the evolution of the project.

In interviews with graduates from the Glendowie Project, comments indicating this desire for contextual relevance, as perceived by students, were made. They made comments such as

College was disconnected from reality; Esperance Road was a dose of reality; in GI [Glen Innes] I felt really alive, theological education really connected; the situations we discussed had life and death reality, it was very edgy; I lost any romanticism about the poor and marginalised (Glendowie-2, 2007).

It was a negotiated collaboration in GI, a lived experience of collaboration with people in everyday ordinary lives... Ordinands [students] will learn more from the community than the community will receive from the ordinands and that is ok (Glendowie-5, 2007).

The various pedagogical approaches identified within the project all functioned in relation to this dominant contextual motif.

### **3.1.2. Problem-based**

One of the clear working principles used by those in a supervisory relationship with the project was not to *tell* the students what *should* be done. Rather it was a model of mutual discovery that recognised that those living in the neighbourhood knew more about life and possibilities there than those of us who came in from time to time. In this way it was a ‘strengths based model’

that brought together the knowledge and skills in the community with the coordinating energy of the student-ministry leadership group. Issues of fundraising for the project and for activities or needs of the project were as much part of the joint venture as theological and leadership reflection with students and local residents participating. Similarly, locally-identified 'problems', like the site for the community hall, the need for a vehicle, whether or not for a group to visit Waitangi, how to take action and how to record and communicate what was happening, all found solutions in the collaboration between students, local residents and supervisors.

Structural analysis was very helpful in understanding the structures we had to deal with and the discourses that maintain them (Glendowie-5, 2007).

There was lots of preparation to make a submission ... we were empowered to 'put the case' at a public hearing! (Glendowie-2, 2007)

... refused to give permission for the visit [to Waitangi] said 'thanks for letting me know your decision, it needs to be made with the community. There was lots of learnings in the reflection later (Glendowie-1, 2007)

### **3.1.3. Challenging dominant wisdom**

As one student noted, "We were living in the shoes of another" (Glendowie-10, 2007), and learning to see things from the underside: "It was a time of political radicalisation for all of us" (Glendowie-10, 2007). The use of the 'hermeneutical spiral' (Glendowie-2, 2007) provided a tool, and encouraged the uncovering of received interpretation and the questioning of commonsense, and this was reported as significant in understanding how dominant ideas shape actions and opinions. One group noted there was a "questioning and reflecting approach to learning", with the down-side that students sometimes did things which "dismayed" the parish (Glendowie-4, 2008). Students noted that they were wanting to "hear a theology of community but [supervisors] didn't always connect easily" (Glendowie -2, 2007) with what was emerging and the supervisors were aware they ..."didn't

have an adequate theoretical base for what I [they] were doing” (Glendowie-9, 2007).

The experience of living in the situation and experiencing daily the issues and concerns of ‘others’ meant students questioned the ‘dominant wisdom’ and social norms they were familiar with, seeking new theological responses and ways to bring change.

#### **3.1.4. Active participation**

The project was predicated on active participation by students in the lives and concerns of this Glendowie neighbourhood. Stakeholders in the project commented that “Students gained lots of experience they could not have got in a traditional theological college programme – today many people benefit from their experience” (Glendowie-3, 2008). As one supervisor noted, “This project was a lot about ‘put the body in a certain place and act’ – then wisdom (reflection) will follow”(Glendowie-1, 2007). “Theological education is also about social transformation and students should be in places where they can engage with this” (Glendowie -9, 2007). It was clear from the data that active participation in living issues was the fundamental material for reflection and learning.

#### **3.1.5. Participatory space**

The Glendowie Project gave rise to different understandings of ‘space’ within the emerging pedagogical approach. *Physical space* being the fundamental requirement expressed through the in-situ location of the student housing. There emerged also the importance of ‘de-cluttering the mind’ to make *space for different ideas*, along with *space in the curriculum* for students to respond to issues emerging from the context, and *sacred space* in which to wonder and ‘be’.

The importance of ways to create space in the mind and in the project design so things can happen has emerged as an indicator of what made some things possible. Students commented that without the *space to live* in the community and the *space to reflect* and the *space to undertake action* there would not have been such significant learnings (Glendowie -2,2007; 5,2007; 4, 2008). This move to create space also emerged as an intentional leadership decision: “We had to bend the rules to make something else happen – create some space” (Glendowie-2, 2007). In response to learnings, a group commented in relation to prayer, “we were left with a mess, we had to wrestle with it day by day – we were doing it in the midst of life not removed to a ‘sacred space” (Glendowie-2, 2007). The awareness that ‘space’ is required in a variety of ways emerged strongly.

## **3.2. The Diocesan Training Programme**

### **3.2.1. The project motif**

With my appointment to the DTP in 1989 there was a revision of the programme. The issue bringing pressure to bear on the DTP at this time was the need for *diversity*. The diocese and church in general was faced with pressure for diversity in educational tracks, in ministry leadership foci, in theological perspectives and in the gender of leadership (Chapter 5, Sections 2, 5 and 6, pp. 131-134 and 137-143). *Diversity* was, in retrospect, the issue that was engaging those who worked with the DTP as both leaders and students.

As discussed in Chapter 5 (Sections 4 and 5, pp. 136-140), there was increasing pressure within the Anglican Church for diverse options in training of ministry leaders. SJC was no longer seen as automatically the primary location or style for such training. There was also the inability of the church to guarantee paid employment, resulting in some people being reluctant to terminate their existing employment to begin full-time training. Consideration of a partner’s employment made itinerancy difficult, and the need for security

for children's education and an expectation of developing ministries, other than the traditional parish model, all contributed to the pressure for alternative training programmes to the residential three year fulltime course at SJC.

I am a plunket nurse; my ministry is in this context with others (Diocesan Training Programme-3, 2007).

With a wider range of ages and people from different social and occupational backgrounds, including women, seeking training for ministry leadership, and with many not intending to be available for appointment beyond their local community, it was important to develop a quality alternative educational track. Pressure for this had been growing since the mid 1980s to support the growth of non-stipendiary ministry (Davidson, 1993, p. 288). In the 1988 research project published in *Toward a Reshaped Church*, I identified, in relation to Pakeha students, that there were 11 male students taken into SJC for fulltime residential training for ministry leadership and no women, whereas there were 14 women in non-residential local diocesan programmes (Adams, 1991). These locally based alternative training options developed in the dioceses, were supported by monies released by the SJC Trust Board after the establishment of the SJC Trust Advisory Board in 1984 (*Proceedings of General Synod 1984*), enabling local diversity to emerge in relation to regional need.

### **3.2.2. Problem-based**

The focus group that met to reflect on their experience of their time with the DTP remembered the experiential tasks and the learning from one another. They recalled the process in which they presented 'problems' they had in their experience in ministry engagement or with theological concepts which were worked on by the group. Comment was also made on the DTP as providing a safe place to experiment with these problems (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

The DTP was not a community-based learning project in the manner of the Glendowie project, so the predominance of 'problems' that constituted the learning material in this project were drawn from personal development issues and from interpersonal issues arising within the learning group. The institution of church, and the shape of ministry leadership opportunities, also provided opportunities for learning. Issues such as how to manage the reading, personal practice and preparation expectations while working fulltime were a challenge for most, but led to insight into personal learning styles and priorities.

We measured up because we were believed in and we didn't want to let each other down.

We learned to be assertive, to give and receive feedback, to be critiqued.

I learned from what I did experientially and then reflected about that.

Students were expected to get on with it  
(Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

We were expected to develop theological competence using the information we had access to, to reflect on current issues to be open to new things and to find ways to share them with others (Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007).

The 'problems' that constituted the learning material were identified by the students, drawn from their experience or internal reflection, and often presented as unresolved ideas to be worked through with the learning group.

### **3.2.3. Challenging dominant wisdom**

Two dynamics interacted in the work of the DTP with respect to the challenging of dominant ideas and that shaped the learning environment for students. One was the inclusion in this formal diocesan programme, people who were not seeking ordination for their ministry leadership, but were exploring a different approach to ministry leadership. This was a departure from previous years, and required some adjustment by those who were preparing for ordination "learning to articulate our feelings; relearning how to

be in church leadership [but] more in wider society” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). The second dynamic was the impact of feminist theology and the use of a ‘hermeneutic of suspicion’ as a tool to shape group reflection. Nothing was to be taken for granted, everything was questioned; ‘why’, ‘who says’, ‘who benefits’ were fundamental questions that ensured “[we] always worked in a cycle with the need to keep contextualising things for now, e.g. feminist theology for today (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

The patterns of male-led ministry established as normative in the church were under scrutiny, and different models were emerging that depended on ordained and non-ordained leadership working in partnership, as was commented on in Chapter 5 (Section 6, pp. 140-143) with reference to LSM (Local Shared Ministry) and non-stipendiary ministry leadership. The impact of feminist theology on leadership was growing at this time and with it the expectation that women would be included in all aspects of leadership. Along with the expectation of the inclusion of women, was the expectation that the concept of inclusion would be reflected in the language of the church and in its theological expressions.

#### **3.2.4. Active participation**

Active engagement was experienced as a basic requirement of the programme by participants. The focus group readily talked about the experiential nature of the group, in which they made presentations on issues drawn from their ministry leadership activities between the monthly meetings of the group and which they reflected on with the group in a learning context. This included learning to give and take critical feedback and developing greater self-awareness (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). One student commented, “I learned to identify, research, present” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

However, it was noted by one member of the focus group that “The DTP standards were too high, not realistic” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). This reflected the more general comment that this was a fully engaged programme that required careful balancing of employment, study, ministry leadership engagement, and family.

[It was] an adult learning programme that acknowledged everyone had something to contribute, it was not a banking model!” There was plenty of “reinforcement that we were the ministry leaders of the future... that we could meet expectations ... [there was] confidence in us... that we would get on with it ... that we would be part of the solution ... time management was an issue, I was working fulltime (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007)

Students in the programme were all actively engaged in local church contexts, and these diverse contexts provided the basis for the growth of knowledge and the place in which that knowledge was tested.

### **3.2.5. Participatory space**

‘Space’ in this programme has multiple applications too (above, Section 3.1.5, pp. 209-210): again, the research interviews highlighted the importance of physical space appropriate to the style of the programme; ideational space in which to ‘rethink’ was also raised, as was contextual space to engage and act. Particular comment was made of the importance of the residential space that provided for physical socialising and in which to debrief. “Things changed when we didn’t stay at St Stephen’s House anymore; there was not space to relax in” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). Along with this comment was a comment on the importance of the emotional ‘space’ for debriefing that this ‘relaxing’ space invited. The absence of the programme facilitator, and primary tutor, from this social peer-space was critical to encouraging debriefing “this was a safety-valve” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). The facilitator chose not to ‘stay over’ during the residential events, thus providing this open space.

The group space, and the environment created when establishing the learning group, allowed for “creative experimenting in a safe place” (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). There was careful attention given “to entries and exits from the group ... it was not static”, and to the building of trust to enable open sharing and exploration.

There were clear boundaries, rituals and expectations.  
It was a safe space to explore, people became friends.  
It was a gift to be who I am and not put in a box.  
Learned to pause and to try and understand what people who were thinking differently really meant (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

Each of these ‘space’ concepts was clearly important to the feeling and functioning of this programme that sought to accommodate diversity of prior experiences and future aspirations.

### **3.3. The Ministry Training Unit**

#### **3.3.1. The project motif**

With regard to the MTU, the dominant issue at the outset was *learning style* (Board of Ministry, 1999; Commission on Theological/Ministerial Education, 1993; Ministry Resourcing Unit, 1998). The MTU was established in the context of a growing debate between higher education and adult education, and the recognition that different learning styles were appropriate for different persons, cultures, and outcomes. A personal comment from a Samoan ministry leader made during a gathering of Pacific leaders to talk about the design and style of the MTU noted,

Your work is a new area ...the Church [Methodist] really needs to grapple with how it wants to train Pacific leaders ... it is very important to gather the data and develop a new theological education model for ministers relevant to the New Zealand context and today’s issues (Personal Comment-1, 2007).

This comment reflected the attention being given to different learning styles, and the need to become more attentive to ways that would encourage positive outcomes in formal learning environments for Pacific students.

The response to the question, “What did you think we were doing when we set out with the MTU?” given by the Chairperson of the Methodist Board of Ministry at the time the MTU was established, also indicates the need to provide for different ways of learning that would have different outcomes especially for Pacific students:

We were setting out to enable the growth of leadership in the Church in a practical, down to earth way especially for Pacific and Asian people. We needed to provide for ways of doing things that were different from the way they were brought up and previously ‘educated’. We hoped they would be able to bring change in their communities and families and bring the Gospel alive as it links with communities today. (Ministry Training Unit-5, 2008).

Students from the programme also commented on the experience of sitting so you could see each other’s face and knowing “we are all learners and teachers; there was lots of laughing and storytelling; we were invited to join in a protest march from church to town-square” (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007). It was an adult education experience in which “there was a lot of going out and coming in, not just me and the books” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). These were different ways of learning from those previously experienced. “This was a hugely different educational experience for me and very powerful” (Ministry Training Unit -9, 2007).

### **3.3.2. Problem-based**

The MTU used a model in which the students themselves identified an issue with their base community and explored this in relation to social impact, implications for theological perspectives, and processes of change. It was these ‘self-identified problems’ that were foundational to the development of

learning goals and assessment tasks. Selections of comments from across interviews identify the significance of the action-reflection model that was a core component of weekly group meetings, along with the expectation that students would think for themselves.

This was an adult-education thinking for self, problem-based learning experience.  
We established our own goals as professionals.  
Taking responsibility for your own learning.  
Keeping your ear to the ground and being present so you know what is going on, identifying the issues.  
Not being given stuff to read (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007).

In a situation where many of the students had previously experienced learning environments in which information was given with the expectation it be learned, this investigative approach to knowledge was very different.

### **3.3.3. Challenging dominant wisdom**

This difference was initially approached with trepidation by some as it did not provide the 'right' answers, and could potentially challenge the received wisdom of the elders. One group reported the expectation that "they would be like the previous minister, and know everything as God in a high place" (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007). Their experience with the MTU put them in a different place from this and frequently they felt they were challenging the dominant wisdom:

The agenda and questions have been the same for 15 years without any change to the format used in Tonga 15 years ago, when I changed the agenda and questions for the first time the stewards were expecting an angry response (Personal Comment-2, 2007).

A hermeneutic of suspicion was a core 'tool' in the reflection process, with the asking of critical questions: what is going on, who says, why? This formed a part of the observation, analysis and reflection (OARs) model that was used to provide a process for thinking about a situation, the historical links, and the

potential impact of actions and ideas, whether they be theological, biblical, cultural or social.

There was a repositioning of theological perspective starting from context.

Lots of questions; who, what, where, why?

(Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007)

And questions that sought to identify the dominant power and normative ideas:

Who says, who benefits, where does the power lie?

(Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007).

The challenge to the dominant mind is best summed up in a quote from a teaching staff group:

The educational shift in style was to move from telling to asking, from transfer of information to discovery. This was a risk and a difficulty. The issue that this shift led to was that Pacific and Asian stakeholders (leaders) saw the educational model as a threat to culture and to 'truth' and 'proper' theology (Ministry Training Unit-3, 2008).

#### **3.3.4. Active participation**

The increasing numbers of Samoan and Tongan candidates for ministry, together with a re-emphasising of ministry preparation and the need to 'do theology' rather than academic teaching of an approved body of theology, were major factors in the MTU and its purpose. Awareness of these factors is noted in further reports of the Board of Ministry (Board of Ministry, 1999; Ministry Resourcing Unit, 1998). As I have indicated earlier in this chapter, both the chairperson of the Board of Ministry at the time, and the TMTC Principal at the time of the establishment and development of the MTU, noted these issues in relation to factors they saw as influential and providing impetus for what developed as the MTU. That principal commented during an interview,

My approach to the teaching of theology with an eye to ministry was shaped by Freire's educational approaches,

liberation and post-colonial theologies and social change understandings of ministry. That is, it is appropriate for ministers to be engaged in activities/engagements in social and political issues (Ministry Training Unit-4, 2009).

Students were expected to be fully engaged and active in local issues in the learning environment selected for their placement, which aimed to give a wide range of opportunities to be engaged, so as to meet the different personal learning goals that were set and assessed each semester.

Interviews with teaching staff identified the holistic learning that was offered as a student centred learning opportunity based on strengths and which provided opportunities to identify and work on growth points. This style of learning requires full and active engagement as “there is development on every level: theological and educational ... people can’t be pushed; it was a culture of discovery” (Ministry Training Unit-6, 2008).

### **3.3.5. Participatory space**

From the outset of this project the physical space was purposefully designed to support the learning needs of a multicultural student group. Chairs, tables, mats and cushions were chosen with the adult body in mind and the kitchen equipped to meet the hospitality needs of a Pacific community. “Meals were a reflection of Pacific hospitality and important for social bonding. The mealtime conversations increased our informal learning” (Ministry Training Unit-13, 2008). Comment was frequently made that the physical space had a qualitative difference from other learning settings that was hard to identify, but made them feel welcome and at home. The soft furnishings included a large tapa cloth on the main wall of the large gathering space and there were floor cushions on a woven mat to accommodate talking groups. Maori and Pacific students found items that were recognisable from their culture and that supported the sense of “being at home and led to increased learning capacity that was very important for Tongans” (Ministry Training Unit-13, 2008). “It

was a lovely environment where there was a sense of being cared for” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

The importance of psychological space for re-evaluating learned responses and theological perspectives was identifiable by comments from students on the importance of “learning to let go; to have an open mind; self-care; knowing it was a space where you do not fail” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

Student interviews also attested to the value that was placed on the provision of space to actively engage: learning spaces where new things could be tried, learnings made in-situ at funerals and feasts for example – real spaces where real things happen; sacred space to practice spiritual leadership and space for testing ideas in the facilitation of groups.

The concept of space in its three applications continued to be important and was developed intentionally as this project evolved.

#### **4. Educational Practice**

The distinction between pedagogical approaches, as the theoretical frameworks that support educational practice, and the practice of education itself is not always easy to identify. The data from the projects show this, in that the key aspects of educational practice identified in Chapter 2 (section 5, pp. 43-48) as appropriate for practical theology are largely expressed in relation to the aspects of pedagogical approach. These components of educational practice are: provoking the generative questions, creating critical attitudes, fostering reflexive thinking, providing relevant space and recognising cultural diversity.

Some other aspects of educational practice were identified through the research, and these are outlined in this section in relation to the relevant project from which they primarily emerged.

#### **4.1. The implications of cultural shifts for educational practice**

The interviews and conversations undertaken in relation to each of the projects revealed that in different ways cross-cultural demands were present for each (Glendowie-5, 2007; Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007; Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). While it is simplistic, it seems helpful to identify what have 'crystallised' as dominant influences emerging from the cross-cultural awareness and commitments to cultural inclusion that developed during the life of each of the projects. For the purposes of this study in relation to the education of practical theologians, and on the basis of both the core learning elements identified in focus groups and interviews (Appendices 9 and 10) and my personal research and reflection, the following influences can be identified as core components which shape educational practice:

1. structural analysis
2. power analysis
3. the awareness of the power inequality between cultures and genders
4. the capacity to use a hermeneutic of suspicion
5. understanding of the demand for power-sharing between lay and ordained ministry leaders and within the stratified hierarchy of the church
6. identification of the pressure for cultural recognition by Maori
7. ability to locate self in relation to pressures and demand for change
8. awareness of the growing Pacific and Asian migration and the need to expand cultural recognition and inclusion practices
9. understanding the shifts in theological education relative to practice and priority
10. opportunities to succeed educationally.

These components were present in each of the projects and students were increasingly articulate about their significance. It was generally the awareness of differing cultural dynamics and expectations that sharpened their relevance, in particular in relation to the Glendowie project and the MTU (Glendowie-5, 2007; Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). It was awareness of the growing impact of feminism that gave rise to similar analyses for the DTP (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

#### **4.2. Variety and flexibility of learning styles**

In different ways, each project recognised the significance of using different learning styles. The Glendowie project sought to respond to student request for engaged in-situ learning to balance their prior academic focus with close supervision that engaged an action/reflection core (Chapter 4, Section 8.1, pp. 119-122). The DTP was reshaped as it sought to provide learning opportunities able to meet the different learning styles and ministry leadership expectations of the various members of the learning community (Chapter 5, Sections 5.5 and 6.1, pp. 140-142). A variety of approaches were used, including guest lecturers, individual research and study, presentation experience, facilitation practice and discussion leadership. The MTU from its inception took cognizance of the needs of a multicultural group with a variety of prior learning experiences (Chapter 6, Sections 6.1 and 10, pp. 171-172 and 182-184). In this programme,

Students had greater access to learning and information and a great amount of material to access because of the integration with and connection to what they were doing in the continuous ministry projects. They were using the material rather than it sitting as a 'body of knowledge' to be learned (Ministry Training Unit-3, 2008).

In each of the projects the students themselves noted their aspirations and learning needs shaped the content and educational practice. Flexibility in provision of educational opportunities and assessment emerged, particularly

in the MTU, as fundamental in order to account for the personal goal setting dynamic that this programme incorporated.

### **4.3. Group cohesion**

At the heart of each project was the cohesiveness of the learning group. In each of the student focus groups and interviews this was positively commented on as critical to the ethos of the projects and to the personal transformation students experienced. The Glendowie household planned their life around daily and weekly 'household'-only times that supported the health of their group (Chapter 4, Section 8, pp.118-126). The focus group interview for the DTP reflected the importance of the Friday night transition time that was planned into the programme and the bonding that emerged from shared meals and the 'staying over' that built strong group relationships and group ethos (Chapter 5, Section 8.5, p.151). The DTP handbook that was given to students each year identifies 'group building' as a deliberate component of work in February each year with time given to personal sharing and informal social time whenever the group met (Auckland Anglican Diocese, 1998).

This group building and social time was deliberately planned also into the work of the MTU. The weekly feedback sessions in which the group interacted in relation to commendations and recommendations (Chapter 6, Section 10, pp. 182-184) provided an opportunity for group bonding. Key events of the year, such as the completion of the Foundation Studies Week, (Chapter 6, Section 10, pp. 182-184) and the annual graduation, were celebrated with families and guests in MTU-hosted social occasions. Students valued the quality of the group experience. In response to questions about dominant memories, one focus group remarked "collegiality, working together, we were strong and there was lots of fun, laughter, dancing and energy" (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007).

It is the recollection of the researcher that each year the development of the learning groups, in both the DTP and the MTU, was given high priority, resulting in shared responsibility for the group functioning and care of the group members. Throughout the year the health of the groups in the DTP and the MTU received constant attention. All members of these groups worked to their strengths in this process and shared their expertise with others (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007). The quality of communication was monitored at each gathering to ensure the group was in a place of trust with one another so the vulnerability required for this open learning and exploratory model could be used to best advantage. The giving and receiving of honest feedback that was both challenging at a personal level and affirming was also a feature of each gathering and taken as a serious responsibility of group members to assist each other's development (Chapter 5, Section 8.4, pp. 150-151; Chapter 6, Section 10, pp. 182-184). These two processes remained part of the life of the learning groups and were commented on by students from both the DTP and the MTU (Appendices 9 and 10).

#### **4.4. Expectations**

Students of the DTP commented that on entry to the programme they were expecting to achieve "theological competence, and for the opportunity to open up new things for self and others, as well as to receive information" (Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007). They reported that they knew they were coming into a programme where "the expectations were high" (Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007). Further probing into this latter comment elicited the response that they knew they would be expected to take responsibility for their own learning, think for themselves, and contribute to the group in an active way (Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007). It appears that the ethos of the group, along with its educational approach with the expectation that members take responsibility for their own learning success, was owned by the group. The experience of the researcher in each group

suggests students took responsibility to 'induct' incoming members into the ethos. One new MTU student said on arrival, "I've been waiting for the dancing" (Personal Comment-2, 2007).

In relation to the educational practice, DTP students noted the expectation that they would become familiar with managing group dynamics, and learn to articulate feelings. Asking questions and solving self-identified 'problems' stretched some and gave them confidence they had not anticipated. Graduate students in the focus group reported they had started asking questions about faith and became less idealistic about the received traditions. Some reported they learned they could research and find things out for themselves and they loved it.

People have different presentation styles and we learned to be assertive... ensuring we gained what we needed to learn...we learned to give feedback and to be critiqued.

There were clear contractual rules/expectations set at the outset [we knew] we had to measure up...it was an adult learning group and we all had something to contribute.

None of us wanted to let the group down, expectations were high and we knew we could meet them and were supported to do so. We were preparing to be the ministry leaders of the future.

(Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007).

Some noted that although they had not expected to be training with people who were equipping themselves for licensed lay ministry, or ministry that was community focussed and different from their church focus, the 'mixing' was inclusive and no-one was talked down to.

We were all expected to be leaders, to be courageous, to pass on what we learned and be non-hierarchical - there were experiential tasks and reflection on these tasks where we learned from each other (Diocesan Training Programme-3, 2007).

#### **4.5. Integration and leadership**

A different set of dynamics from those of the DTP emerged from the interviews with members of the governance group of the MTU. As there is readily available documentation for this project it has enabled a broader scoping of stakeholder expectations. There was clarity that:

The Church needed to train more people for effective leadership. We needed a different way of doing that, as numbers of candidates were failing in the traditional university model. We needed a more hands on model that was about doing theology not learning about it, and that would give permission for Pacific issues to be the subject for theological reflection (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2008).

The theological college was constrained by financial restrictions from implementing such a programme by itself, and the Central Parish was exploring how it might provide ministry to its five congregations given the shortage of graduate ministers, the cost of a fully paid minister, and the ministry leadership education they hoped to make available (Ministry Training Unit-4, 2009).

In 1990 the Methodist church had established a Commission (Chapter 6, Section 3, pp. 162-166) to look at the provision of theological and ministerial education for the future leadership needs of the Church. Amongst the Commission's subsequent recommendations, was the suggestion that the focus for the educational enterprise of the Methodist Church should be "integration of theological and ministry leadership education, with flexible options for both lay and ordained" (Board of Ministry, 1999). The curriculum of the MTU was designed explicitly to provide this integration (Trinity College, 2007; Chapter 6, Section 5.1.2, pp. 169-170).

The focus on "preparation for ministry leadership" was later specifically identified in TMTC's 1998 report (Trinity College 1998a, p. 364). From a Board

of Ministry workshop on theological education held in 2001, came a vision statement that identified the purpose of ministry education as

Provision of leaders in ministry who can assist the church towards hopeful futures (Board of Ministry 2001).

Each of the three projects developed in different ways educational practices that integrated formal learning that was content-focussed with experiential learning that was focussed on developing ministry leadership skills and the capacity to learn from reflection on active engagement.

## **5. Transformative Leadership**

In each cluster of interviews, interviewees identified the importance of the coalescing of a number of factors which gave impetus to the initiation of their particular project. These have been commented on in the case studies of Part Two. In relation to the fourth area identified for analysis, social transformation, it was the development of ministry leaders who could enable transformation that was noted to be significant. The role of leadership in transformation was identified in the review of literature (Chapter 2, Section 6.3, pp. 52-54). Stakeholders in the projects were in search of an education programme that would train relevant contemporary leaders in ministry for the church (Board of Ministry, 2001). While this was discussed by those whom I interviewed, there appeared in my experience to be no clear consensus in the institutional structures of the churches engaged in these projects about what this meant.

During the time since the 1980s it has become clearer that leadership with the capacity to engage with diverse communities of people has emerged as a significant dynamic amongst those in the church looking to a different future from church traditions of the past. As noted, the vision of the Methodist Board of Ministry was in relation to leaders able to assist the church toward “hopeful futures” (Board of Ministry, 2001).

Former students from the Glendowie project identified their desire to exercise leadership that engages the wider society, be that in leadership development amongst communities, or provocative public conversation on matters of life and values (Glendowie-2, 2007). It was, the teaching staff recalled, an:

Opportunity to get middle class students out of their safe place and into somewhere they didn't know existed. Theological education is about social transformation and students should be in places where they can engage with this (Glendowie-1, 2007).

Within the DTP, it was the transformative leadership of women that became a factor, in particular for lay women who were not at the time seeking ordained ministry leadership (Diocesan Training Programme-, 2007).

In 2010, Tongan and Samoan presbyters who were former students of the MTU were engaged in social development projects with their respective communities in areas that include youth, health advocacy, violence, educational support and environmental sustainability (Pope, 2010; Appendix 12).

In each project, the importance of goodwill was noted, along with a desire to engage differently in transformative ministry leadership that would respond to the changed time and circumstances of the different periods in which the projects were developed. In each instance, as in the DTP (Adams, 1989; Auckland Anglican Diocese, 1998), programme planning was designed to ensure that:

- the theological education/ministry leadership formation was 'real and effective'
- that it addressed the traditions of the church
- that it be engaged with the people and the issues of local contexts, including cultural contexts, and
- that it provide supervised skill development.

It was important to me as educator that the programme design be educationally sound.

## **5.1. Power analysis**

Each of the programmes was significantly influenced by the awareness that power analysis was a critical ingredient in any process of social transformation. Power analysis, as it relates to social structures and institutions is a component in the broader process of structural analysis (Chapter 4, Section 3.1, pp.94-96). Students became aware that if they were to engage in socially transformative leadership they would need to identify people and ideas that held power in place (Glendowie-5, 2007).

### **5.1.1. Glendowie**

During the exploration phase, prior to actually committing to engagement with the project, questions were asked amongst the wider SJC educational staff as to whether or not students should be engaged in social change initiatives and whether theology was really about social transformation (Glendowie-1, 2007).

As the Glendowie project gathered momentum, the educational staff members from SJC who were engaged with it were, they noted, "only able to watch nervously while the dynamics unfolded" (Glendowie-1, 2007). They then provided support by attending various College meetings and speaking positively. Students were actively engaged in "being a conduit, an interpreter to the other world" (Glendowie-1, 2007), and in identifying local power holders in the community and in the various social organisations that impacted on the lives of the people in this area.

There was much planning for structural and social engagement with government departments, the Board of Governors and the Parish Vestry (Glendowie-1, 2007).

Reflection on memories of models and methods used in the supervision and tutorials elicited the comment that:

Always there was the need to ask the questions;  
Where is the power? Who benefits? How do we empower all of us? We wanted to struggle with where our accountability lay (Glendowie-2, 2007).

We were clear this was a collaborative and negotiated engagement ... that was daring to unmask power structures and deconstruct roles and expectations (Glendowie-5, 2007).

While the learnings commented on seemed, in the first instance, to be primarily personal, they also had social impact. In preparation for direct action in relation to identified social issues, for example, safe road crossings and the repair and maintenance of housing, analysis of the social structures impinging on the lives of the local residents helped the students and the residents target their action and mobilise the community.

We quickly learned that the systems of our society favour 'hetero' men and that we must take great care not to precipitate an avalanche that further damages those we want to help. With the painting of the Zebra crossing we wanted to push ahead but it was obviously necessary to consider carefully what the reaction might be and consult the community (Glendowie-5, 2007).

### **5.1.2. The Diocesan Training Programme**

Within the DTP, participants commented on the significance of a power analysis, in relation to their work within the church rather than in relation to social change engagement. Comment was offered on the growing awareness of church hierarchical structures and the significance of the power held by those with structural authority (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007). Participants explored an ecclesiology that named and deconstructed power that was held by virtue of office, and constructed a theology that was predicated on partnership. By contrast with the hierarchical power structures that gave shape to the church and relationships within the church, DTP

participants sought to develop for themselves an ability to share power and empower others. In one instance it was expressed as:

Learning how to encourage people to tell their own stories and solve their own conflicts and problems without feeling the need to have all the answers (Diocesan Training Programme-1, 2007).

### **5.1.3. The Ministry Training Unit**

Participants of the MTU also spoke of the lasting impact of structural analysis and in particular the power analysis. For some this was a struggle in relation to preconceptions of the power and influence of Pacific presbyters amongst specific cultural groups. They reported being initially engaged in a conflict of interest: “We lose hierarchical power but we see people grow” (Ministry Training Unit-11, 2010).

Tongan and Samoan students reflecting on the leadership role of a Pacific minister were able to assert they could facilitate healthy change and development amongst Pacific communities, rather than simply exercising the power of veto in favour of the status quo. Students were challenged, in keeping with their emerging theology, as to the role they wished to exercise in church and society and on whose behalf (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2007). Initially it seemed the analysis they undertook was in relation to their own situation. This was reflected in comments on the nature of the education programme the MTU was offering them and on the role of the ‘teacher’. They commented on the difference from the hierarchical classroom model they had previously experienced with phrases such as:

Sitting in circles, asking questions, thinking for myself, not being given the answers, respect for our choices, collegiality, being part of a team and use the gifts of others (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2008).

When the focus group discussion moved to processes and models that had been useful and had lasting impact on ministry leadership and theology, the following were noted:

Structural/social analysis helped us understand the structures we are dealing with in different situations and the power different people have in relation to these structures so we can act politically; SWOT and force-field analysis that helped understand possibilities; OARRs [observation, analysis, reflection, response]; asking who benefits. Asking who benefits is always very important (Ministry Training Unit-2, 2008).

It seems there were learnings made from using a power analysis in relation to the hierarchical place of ordained ministers, with a subsequent repositioning of self as 'minister' into places of greater collegiality, and with a desire to facilitate the growth of others. This has significant implications for effective change leadership, as highlights the significance of power analysis in some form in the equipping of ministry leaders to engage in social transformation.

## **6. Socially Transformative Leadership**

Students responded to the question regarding their leadership style and goals with illustration of engagement in situations that sought to bring change and which they identified as 'transformative'. In this section, I point toward the subsequent roles and activities of selected graduates from each project whose transformational leadership was effective in some aspect of social transformation. I do so as an illustration of aspects of leadership these people are now undertaking within particular communities, but without discussing their work in detail.

### **6.1. Glendowie**

During the time of residence in the Glendowie neighbourhood the students exercised significant leadership within the neighbourhood in terms of youth development and youth employment; engagement in anti-racism protests,

including awareness-raising work in relation to the Treaty of Waitangi; skill development for local people in fund-raising and the interface with the local council and government agencies and accessing resources to support capacity building (Chapter 4, Sections 7.2, 8.2 and 8.3, pp. 117-118 and 122-126).

In later years The Venerable Glynn Cardy, one of the students in the first household, has continued to direct the concern of his church-based ministry leadership toward those in the community who question the traditions of church teaching and theology. He is currently Archdeacon of Auckland and vicar of St Matthew in the City, with its city focus and 'progressive' approach to spirituality and theological expression. In his work he is a frequent contributor to the newspaper with articles on current social issues such as attitudes to aspects of sexuality, as well as providing billboards on the St Matthews' property that challenge the public to think in different ways about Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter. Churches under his leadership offer hospitality to those alienated by more traditional churches and time is given to theological consideration of responses to 'street people' and property development in the inner-city. Glynn works closely in the city with the Anglican City Mission as well as with civic and business leaders.

The Right Reverend Phillip Richardson, also a previous Glendowie student who has remained in the employment of the institutional church, is now Bishop in Taranaki. He has provided vision and enthusiasm for a development project to establish a leadership forum and training centre in New Plymouth for local business and service-agency leaders. For him this is in continuity in meeting the needs of a local community and a contribution to the health and wellbeing of the community that is wider than church - which he sees as being in continuity with his time in the Glendowie Project (Anglican commission on communications, 2010, p. 9). The project has drawn together managers and service providers and offers an educational programme that

opens new insights into the nature of being community, managing change and employment relationships. His position and role as Bishop has enabled him to develop networks and respond to a need expressed by the local community. He has since withdrawn from active participation and the project is continuing under the management of the community itself.

## **6.2. The Diocesan Training Programme**

From the DTP, Barbara Wesseldine, a lay woman now employed in licensed ministry in the Bishop's team, has led a significant development in local ministry. She has structured and trained LSM teams throughout the Auckland Diocese and provided training on a national scale for this community based and staffed model of ministry (Wesseldine, 2010, pp. 38-41). The aim is to engage local people in the life of their communities in ways that support the spiritual health of the community as well as remaining responsive to local issues and community needs. In this model, ongoing training and resourcing are provided for those who support the spiritual health of the community as well as the equipping of local community workers and pastoral workers. Her work has linked this LSM development with an international network. As noted in Chapter 5 (Sections 6.2 and 8.1, pp. 142-143 and 148), this model of local community ministry has become significant, accounting for 22% of the ministry units of the Auckland Diocese in 2010 (Auckland Diocesan Website).

## **6.3. The Ministry Training Unit**

More recently, graduates from the MTU have focussed their work into both the issues of their neighbourhoods and the cultural groups of which they are a part.

The Rev'd Ikilifi Pope is working with Tongan youth on issues of environmental awareness and violence, while addressing the literal interpretations of the Bible that impede many in his congregation from

engaging with the issues of living in Aotearoa-New Zealand in 2010. He comments on the importance of shifting the gaze “from heaven to earth” (Pope, 2010). Ikilifi Pope uses Tonga Youth, a local group for New Zealand born youth, and the media as ways to contact with his audience. He broadcasts regularly on through a Tongan programme on Radio 531pi and on Niu FM and has begun a column in Kakalu, a Tongan sports newspaper. This column he calls ‘Sport Theology’ (Pope, 2010).

The Rev’d Vaitu’ulala Ngahe has networked effectively in the community where he is located and redeveloped a property for use by the community as a homework centre for young people and a health and fitness centre for old and young people (Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2009, p. 7). This project in the Rosebank Road community of Avondale has pulled together the resources of many different networks to fund and staff the redevelopment, including Police, District Health Board and Age Concern. His purpose is to give back to the people of the area a community centre that supports the health and wellbeing of the local people: a place where they can celebrate and mourn together, where they can learn and dance together. He has recognised the communal need for such a gathering place amongst people struggling with social isolation and the cost of hiring ‘private’ facilities (Appendix 12).

In each of the instances cited, the leadership is focussed on the issues that have emerged in relation to the communities where the graduate students are located. They are working with groups to explore what constitutes life-giving change and providing vision, skill and support in developing appropriate responses. I contend that their leadership in issues of social transformation points to the effectiveness of the educational models in which they were engaged.

## **7. Core Project Characteristics**

This section identifies a series of core characteristics that emerged from the groups and interviews in relation to the three projects. Though the characteristics emerged as aspects of the pedagogy of each of the projects, I argue that they express key philosophical perspectives for practical theology, and constitute components of practical theology as theological education relevant to the contemporary context of Aotearoa-New Zealand. They thus appear as markers in Chapter 9.

### **7.1. Being inclusive**

In different ways each of the projects were exploring inclusivity. It included examination of gender roles, cultural expectations, leadership style and the theology that challenged social stratification. The MTU focus groups were asked to consider what, in relation to their time with the MTU, had significantly resourced the work they were currently engaged with. They noted phrases such as:

*“learning to be inclusive”, “delighted to receive phone calls telling me what has been done not telling me to do something or to ask permission, this tells me I am making changes”, “engage with your community”, “being present in the political sphere”, “not scared of asking”, “contributing to others creativity”, “We learned to be inclusive: words as well as intentions – language/meaning/context”*  
(Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

### **7.2. Liberative**

Liberation theology challenged the power of the church to engage with the life struggles of the poor and marginalised in ways that empowered them to demand justice and inclusion, and freedom from the constraints of poverty. It caused the life-giving story of Christianity to be re-theologised in local situations in ways that supported active engagement in social change. Feminism challenged the roles and stereotypes of women and men in society and in the church, demanding a different reading of the Bible ‘with women

included'. Women and men in all the projects were considering their personal 'conditioning' and how different readings of the Bible would support changed roles (Glendowie-5, 2007; Diocesan Training Programme- 1, 2007)

Those representing the governance and management groups, particularly in relation to the Glendowie Project and the MTU, were clear that theological education needed to equip students for engagement as leaders in social and political activities which promoted the liberation and wellbeing of communities. One of the SJC educational staff commented

'That students should get involved in social action', and questions of the social location of Jesus, and salvation when it starts to happen in NZ were appropriate for theological students to be reflecting on (Glendowie-1, 2007).

### **7.3. Transparent**

The difference with the DTP from earlier diocesan programmes was that it was planned with a detailed three year curriculum, setting out the learning goals and student requirements for that whole period in advance (Chapter 5, Section 7, pp. 143-147). This transparency regarding the scope of the programme and its competency expectations was commented on positively by students. They felt free to pursue material as it became relevant to them. As an adult education programme, it expected the active engagement of students in taking responsibility for their own learning, utilising the opportunities, support and resources made available. Some were able to do this more effectively than others, but all commented on growing through the expectation that they could do it and that they could achieve a high level of competence.

Building on the DTP experience, this same transparency of curriculum and learning outcomes was provided for in the MTU (Chapter 6, Section. 5.1.2, pp. 169-170). However, the earlier Glendowie Project had not had this benefit, as we were 'learning as we went' and discovering what was relevant and helpful

as the time unfolded. This situation required significant flexibility and trust that what was required could be sourced by teaching staff or student research and reflection. In learning from this, the MTU spelt out in some detail learning outcomes, expectations of students and course requirements (Trinity College 2007).

#### **7.4. Holistic**

Each of the three projects sought to be holistic in its approach to learning. In interviews and focus groups from each project, students commented on the significance of the physical learning environment, the role teaching staff expectations played in creating an affirming emotional environment, the significance of social occasions in which families were included. They commented also on the power experienced in reflecting with others on personal experiences and problems they presented, the significance of developing facilitating and teaching skills and discovering they could do research and enjoy it. Attending to personal learning needs and spirituality, goal setting and personal journaling were identified as of continuing significance.

We were resourced in every sense: teaching material, personal comfort (lovely environment and sense of being cared for), supervision; not just me and the books – always going out and coming in; we had the best parties (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

‘No distinction was made between time of learning and non-learning, all time was learning time and subject for reflection’. Educational staff noted that the pedagogy was developmental on every level and a spiralling approach was used in recognition that students could not be pushed but would come back to matters time and again with different insights and different questions (Ministry Training Unit-6, 2008).

#### **7.5. The significance of the learning group**

In each project comment was made on the importance of interpersonal relationships. The learning group supported the development of open trusting

relationships making personal growth possible and enabling significant sharing amongst participants. Learning groups also affirmed members by providing the opportunity for everyone to demonstrate their prior knowledge as well as their new learning. It is clear that the small intimate learning group, has been a significant feature in each of the three programmes, and is felt by students to have been significant to the quality of the learning and relationships that developed, including growth in self-awareness and leadership skill. The role of the learning group was a distinctive feature in each of the projects. One DTP interviewee made comment on this, noting that the personal work she needed to do as a result of the group helped her develop a capacity for social engagement that she saw as useful for the ministry she now exercises (Diocesan Training Programme-2, 2007).

#### **7.6. A multicultural context**

Of particular significance in the MTU was the multicultural learning dynamic. This had not been present in the makeup of the student groups in either of the other two projects. Comment by students and educational staff indicated that the multicultural educational experience had been significant in the shape of the pedagogy. Comments such as the following, contained in the various MTU interviews, indicate aspects of the total learning experience that responded to the multicultural learning environment:

- pacific issues were the subject for theological reflection;
- we need to be aware of the hidden figures that had power over students in relation to friendship and cultural groups;
- providing and reflecting on experiences in 'talking groups' helps me learn;
- you talked straight and took no 'bullshit';
- it is practical and down to earth so we can see what it means and how it makes a difference; our families were welcome;
- we like the use of stories; we can go into scary places where we don't have the answers and that's ok;
- it was difficult to move away from telling to asking;

- collegiality, working together was very strong and there was lots of fun, we laughed a lot and danced, there was lots of energy;
- the social celebration times with families invited were such fun and helped us get to know each other as people.

My experience of taking up the challenge of intentionally planning for a multicultural student body, points to the importance of group dynamics, peer learning support, self-selected language groups, décor and furnishing that recognises the cultural mix, respect for prior learning, contributions from different cultural perspectives and concerns, as well as the importance of using a range of other educational practices that maximise access to the learning opportunities and provide for a range of assessment tools.

## **8. Summarising**

The research has identified significant emphases in philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, educational practice and transformative leadership in each of the three projects studied. While these emphases were present in each project, they were expressed differently according to contextual pressures and the nature of the programme. I argue that the emphases identified in the research are core for practical theology that can equip practical theologians as transformative leaders.

These emphases, providing a theoretical framework for practical theology, include enquiry-based learning, challenge to dominant wisdom through power analysis, an expectation of liberative change for persons and communities, communities of participation that promote the co-creation of knowledge, recognition of and engagement with context, and a praxis approach that integrates theory and practice. These emphases identify a position in relation to the theoretical bases for practical theology outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2. They also reflect the core characteristics identified above emerging from each project and its context (Section 7, pp.

236-239). The research shows also the significance of a sense of dissatisfaction that opens the way for change.

Addressing these emphases in contextually relevant ways will, I argue, contribute to the formation of ministry leaders able to engage in processes of social transformation. The emphases from this research that shape the approach to practical theology for which I am arguing are picked up in the development of the markers identified in Chapter 9.

The research and experience also identified difficulties in achieving the goals of practical theology as transformative theological education. Alongside pedagogical and philosophical emphases, the research identified challenges to be taken into account in planning and carrying out any programme aimed to produce practical theologians. While some of these challenges have been raised previously, in Chapter 8 the focus is explicitly on examining the part various factors played in the challenges and in the closure of the projects.

## Chapter Eight

### Challenges in Establishing Intentional Educational Projects for Practical Theologians

#### 1. General Comments

While the institutions and other stakeholders in each of the case studies were initially willing to 'experiment' with pedagogy, and able to articulate a hope and expectation for a different educational project, in each case support was withdrawn after a similar period of time. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the challenges encountered and to identify the factors in the withdrawal of support. It is clear and unambiguous that in each instance the project was discontinued by the institution at the point at which student graduates began to make an impact on the institution of church and its leadership. Given the purpose and design of the projects was clearly intending to equip ministry leaders to ask critical questions and to challenge the status quo in the interests of personal and social transformation, it should not have been a surprise that the research so clearly showed this. While social transformation was named as a *goal* by the host institutions (in line with their mission as Christian communities), and while the ministry leaders emerging from the projects were clear about their role to facilitate such transformation, when these ministry leaders began to *act* as facilitators of transformation, the institutions reacted negatively.

#### 2. Educational Climate

In 1984, during the time of my engagement in the Glendowie Project, I prepared a paper, 'On the importance of context for the 'doing' of theology and the preparation for ministry'. The paper argues, from a biblical base, for the engagement of the church and its ministers in social change and transformation, and provides a clear indication of the direction that would be

taken in shaping a purpose and pedagogical approach to theological education. The concluding paragraph states:

This style of being engaged with a community recognises both partners as learners, recognises both as having something to offer, recognises an expectation of transformation for both and ultimately for society. It is not a method which imposes or implies a correct response or vision, except that that vision is in line with shalom, the time of peace and justice (Adams, 1984).

This contrasts sharply with the description of the dominant educational practice as experienced in 1969 by Postman and Weingartner.

... in our society as in others, we find that there are influential men at the head of important institutions who cannot afford to be found wrong, who find change inconvenient, perhaps intolerable, and who have financial or political interests they must conserve at any cost. Such men are, therefore, threatened in many respects by the theory of the democratic process and the concept of an ever-renewing society. Moreover we find that there are obscure men who do *not* head important institutions who are similarly threatened because they have identified themselves with certain ideas and institutions which they wish to keep free from either criticism or change (Postman & Weingartner, 1971, p. 15).

Although I was familiar with the general climate and the caution expressed by Postman and Weingartner, the hopefulness of the 1980s and the change-wave that we were riding as a nation suggested to students and stakeholders alike that we could bring about some level of institutional change in the preparation of ministry leaders. Those who pressed for change believed that this change was appropriate and timely and would equip theological students for community leadership in situations where transformation at some level would be a positive step in the interests of a more just society or institution.

Similarly, hope for a different way of equipping theological students was present in 2000 at the outset of the development of the MTU (Ministry Training Unit), the third case study. That hope was for the development of

theological education and ministry leadership formation that would equip leaders for participation with communities of interest in ways that engaged them in processes of social transformation. Expressed less clearly, but present to some degree nevertheless as evidenced by the curriculum and pedagogy, the same underlying expectation for the role of the church and its ministry leaders in the wider community had been present in the DTP (Diocesan Training Programme), the second case study. In practice, the main expression of social transformation in the DTP project came with the redesigning of a significant number of the geographic ministry delivery units of the Auckland Diocese into LSMs (Local Shared Ministry Units).

### **2.1. A change of heart**

Each project was predicated on similar philosophical perspectives and developed its pedagogical approaches, educational practices, and expectations for the practical engagement of students in social issues over an eight or nine year period. As researcher, I was astounded that in each project the research showed that following this eight or nine year period, institutional support was withdrawn and the respective programme was closed or fundamentally changed (Chapter 4, section 9, pp 126-129; Chapter 5, section 9, pp. 151-153; Chapter 6, Section 14, p190). This withdrawal of institutional support was exacerbated by the fact that students for the particular programme were drawn, in the main, from the same small pool of persons seeking theological education. Moves were taken in each case to justify the withdrawal of structural support by the primary institutional stakeholder by citing funding constraints, student preference and changed priorities. While these 'reasons' were not necessarily specifically articulated or documented, except in relation to the closure of the MTU (Titus, 2008a), in each case conversations between the institutional representative in direct line of authority and the programme director left no ambiguity.

## **2.2. Educational priorities are refocused**

In Aotearoa-New Zealand during the early 2000s the role of the government in influencing the focus of universities and educational outcomes was demonstrated in the emergence of the concept of 'the knowledge economy'. This 'knowledge economy' focus redirected the purposes of education, including in the universities, to support business and economic growth (Kelsey, 2007, pp. 148-149). The Prime Minister the Rt. Hon Helen Clark, and the Vice Chancellor of Auckland University, Dr. John Hood, gave leadership to this direction and purpose. In this approach, education is a tool of the dominant culture, and subversive activity within that purpose is not to be supported. In the context of Aotearoa-New Zealand it was the pressure of the global market that exacerbated the bias of educational spending toward business and global relationships. Furedi sets out what he discusses as the 'dumbing down' of general education. In the 1930s, he suggests, it was the commercial imperative that was a key causal factor in shifting the emphasis of education, but he notes that today

It is not market forces that are primarily responsible for the process of dumbing down. Rather, it is a direct consequence of public policy that promotes the politics of inclusion at any cost (Furedi, 2004, p. 15).

I am of the opinion that it is public policy and, with respect to the churches, the institutional policy developed by the governing boards that direct what is the acceptable content and practice of education and its purposes. These church boards release funds to support the approved style and purpose.

Furedi develops his argument in relation to the interests of those with policy-making power and the purposes they establish for the general educational enterprise, rather than the education process per se and the capacity of 'learner' individuals given appropriate access to relevant education to develop intellectual rigour. He is concerned to identify that the devaluing of the

thinking person and the place of knowledge in public debate has disengaged people from the rigorous contest of ideas.

Moreover, the subordination of knowledge to pragmatic objectives has helped foster an intellectual mood that is inhospitable to experimentation and the development of powerful ideas (Furedi, 2004, p. 72).

Experience with the institutions of church involved in the cases of this research project suggest that church sponsored theological education follows the same pattern and cannot sustain an alternative for any significant period.

It could be argued from the same position that Furedi proposes that the projects of this study with their concern for the inclusion of a breadth of learners with a range of prior educational opportunities and success, is 'dumbing down' intellectual rigour in the church. It is my contention, however, that well-crafted theological programmes designed for the education of practical theologians provide just the opposite, and do engage intellectual rigour in reflective processes with communities of practice in the interests of social transformation. The priorities and purpose of education are transparent in such programmes, as are the philosophical approaches and concern for active participation in shaping the conditions to live well.

### **3. Structural Issues**

#### **3.1. Partnership**

By 2008 the fragile nature of the partnership of the churches' theological colleges with the university School of Theology was becoming more evident. The continued development of parallel programmes by Carey Baptist College, the Catholic Church's Good Shepherd Theological College, TMTC (Trinity Methodist Theological College) and the Anglican Studies programme at SJC (St John's Collage) were indicative of a desire to have more direct control and influence. These programmes developed as ways of meeting denominational requirements and included formation and church polity and practice not at

this time able to be included in the university School of Theology curriculum or other partnerships such as that between TMTC and SJC.

The complex partnerships involved in both the Glendowie project and the MTU made negotiating change and meeting diverse expectations difficult. The avenue for communication and authorisation of new initiatives within these projects was complex. If greater clarity had been established at the outset it would have made accountability more effective. Simplifying partnership structures and lines of accountability seems critical in maintaining the capacity for cordial and supportive relationships. Within the operation of the MTU it would have also enabled more effective response to stakeholder feedback.

### **3.2. Pacific leadership in the church**

From time to time, and with increasing frequency at the end of the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century, leaders from the Pacific churches are evident in providing leadership in engaging positively with cultural changes that are emerging as further generations of Pacific peoples are born and educated in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

However, Tongan Methodist graduate students, motivated to exercise transformative leadership in their culturally based faith communities, reported in private conversation following graduation the need to 'keep their head down' until after ordination. They expressed anxiety that the elders who have significant influence would block or delay their ordination. In 2009 two Tongan probationary ministers, who might reasonably have assumed to be ordained that year, were 'held over' for a further year. One of those probationary ministers, a graduate of the MTU, was clear that he must not 'rock the boat' of Vahefonua Tonga leadership if he wished to proceed to ordination (Private conversation March, 2010).

The current social context as I have outlined it is one in which transformative leaders with vision of what could be, and commitment to working with others to achieve it, have important work to do, particularly amongst migrant Christian communities. However, the prevailing approach to theological education, and the church's concerns and practices are directed at church survival in a time of declining numbers (Chapter 1). This readily works to undermine a vision of transformative leadership. A deaf ear is turned to critique and challenge in favour a ministry leadership that will manage the status quo.

### **3.3. Power and authority**

In each of the programmes, access by students to decision makers was indirect. The exception to this was student access to the vestry, the management group of St Heliers Bay parish in the Glendowie Project. For both the DTP and the MTU, students were conscious of the power the ministry boards had in relation to assessment for ordination. They expressed concern not to draw undue attention to themselves by direct challenge to the board over issues. This was a more direct concern for MTU students who seemed to have developed a sense of 'ownership' of their programme and wanted to participate in its development. The Pacific students in particular saw the MTU as more appropriate and relevant to the education of other Pacific students and they wanted to encourage decision makers, including the Tongan and Samoan elders, to direct students into its programme.

#### **3.3.1. Glendowie**

Accountability, and who or where the power to demand reports and exercise influence and veto lay, emerged early in this programme as an issue. A note, written in the hand of one of the students engaged in the Glendowie Project, on the front of a report to the Parish Vestry and Board of Governors of SJC in 1983 asks "who reports to whom about whom especially with regard to the

negative stuff?" What was being highlighted in the body of the report was the growing tension between the institutional stakeholders who wanted instructional control and authority, and those who were growing in strength in using a consensus model of decision making (Glendowie Project Participants, 1983). The section of the 1983 report on the Holiday Programme speaks of the possibility of this tension being resolved by greater trust by the institutional representatives in the younger members of the neighbourhood. And later, in the section on House Life, the same report notes the commitment

To sharing more diligently our learnings and ways of participating with local churches, parent bodies and associated government departments (Glendowie Project Participants, 1983).

What was being indicated by these comments is the growing awareness that activities and processes that are different from those experienced previously are vulnerable to the charge of lack of transparency and increased risk of closure. Where local neighbourhood participants are included in planning and implementation there are of necessity open and often unpredictable outcomes. This can be threatening to those who have previously held control. Students sought to protect the people of the neighbourhood from the demands and censoring of the institutions while satisfying the 'desire to know' they expressed with enough information. The structures of church and government that sought to support the project found this difficult.

#### **3.3.1.1. Accountability**

The students in the Glendowie Project experienced a dilemma regarding to whom they were accountable: was it to the community with whom they sought to engage through participation in the issues that impinged on their lives, such as the operation of the playgroup, or was it to the institutions of church and state such as departments like Housing New Zealand and Social Welfare that exercised control over the individual people and funded the presence of the students. These institutions were being faced with increasing

challenge from people in the neighbourhood who were growing in assertiveness and self determination. The students and those with whom they worked wondered how honest could they afford to be with these institutions about the growing pains and tensions they were experiencing as they learned how to work together and the plans for direct action aimed at change that they were working on.

The demand of the stakeholder institutions for primary accountability became contrary to the developing understanding of effective accountability amongst the students (below, Section 3.3.1.3, pp. 251-252). On reflection a parish vestry member offered the comment that “the accountability expectations of the parish were too time-consuming” (Glendowie-4, 2008). What was emerging for them and their supporters was an accountability biased toward the neighbourhood community amongst whom they were living, and working to develop the trust that would facilitate transformative engagement. Students were aware that primary accountability to the stakeholder power structures would not facilitate the changes that they were engaged in with the local residents.

The question of accountability was, according to personal conversation and interviews, never resolved in relation to the expectations of the local St Heliers Parish vestry. From student experience it is clear that guideline questions for responsible accountability – to whom and for what – needed to be clearly established at the outset of such an open ended ‘risky’ venture. If adequately discussed and clearly established at the outset, they would have helped alleviate stress and tension amongst the many stakeholders who sought accountability and influence.

### **3.3.1.2. Conflict of interest**

Students learned to play out personal conflicts of interest with care. Supervision provided a forum to assist in processes of reflection where such issues were identified, and to reflect also on the implications of decisions taken. However, to be congruent with the pedagogy the students were left to make their own final decisions and to reflect on the outcome of their actions. Comments indicated how difficult this approach was for students initially, but how significant it became to personal confidence and group cohesion. Freire comments in his book *Pedagogy of Hope*, time and time again, on the importance in progressive education of “respect[in]g the educands, and therefore never manipulate[ing] them” (Freire, 1992, p. 76), nor underestimating the value of living experience (p. 77). The decision of the household to go to Waitangi with a group from the community was offered as an illustration of this (Chapter 4, Section 8.2, pp. 122-124). The arrest of one student from the household brought a reaction from the SJC Board and required the intervention by the Warden of SJC to settle the matter (Glendowie-1, 2007).

### **3.3.1.3. Power sharing**

A person with sympathetic understanding at the governance level of each project structure would have enabled growth in understanding and alleviated suspicion amongst governance board members. According to Glendowie student notes, Dr Judith McMorland was able to provide this support in relation to the St Heliers’ vestry. Dr McMorland was able to clarify parish expectations and support the students with their community development understanding (Supervision Notes, 1984). Pelly was a conduit in relation to SJC Board of Governors (Glendowie-1, 2007). Experience in this project indicates that time needs to be given by teaching or supervisory staff to assisting the various stakeholder groups to develop greater understanding of what was emerging in the programme. This task should not be left solely to

students, even as an aspect of their learning or in the desire to facilitate power-sharing.

What is highlighted is the 'no win' situation that projects seeking social change easily fall into. If the result of their participation is a docile constituency, not enough is deemed to have happened to move forward to a time when paid community leaders would no longer be needed, so continued funding is considered a never-ending drain. From the perspective of the community leaders, not enough has happened in this situation to satisfy the social change aspirations of making a difference in the community, so they lose heart. On the other hand, too much growth in levels of personal and communal assertiveness with expectations of active and direct participation is uncomfortable and disruptive to the power balance for those who seek to control and administer. Students clearly understood this dilemma and sought to clarify the paths and responsibilities of accountability without undermining the power-sharing dynamic they sought to live out in the neighbourhood. Notes from a supervision session indicate the understanding that "the community must hold the power" (Supervision notes, 1984).

The Board of Governors of SJC made a decision to pull away from the Glendowie Project's programme and refocus on the Meadowbank site (Chapter 4, Section. 9, pp. 126-129). They withdrew access to the student stream and later failed to approve continued funding. It is significant to note that both the college staff persons left over the next couple of years: one resigned under pressure and the other did not have his contract renewed (Glendowie-1, 2007). Students felt they were left with no option but to return to the standard traditional programme offered at SJC or to withdraw from training. The parish continued to employ ministry staff in the area, and AMSS (Anglican Methodist Social Services), or the 'Community and Social Service Division of the Methodist Central Mission' (CSSD) as it was now, was left

with a choice regarding its continuing participation and ability to fund a staff person: it withdrew in 1984 (Glendowie Neighbourhood Project, 1984). SJC students attempted for some time to staff the house with sole support from the parish. Accelerating withdrawal of structural support from the range of stakeholders, however, made this increasingly difficult. In addition, the project was no longer functioning as a supervised and mentored learning opportunity supporting a different model of ministry leadership as had been the initial plan (Glendowie-4, 2008). The household closed finally in 1992.

### **3.3.2. The Diocesan Training Programme**

The same dilemma in relation to power and accountability appeared in the other two cases in similar ways. In the DTP it was the inclusion of lay women and their increased confidence and skill development which later led to a growth in local shared ministry units (LSMs) and parish leadership by licensed lay women. It was my experience from diocesan meetings at the time that this challenged the power-holders, who saw theological education and ministry formation as the preserve of those seeking ordination. In the LSM units, ministry was in large part carried out by people who were not ordained and frequently were women. This was a significant potential change to the traditional patterns of ministry leadership. Including women not seeking ordination in the formal funded programmes of the DTP and SJC was a matter of justice. It was an issue of equity that lay women, as well as those seeking ordination, should have access to the funding resources of the diocese for theological education and ministry training. It was notable that ordained males from time to time expressed disquiet that their ministry options were being limited and the role of ministry leadership was shrinking. I came under personal attack for seeming to 'exclude' evangelical men from selection and training, despite that decision being beyond my powers and authority. The licensing of trained and skilled women challenged the status quo. Up to this

time ordained ministry leaders, trained in the residential college of SJC, had been the ones to hold paid and licensed diocesan leadership appointments.

Similarly, the capacity of the programme to educate and form ministers for ordination without fulltime attendance at the previously 'required' residential college saw an increase in tension develop between those who had previously trained in the college and those who had trained in the diocesan programme. At stake were questions of power and gender. Women not seeking ordination were being trained and licensed for ministry, and women and men were being trained for ordained ministry without the fulltime residency requirement that until this period had been understood as necessary for parish appointments.

The Diocesan Board of Ministry at the time was cognisant of these tensions and nevertheless continued to select people, for ordained and lay ministry, who would be equipped through the DTP. On completion of the DTP course the board then assessed, and recommended people for ordination to the bishop. They recognised that ultimately it was the bishop's prerogative to accept or reject the advice and recommendations of the Board.

At the time of my resignation in 1998, the strength of the more conservative evangelical wing of the Auckland Diocese was seeking greater influence. In encouraging my resignation, the bishop reported there was a reconsideration of matters regarding the focus of the Church's ministry and ministry leadership education.

### **3.3.3. The Ministry Training Unit**

In the MTU issues of power and authority came to the fore primarily in two ways. Amongst the Pacific community, Pacific students and graduates began to ask critical questions regarding cultural practices, especially around money, sexuality, and the place and needs of young people - to say nothing of the use

of contemporary approaches to the Bible and theology. This was a direct challenge to the authority of the elders, and I recall students who had attended meetings of Vahefonua Tonga commenting on this in subsequent class sessions. Similarly, a Samoan student on field placement in a Samoan parish reported the difficulty of contextual preaching (Personal Comment-3 2006).

The other issues of power came to the fore in relation to pedagogical approach. The MTU programme was student-led and used adult education best practice, with an emphasis on creating a multicultural learning environment and not supplying 'the truth' to be learned. While this approach responded effectively to the range of learning styles of the multicultural group, it was a challenge to the authority of Pacific elders and ministry leaders (Ministry Training Unit-7, 2006). It was also a topic of debate in meetings of teaching staff in relation to institutionally-framed courses that were tied to classrooms and to externally generated assessment tools based on accrued information (Ministry Training Unit-3, 2008; Ministry Training Unit-6, 2008).

Learning from experience in the Glendowie project, efforts were made to raise awareness and understanding of the MTU programme. These included the provision of study leave reports by the director, invitations to meet at the site of the Unit, and offers to present papers or address questions of the Methodist Board of Ministry, responsible for TMTC. None were taken up. There was an awareness that the terminology and approach of practical theology would be unfamiliar to many people, thus the effort was made to provide adequate explanation. In retrospect, a further learning would be that many people within institutions are not prepared to seek further explanation of information that is unfamiliar or relates to activities of which they are suspicious. It is important to note that all the requests and offers, in this case, were made through the principal as required by the college management structure and

lines of accountability. “A direct presentation could have been useful but this was blocked because structurally staff do not have direct access to the Board” (Ministry Training Unit-5, 2008).

From 2003 the TMTC principal was also teaching practical theology for the university School of Theology. I experienced this as a conflict of interest in relation to supporting the TMTC practical theology programme, especially when I was requested to provide course materials. This conflict of interest was experienced by me in an unwillingness to call college staff meetings, to meet with me as director, to participate in development planning of the programme, and the exclusion of me as director from the budget-setting for the MTU, amongst much other marginalising behaviour. In 2007 no new students entered the MTU programme.

#### **3.4. Summarising lessons on power and authority**

In each project, it would have been helpful if the governing bodies had actively supported the projects they had been part of establishing by continuing to reassert the hopes and expectations that led to their original decisions. The dream of an alternative programme for the equipping of ministry leaders needed to be passed on. In my experience it would have been helpful if the bishop, president, principal, and others with policy and management responsibilities had engaged more actively in the planning, decisions, and oversight of the programmes. This would have helped them to develop positive understandings of the philosophy of each programme and an appreciation of the significance of its educational practice.

In both the Glendowie Project and the MTU it was declared that funding was the primary reason for closing or fundamentally changing the project. The Glendowie Project was extensively funded externally; however no discussion was ever entered into about the replication of the project in a different location

or the desirability of having this style of ministry leadership formation and theological education available to students. The integrity of the philosophical perspective, pedagogy and educational approach, all critical at the outset, were never formally reviewed jointly by stakeholders.

The DipPTh (Diploma of Practical Theology) within the MTU, if developed into a three year degree programme, could have enabled TMTC to seek further financial support from the TEC (Tertiary Education Commission) for the third year of study. TEC was still providing funding support to students engaged fulltime in an accredited and approved course of study. This would then have included the third year of study that students were normally required to complete by TMTC. At the same time, based on the enquiries received in the MTU office, it is possible to speculate that a three year degree course would attract students in the open market. These students were seeking a course of study in practical theology such as offered by the MTU. Costs to TMTC for the third year could have been reduced.

In reflecting on the factors that fatally challenged these projects, several requirements for maintaining such projects became clear:

- Persons with sympathy and understanding of the need to risk open contextual theologising, with the express goal of equipping transformative leaders for church and community, are essential.
- Effort is required to ensure that the second generation governors and managers have adequate understanding that could enable them to promote the projects confidently when challenged by the wider constituencies of church.
- People are needed in strategic structural locations with commitment and understanding of the place of institutional risk when developing new programmes.

- There is a need for constructive critical evaluation that supports development.
- People with open understanding, who are located in places of structural power, are critical to the survival of innovative programmes. Such people need imagination to 'see' something other than the status quo of that which they were appointed to govern or administer.

#### **4. Credentialing and Qualifications**

Seeking recognition for the work of students, by offering a credential, either a diploma or a degree, seems to have had the effect of shifting the project from 'experiment' to viable alternative. In each instance initiating a conversation about ways to achieve a credential received a rebuff by the host institution. With small numbers overall entering theological education via church selection processes, a recognised alternative credential to the BTheol, for example, would offer a choice to students. This was particularly so in the TMTC situation as the Board of Ministry had earlier expressed a priority for equipping ministry leaders, and an alternative credential (Chapter 6, Sections 2 and 3, pp. 159-166) could encourage students to choose the contextual student-focussed programme. Certainly there were enquiries from Tongan, Samoan and independent Korean students wishing to engage with the MTU programme.

##### **4.1. The Ministry Training Unit**

By 2007 the MTU was on the verge of seeking degree status, and this potential appears to become a significant factor in relation to the commitment of TMTC.

In my experience within the staff meetings of TMTC, whatever the teaching staff perceived as present in the other programme was sought to be included in some way in 'their' programme. The reshaping of the three hour Wednesday ministry leadership class held at TMTC Meadowbank to

supplement the university BTheol classes which comprised the basic course for this stream of students, is one example. The intention was to ensure students had proper training in the skills and arts of ministry leadership otherwise absent from their university programme. And, conversely, the curriculum of the DipPTh was reviewed and revised to add more structured 'teaching time', where content was stressed. The DipPTh was in danger of succumbing to a 'transfer of information'.

Consequently, both the MTU and the established Meadowbank programme were in danger of losing sight of the core style and objective of the respective programme. Continual inclusion of subject matter, expansion of goals and learning outcomes, and time expected to be spent by students in active engagement on the one hand and class work on the other served to increase the risk of distortion of primary aspirations and goals. Student comments noted this and its implications on time pressure and work-load (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007).

Authority within Pacific church communities is often attached to an academic credential. This has been particularly so in the Methodist Church. Until very recently, it has been the attitude amongst some older Tongan people that the properly trained Methodist Minister is one trained in Sia'atoutai on the island of Tongatapu in the Kingdom of Tonga. Such ministry leaders are deemed by congregational elders to have the proper training that entitles them to positions of status and authority with respect to cultural knowledge and spiritual influence and to be entitled to all the rights and privileges that are attendant on that status. Ministry leaders with an academic credential more readily become entitled to this status.

The move toward degree status for the MTU diploma programme in 2007 (Chapter 6, Section 11, pp. 184-185) would have met this desire for a higher

credential, though the desire was in conflict with the purpose and pedagogy of the MTU. Although consultation with the different Pacific communities was requested and anticipated in order to aid understanding and feedback, access to the leaders of those communities was through the TMTC principal and did not occur at this critical time.

#### **4.2. Glendowie**

In the Glendowie Project, conversations began in the second year of the project regarding the ability for students to earn credits towards their LTh (Licentiate in Theology), while working and learning in Glendowie. Efforts of the SJC teaching staff engaged with the project, and student hopes as expressed initially at a reflection day in November 1983 (Reflection Day, 1983), were unsuccessful in advancing this prospect (Glendowie-1, 2007). The action/reflection process for learning, beginning with experience and social context, appeared to be inadequate for accumulating the information that, at that time, was considered to be essential requirement for students seeking ordination to ministry leadership in the Anglican Church. Consequently, it was more and more difficult for students to spend time with the Glendowie Project and its experiential approach, as they were required by the college to attend to the requirements of the LTh course as well as to the learning requirements of the Glendowie project. This pressure was commented on as “a double workload” by students from the second and subsequent households that were formed (Glendowie-4, 2008).

#### **4.3. The Diocesan Training Programme**

Similarly, when in 1997 the issue of credentialing became a natural next step in the development of the DTP programme, a conversation was opened with the then ‘newly begun’ Not for Profit course being offered by UNITEC (Chapter 5, Section 9, pp. 151-153). The newly appointed bishop of the diocese did not express interest or support in this development at the time. It seemed

a step too far to seek to establish a programme able to offer credentials independently of SJC but in partnership with another institution using the new NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) system. At this time to be awarded a credential in theology required students to fulfil theological education requirements through the SJC LTh course or later, the BTheol of Auckland University.

#### **4.4. In summary**

Learning from experiences in both the previous projects (the Glendowie Project and, in particular, the DTP), from the outset the MTU DipPTh had been independently registered with NZQA. Yet, again, when questions were raised about the shift of the diploma to a degree course, diversionary actions were initiated by the structural stakeholders:

- reports were not tabled,
- decisions not taken,
- responses not communicated.

Overall there seemed to be a general lack of understanding or ability to see the relevance of the practical theology courses and their contribution to theological education by some members of the board.

The diploma was, notwithstanding the disquiet, informally offered at a degree level (as identified by NZQA auditors in conversation with the director), that is, at NZQA levels 5-7. It was designed to run over a three year cycle. Any two years of this cycle, completed to a satisfactory standard, earned a diploma. Students seeking ordination for ministry leadership were normally required to complete a full three years of theological education and ministry formation before initial appointment. At this point no credit was available for this third year as it was not part of an approved and credentialed course of study. Consequently, student subsidies and access to student allowances and loans

were unavailable to the students. Full costs had to be borne by TMTC, which fully funded students as part of their training package once selected for training.

As with the DTP and the election of a new diocesan bishop, there was a change of principal for TMTC during the life of the MTU practical theology programme. A significant change such as this at the core of the primary stakeholder institution compounded the difficulties of continuing to tell the story and uphold the vision for the programme's development.

## **5. Culture, Identity and Difference**

The development of transformative leaders who can engage communities of interest in public debate around ideas and cultural norms is critical in the present time as Aotearoa-New Zealand struggles to engage migrant communities positively in social life and the development of a new social consensus around national identity - colloquially termed 'being Kiwi'. This has been noted in Chapter 1. It is basic to my thesis that hospitality to migrant groups must go further than either looking after them as if 'well cared for guests' in the home or supporting the cultural isolation that church or other religious organisations can foster. Yet at the same time as we move toward multi-cultural understanding and cultural awareness this move toward engagement and critical reflection on cultural norms brings resistance.

Students of the MTU identified the struggle they had to engage Pacific groups in engagement with the issues of life in Aotearoa-New Zealand and enabling a cultural evolution that engages as well as preserves fundamental cultural values. A Pacific leader from amongst the Methodist church also spoke of the preservation dynamic that exists and which makes it difficult to bring about change influenced by life here (Personal Comment-1, 2007).

It is my contention that leaders from amongst these groups, equipped as practical theologians, can work effectively toward engagement by taking seriously the spiritual dynamic present in the communities of which they are a part. The respect and trust that develops between these leaders and the migrant community, built on respect for spiritual frameworks, is significant to our ability to enable migrant communities to move from understanding themselves as guests with no responsibilities beyond preserving cultural identity, to being *at home* with implications for active social engagement and participation in current issues. Being *at home* is a concept that asks more than living alongside each other with a 'live and let live' attitude. It includes notions of becoming mutually caring neighbours, and working cross-culturally toward participation in the society of Aotearoa-New Zealand without losing cultural identity.

### **5.1. Difference**

In Aotearoa-New Zealand work is being undertaken towards a social consensus that reflects the values emerging from the interface of the different cultural perspectives and practices that now make up our society. Students of the MTU spoke of never having engaged more than superficially with a person of a different culture and being afraid of relating with people of other cultures (Ministry Training Unit-9, 2007; Hotere, 2008).

The need to preserve cultural norms and values, including traditional church norms and values, presented a challenge to the maintenance of the programmes with their transparency about the intention to critically examine received tradition and knowledge in the light of an agenda that prioritised justice and social transformation. Cultural difference is experienced as a valuable dynamic but also as an inhibitor to change and social interaction.

Amin Maalouf addresses this present-day tension in his work *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (Maalouf, 2001). Amartya Sen also takes up the same theme, a number of years after Maalouf, in his *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (Sen, 2006) Both argue that it is the need to belong, and the establishment of sharply delineated boundaries to mark that to which we choose to belong, that produces the need to defend what we have chosen to belong to. This fear of the other and the impulse to defend 'our way' or what we believe is right raises tension that can spill into a form of violence. They both argue helpfully that we belong to multiple groups and share identity with a number of different peoples who may in turn belong to a variety of groups and religious systems different from ours. Encouraging recognition of this – the complex interconnectedness of the human community – and learning and experiencing what others value, will assist in the development of respect for the other. Multicultural learning groups provide opportunities for just this sharing.

## **5.2. The significance of 'respect'**

Emerging from the work of the Pacific students in the MTU, the importance of respecting the existing spirituality and cultural protocols of the receiving cultural group was recognised as critical if sufficient trust was to be gained to enable questions to be asked. Too often they reported fear at sensing they were expected to 'give up' what they believed and held dear. Pacific ministry leaders also spoke of the disempowerment experienced when church protocols and patterns were changed without adequate consultation or understanding. They noted the resistance that could result to new ways and changed expectations (Finau, 2007).

It is a gentle and slow process they note, if a conversion is to be achieved, if a move is to be made from embedded beliefs and values brought from 'home in

the islands' so the eyes can be turned to this land as home (Personal Comment-1, 2007).

### **5.3. A contribution by the church**

The churches have an important contribution to make here to the challenge of cultural diversity and social engagement as the values and ethical relationships their adherents are encouraged to live out are re-worked. I argue that a thoughtful leadership from amongst the ministers of the churches, who are able to provide spiritual reassurance, can assist this process significantly. This is particularly so in relation to Methodist communities of Pacific peoples and people from Korea, as they may be either committed to a religious framework that has not been faced with the influences of secular society, or are seeking a Christian country in which to practice their faith traditions.

In either case, Aotearoa-New Zealand presents some difficulties. The formation and equipping of ministers able to assist, albeit differently and in very different contexts, a process of transformation and community confidence was the goal of each of the three cases studied. It is important to note that ordained ministry leaders across the religious traditions also have the power of spiritual suasion sufficient to discourage social engagement with other cultures and discourage openness to differing ideas and aspirations. We can observe actions of a spiritual leader facilitating social isolation and defensiveness in the reports regarding Destiny Church on TV3, Campbell Live,

You isolate them and you stop information from the outside, you control relationships, you indoctrinate them and over time if you have a group that praises one man and he starts drifting into strange practices the whole group will go with him (3 News, 2009).

## **6. Pedagogical Tensions**

Each of the projects was conceived in a general climate of change, when external pressures were bearing down on the educational enterprises of the church. I have commented on this in the introduction to the context in relation to each case study. In summary, this changing educational environment expressed itself in concern for relevance by students and the challenge for education to be 'student led' from amongst adult educational theorists. The need to assess achievements and competencies differently from the predominant exam and essay model was emerging amongst those with awareness of differing learning styles, and amongst those with a concern to meet student learning needs across different cultural expectations.

There were some in each instance who showed an emerging willingness to 'see what could happen' by using different pedagogical approaches and educational practices. This changing environment was destabilising to the established norms of theological education, where teacher-directed learning and institutionally-framed goals and outcomes had traditionally shaped the programmes. There was cautious interest and curiosity regarding the proposed projects and their purposes on the part of their respective governing boards, as noted in the respective case studies. Encouragement for the Glendowie Project came from the warden and the lecturer in theology at SJC, who were both teaching staff and members of the Board of Governors at the time. In relation to the MTU, the principal of TMTC had been a positive influence in the parish/college negotiations prior to the establishment of the MTU, in response to the recommendations of the Commission on Theological/Ministerial Education (Trinity College Council, 1998) and the Central Parish offer of partnership in a new educational project.

The general social climate during the years covered by this study was conducive to increasing people's access to adult education. This approach

promoted an appreciation of life-long learning with an emphasis on how to learn, and on critical thinking and processes of analysis. There was a concern amongst a school of educational thinkers, as indicated in Chapter 2, for relevant practical 'transferable' education centred on participation and implications rather than the transfer of information. In the early 1990s the emergence of the NZQA and later (2003) TEC produced an increased opportunity for 'experimentation and diversification' in educational programmes. These diverse programmes and qualifications were able to lead to recognised credits, and with this came an ability to respond to the demands of the market. Schools of theological education across various denominations were able to make use of this opportunity to register a qualification with NZQA. And later they were able to apply for funding for approved courses through the TEC. TMTC made use of this opportunity when it sought NZQA recognition for its DipPTh in 2001 and later for funding support through TEC. But there continued to be suspicion from traditionalists at Methodist Conference and questions continued to be raised about the need for two programmes.

### **6.1. The Ministry Training Unit and pedagogical suspicion**

The MTU programme provides material for focussed consideration of how pedagogical suspicion affected the programmes and their ultimate closure. As the MTU is in many ways the culmination of my experience in providing what Freire terms as a 'progressive education', and the place in which it was possible to intentionally design the programme and the physical space to meet the requirements of a particular pedagogical approach, its constituent student body and educational practices, I have focussed on the MTU and its DipPTh programme.

As noted (Chapter 6), the MTU programme took shape during the year 2000. It was intentional in its design to support practical theology, which was

understood to require the interface between contextual experience and theory across both social and theological genres. The DipPTh was developed and registered by 2001. In order to obtain a measure of freedom to design the course, the programme was established independent of the constraints of a university or other credentialing institution. It sought to work directly with the requirements of NZQA and TEC. From the beginning it was designed to meet the philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches and teaching practices that were understood to be consistent with an identified approach to practical theology and educational practice.

The design of the programme and the facilities were able to take into account the multicultural nature of the student group, including knowledge of the range of learning styles that would need to be accommodated, the adult minds and bodies of the student group, and an intentional focus on ministry leadership. The course was designed to both teach about practical theology and engage students in developing their own practical theology: it was both content and process. From its inception, the MTU programme and DipPTh were holistically designed in the interests of the subject matter and the student group. This was experienced positively by students and teaching staff (Chapter 7). Some of these students had previous experience of the taught courses in theology at a university and some of the teaching staff had university teaching backgrounds.

#### **6.1.1. Tensions in relation to 'higher education'**

The programme came under suspicion from university-based teachers who were not engaged in the MTU. Students and MTU staff received diffuse messages in relation to the 'lack of theory' and rigour in the MTU course. The course was considered to be light on biblical studies and to be simply an 'applied' course. Those who went to criticise, suggested it was able to offer nothing more, and probably less, than the university B.Theol was able to deliver.

Students reported feeling attacked by negativity from within TMTC and raised the issue in learning group. They reported a “culture clash between the MTU and the rest of the Methodist church which was suspicious of a ‘new way’” (Ministry Training Unit-8, 2007). Students spoke positively of their experiences of the MTU and its different style and emphases, as has been identified in Chapter 6. They reported defensiveness in the face of the destabilising messages they were receiving. It appeared from student’s verbal comments that this destabilising of their confidence was most directly experienced at the joint session with BTheol students they were required to attend on Wednesday on the Meadowbank site. The MTU group reported it took some years for them to strengthen their capacity to recognise the criticism and then to respond confidently.

When the University of Auckland School of Theology changed the name of its course in pastoral theology to practical theology in 2006, this added weight was given to the questions asked at Conference by the wider Methodist Church as to why two apparently identical courses were required. As a Conference they had limited access to information of the fundamental differences in content and style between these two courses. A former principal of TMTC (1999-2003) identified there was limited understanding of the capacity for the churches any longer to influence significantly the content or the appointment of teaching staff in the university’s course (Ministry Training Unit-4, 2008). Many Conference members still appeared to be under the impression that the BTheol was a church programme under church direction in the same way that the LTh had been previously.

### **6.1.2. Moves to close the programme**

By 2006 it was becoming evident that university teaching responsibilities were adding pressure and time constraints in relation to staff meetings for the principal. There appeared to be a lack of support for the pedagogy and

ministry leadership goals of the MTU programme in practical theology. "Education is about change and institutions such as the church resist change" (Ministry Training Unit-6, 2008). The chairperson of the Board of Ministry identified that, without adequate numbers of board members with understanding and support for what the MTU represented, they were unable to defend, or seek to explain, the different way of approaching theological education and ministry formation embodied in its courses (Ministry Training Unit-5, 2008). Initiatives were begun at this time by the college management, in the person of the principal, to limit students and funding for the MTU. Approval was not forthcoming for expenditure to develop the annual advertising brochure for the coming year nor, despite the work that had been undertaken, was there encouragement to finalise the development of the degree. These moves seemed a clear indication that the status of the programme was changing. No new students were directed into the MTU programme for 2001 by the principal, who had sole discretion over the courses students registered in. In April 2007 the board agreed in principle to move the programme "onto the Trinity Meadowbank site by December 2007" (Board of Ministry, 2007b). What was experienced as withdrawal of support began, despite a very positive audit report from the NZQA auditors in 2007 (NZQA, 2007), which resulted in being placed on the much sought after three year audit cycle instead of the annual cycle that had been in place up till then. This NZQA action was understood as a mark of confidence in both the MTU and the DipPTh.

One of the suspicions addressed to the MTU surrounded the integrative nature of the course. Deliberate work had been done to break out of the 'silos' into which courses in theology had been traditionally packaged and to work in intentionally interdisciplinary ways. Similarly, the emphasis on group learning and the sharing of insights and information by students in a communal learning environment was seen as not objective enough to assess

individual competence and knowledge. It had been a deliberate intention to encourage cooperative learning in ways sympathetic to the strengths of the multicultural group, rather than individualising learning and learning assessment in ways that drive competitiveness. Setting the theological work within the contexts of the lives of students and enabling them to explore the sociological implications of theology as well as the theological implications of social issues, rather than starting from the basis of written texts and issues established by an exam structure, likewise appeared to threaten those from the traditional schools of theology.

Along with cooperative learning and the exchange of role between teacher and learner and between members of the group, families were encouraged to feel part of the programme. As director I came under direct challenge from time to time for the inclusion of families in celebrations and in the development of student goals and study timetables. Scepticism was expressed by people on the outside of the MTU at the use of dance and music as integral to the programme and to learning. Similarly, questions were raised at the use made of group role plays and video work as assessment tools. All this was considered to be 'not core business': not academically sound and the necessary equipment was a financial extravagance, as I recall.

## **6.2. Summary of pedagogical challenges**

In case studies one and three of this study, tension developed around different teaching methods and the integrated curriculum of those programmes.

There was discomfort with the expectation that students, from the very outset of their engagement with the programme, would learn to 'see' things differently and ask "why"? Students were not required to engage in a traditional theological education course as a primary programme, which would then be followed by the DipPTh offered as a post-graduate

programme, as often happened overseas. From the outset, students were engaged in a rigorous critical reading of their context and a questioning of what they saw and an offering of an alternative perspective. This learning ran concurrently with a course on the traditions of theology and church that was integrated with the reflection and practice components. Nothing was exempt from review and analysis: not the world, nor themselves, nor their perspectives, nor the programme and its teachers.

In the DTP the challenge was expressed through an informal questioning of the cost of the two nights in residence each month, the availability of the training to people (in particular women) not seeking ordination, and the unwritten diocesan expectation that students would complete at least some LTh or BTheol papers simultaneously with the diocesan programme.

## **7. Philosophical Differences**

### **7.1. A fundamental difference**

A significant philosophical difference in relation to the purpose of theological education emerges in this study. Along with a difference in purpose, and especially relevant for this study on the education of practical theologians, is a difference in the process of education. In the following two sections I identify two significant ways theological education has been experienced, observed and understood by participants in the projects (G-1; MTU-4). The experience of these two different approaches to the purpose and process of theological education highlights the significance of the differences.

#### **7.1.1. Systematic theology and traditional theological education**

In many traditional approaches to theological education, theology is equated with what has become known as 'systematics' or 'systematic theology'. In this approach specific theological topics – such as 'God' or 'Christ' – are studied systematically in relation to the ideas handed down in the Christian tradition.

Alongside systematic theology, traditional theological education included a series of other specific areas to be studied (Groome, 1987; Wheeler, 1991). The various aspects of theological study (such as biblical studies, church history, systematic theology, and pastoral theology) are compartmentalised or 'siloed' according to the traditional content considered appropriate to be taught. The written text and historical traditions of interpreted experience form the basic data of this approach, and a deductive education process is used. Students are encouraged to learn about the work of significant selected people and ecclesial bodies and to consider their own accumulated knowledge in relation to these 'bench-marks' of theological 'wisdom'.

### **7.1.2. Practical theology**

Practical theology emerges as a discipline in its own right, or more accurately as a way of 'doing theology' rather than a discipline within the curriculum of a course in theological education (Pattison and Woodward, 2000; Browning, 1996). I would argue that to speak of practical theology as a 'discipline' is to revert to language appropriate for the traditional systematic approach rather than to signal something different. Practical theology as it has been defined in this study is 'the intentional reflection on experiences of life in context, drawing on the traditions of church as well as other social dynamics, to assist the framing of meaning, purpose and action'. This approach to 'doing theology' is inductive, focusing more on process than on abstract content; it is holistic and integrated rather than compartmentalised, in terms of either the body, mind, spirit dynamic, or the various aspects of traditional theological study. Practical theology thus involves personal change and commitment to ongoing reflection on self in relation to social wellbeing and to the resources of theology.

## **7.2. Ministry**

A strong strand in the life of the church sees theological education and ministry training directed toward the church itself and its membership. The primary purpose of theological education from this perspective being to equip ministry leadership with the skills necessary for 'building up the body' and maintaining denominational ethos. This task and focus is set out in the Anglican ordination service (The Church of the Province of New Zealand 1989, p. 901) with the use of 'body' as an image. The primary role of ministry leadership is carried out within the context of the Church and for the benefit of its members.

This approach can be distinguished from that which sees the purpose of church and the education of its ministers to be engagement in justice-making in the world, with a focus on supporting the weak and vulnerable in society and engaging in actions to change their circumstances (Randerson, 2010; Reader, 1994). From the perspective taken in this thesis, theological education appropriately looks outwards to the wider community with the goal of equipping a transformative leadership.

I have commented previously (Chapter 6, Section 1.2, pp.156-158) on the expressions of church within Pacific cultures that seek to maintain hierarchical power and the influence of the ordained ministry leader. From this perspective, ministry leadership is understood to have spiritual authority by virtue of ordination and therefore expects obedience and allegiance from the community. It was this approach to ministry that some students critiqued (MTU-13).

## **7.3. Church and society**

Each of the three cases of this study stand in the social justice and active social engagement stream, and were concerned to equip leaders for work in such

areas of social transformation. Over against this stream, there has been an approach to church life and theological education that focuses its concern on internal structures, relationships and theological ideas.

Traditionally, educational structures (such as theological colleges) were established to shape the memory, thinking and aspirations of students to support the cultural norms and inherited story of the denominational identity. This approach to education was clearly identified and critiqued by Postman and Weingartner (1971) and by Furedi (2004). Furedi's criticism suggests that the purposes of the educational manager have been to support the market economy, with 'the arts and culture being only significant if they increase employability, eradicate inequality and eliminate crime' (Furedi, 2004, p. 15). As I look at it, church theological education institutions have often followed similar priorities for grooming cohorts of leaders where the 'market' is the church and congregation.

Liberation and political theologians (Chapter 4, Section 1, pp. 86-89) were challenging theologians and church ideologues from the 1970s with their complicity in continuing oppression and exploitation. Students in the Glendowie project for example, took this challenge to heart and were consequently a constant thorn in the side of the institutions of the church, including the theological college, which they saw as continuing the patterns of white male power and control. They sought to develop different ways of engaging with their community. The impact of liberation theology also raised issues of the church's role in colonisation. Again, the students of Glendowie were working intentionally with the insights from liberation theology, and moving more rapidly than students in the core college course at that time in understanding their ministry leadership role as facilitators of liberation and social justice. They saw their accountability to those on the underside of the story told by those with power and worked with Maori and with the

developing momentum to honour the Treaty of Waitangi (Chapter. 4). In different ways this momentum continued in the DTP and the MTU, but by then the churches had commitments to honour the Treaty and enhance bi-cultural relationships, so the tensions in this area were not as great.

At the same time women's publications in Aotearoa-New Zealand (Chapter 4, Section 4.1, pp. 97-98) were articulating a growing self-confidence amongst women and drawing on feminist liberation theologians to challenge the church in relation to biblical interpretation and church power structures. This was a particular area of debate and exploration in both church and society during the life of the DTP and students' involvement in challenging gendered language and male authority caused some tensions with wider church structures.

By the time of the MTU, Pacific students had begun to challenge the perspective of traditional Pacific church leadership on the church's role in their communities. This challenge addressed aspects of social justice and the place of migrants in a new host society, together with the theological understandings that had undergirded traditional perspectives. The result was a backlash for the project and some students.

#### **7.4. Summary**

The lack of ongoing debate and agreement around the purpose and outcome of each project appears to have had negative consequences when further development of the project and a re-prioritising of funding were required. It appears in relation to each project that it was assumed there was common understanding and agreement as to the purpose of the theological education enterprise. Differences in perspective then emerged over time. Again, there was insufficient recognition of the difficulty people had in understanding a different educational approach.

The differences in perspective that emerged were threaded through each of the three projects of this study, and focussed on the purpose of education, its content and focus, and on the educational practice. On the one hand, the projects understood themselves to be engaging practical theology that would equip reflective and transformative leaders. And on the other, there was the understanding that theological education was primarily about providing people with the content and skill for ministry leadership.

It can be seen with hindsight that, despite the enthusiasms and hopefulness at the commencement of each venture by all parties involved, anything that 'subverted' the dominant power structuring of the institutional church, be that in terms of the role of ordained ministry leadership, the role of the church in the structures of society today, or the function of theology and biblical texts, was not going to survive. As was said during the research,

Risk shunts people out of the church and puts you on the edge of the church – others put you on the edge if you are engaged in anything different (Ministry Training Unit-3, 2008).

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore describes the importance of practical theology in the emerging debate about the place and contribution of this way of understanding ministry, theology and the educational task as it pertains to practical theologians in the following words:

Intrinsic to the practice of teaching in this field is a particular way of theological knowing....This way of knowing is a form of *phronesis*, that in this context might be called "pastoral wisdom" or "theological know-how". This claim suggests that practical theologians, who among theological educators stand the closest to the juncture between church and the academy, and thus must continually assert the relevance of their teaching in the theological academy, possess (or in order to be effective need to possess) pedagogical wisdom (Bass & Dykstra, 2008, p. 171).

The nature and composition of the institutional structures connected to the projects made this 'assertion of relevance' dependent on individuals whose personal power and influence would itself be challenged by the theology, pedagogical approaches and educational practices of the project they were expected to support. Also, the integrative nature of this approach to practical theology requires of teaching staff the ability to work in and across a range of sub-disciplines for which many theologians are not trained. The dependence on individuals (both in governance and teaching) was a major weakness in each project, and would need to be addressed in intentional planning for any challenging programme to be sustained in the life of an institution.

## **8. Conclusion**

The closure of each of the projects at a similar point in their development raised questions for the researcher about the factors in the educational models and their contexts that might have contributed to their closure. This chapter has reviewed the processes of closure, and has identified factors of educational climate, issues in institutional structures, tension over credentialing and qualifications, aspects of culture and identity, pedagogical tensions, and differences in philosophical perspectives as influencing the closures. These factors point towards issues that need to be taken into account in developing and maintaining practical theology programmes of this kind, and towards some areas for possible future research. They also help to shape relevant markers for practical theology, as these are identified in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Nine**

### **Identifying Markers and Weaving Threads**

This study set out to make a contribution to the future design and practice of theological education in the context of Aotearoa-New Zealand and to contribute to discussions in the international field of practical theology (Part One, p.1). The objective was to identify markers in theological education that characterise practical theology as a process for equipping practical theologians to be leaders in social transformation.

I argue that practical theology is a way of conceptualising the theory and practice of theological education in which philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches and educational practices come together in developing leaders who are active in social engagement, and in which the often-separated disciplines of theology are brought together.

Further, I argue that practical theology describes not only the field in which the study is set but also constitutes an approach to theological education that attends to both process and content in interactive engagement in relation to a specific social context (Chapter 1, Section 3, pp. 15-16). This approach to theological education uses an action and reflection process and is both integrated across disciplines and integrative of theory and practice. I therefore use the term 'integrative practical theology' to identify this approach developed out of the research undertaken in this study. My use of the term 'integrative' differs from Heitink's (1999) (Chapter 2, Section 2.5, pp. 28-30) focus on integrating theoretical aspects of practical theology in a theological sub-discipline of practical or applied theology. To me, integrative practical theology refers to the integration of philosophy, structure, pedagogy and

educational practice, together with other related disciplines, in a total theological education programme.

From both the researcher's reflected-on experience gained through thirty years' engagement in the theological education projects examined in this thesis, and from the specific research conducted in the case studies, this chapter identifies markers that characterise practical theology programmes able to equip transformative ministry leaders. Together, the markers constitute the nature of integrative practical theology and its educational processes and transformative outcomes. The markers inter-relate with each other in shaping such a theological education enterprise, and comprise a single whole. However, for the sake of clarity and consistency, in presenting the markers, the fundamental categories established at the outset in which to analyse the research data will be used. These are: philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approaches, educational practices, and transformative leadership. In this chapter, the markers relevant to each of these categories will be presented as italicised statements, with a short comment where necessary. The challenge of integration is to bring them together to provide an integrative practical theology programme.

## **1. Philosophical Perspectives**

Core philosophical perspectives shape the attitudes, values and priorities of any practical theology programme. This study identifies the following perspectives as markers that shape an integrative practical theology able to equip practical theologians as transformative leaders.

### **1.1. The nature of knowledge**

- *Knowledge is understood as constructed not received.*

This is a critical marker present in each of the projects. It opens the mind to discovering knowledge and engaging with the shaping of meaning in diverse

situations, rather than receiving truth and solutions in a predetermined form from the experts. In the projects, knowledge arose from reflective engagement in specific situations and on critical questions and issues of significance to the life and wellbeing of the community or group.

### **1.1.1. Knowledge and community**

- *Communities of participation provide a context for processes of 'coming to know'.* Communities of participation may be specific communities in which students participate with the community in processes of reflective practice, out of which new knowledge emerges, existing knowledge is reshaped, and ideas and perspectives are tested. Communities of participation may also be understood as the learning group within which similar processes of reflection and knowledge testing take place and out of which new knowledge is developed.

- *Communities of participation engage mutual exploration of relevant knowledge.* Identifying and naming knowledge relevant to the wellbeing of the particular community enables the articulation of alternative visions and planning for change relevant to that community. This perspective emerged out of the increasing participation of local residents and interest groups in the Glendowie Project, focussing on the analysis of power as it was exercised in their context.

### **1.1.2. Hermeneutics**

- *Contextually relevant methods of hermeneutics are recognised as significant for interpreting written texts, human actions, social events and structures of power.*

In order that interpretations positively support moves toward social transformation in any local situation, the hermeneutical tools need to be sympathetic to the characteristics and needs of that situation. This perspective

on hermeneutics was sharpened by the culturally differing needs within the MTU learning group and their communities of practice.

## **1.2. The purpose of education**

- *The purpose and goal of education is to enable participation in the processes of social-wellbeing.*

For education to lead toward social engagement, this needs to be its clearly-stated goal. Such a goal shows the priority placed on engagement in community well-being rather than on such purposes as individual acquisition of information and skill or the transmission of cultural norms.

- *The goal of theological education in practical theology is to equip transformative ministry leaders who can lead in processes of social wellbeing.*

This marker identifies the clear goal of practical theology and of the education of the practical theologian as equipping transformative leadership. When the Methodist Board of Ministry identified the goal of its education programmes as providing leaders who could lead toward “hopeful futures” this enabled shaper identification of transformative goals in the MTU (Ministry Training Unit) programme.

### **1.2.1. Liberation**

- *Practical theology as a theological process understands liberation and justice as integral components.*

The philosophical perspective behind this marker has implications for the content of the curriculum as well as educational practice, by recognising the core role of liberation and justice in processes of social transformation. Education from this perspective seeks to increase personal and social awareness, naming the constraints and social dynamics that limit participation in changing circumstances.

### **1.2.2. A feminist liberation**

- *Feminist theology as a theology of liberation is brought to bear in relation to biblical interpretation, pastoral practice and the nature of being church.*

A philosophical perspective that supports the role of feminist theology in theological education enables women and issues relevant to women in society to be articulated and engaged in relation to social transformation. Analysis of the role of women in church and society, and of the way power interests are reflected in traditional texts and resources, can lead to the empowerment of groups which are often marginalised and to further social critique.

### **1.2.3. Social capital**

- *Networks of trust are intentionally nurtured to enhance growth of confidence and skill in social participation.*

A perspective that values networks, and communal life in shaping key ideas, supports the equipping of transformative leaders. Networks are subject to critical theological examination, with the intention of enabling students to identify network characteristics that will encourage confidence in the support that such networks can provide in times of social uncertainty.

- *The ethical dynamics of all social interactions are overtly considered.*

The theological education programme needs to include ethics as part of its overall philosophical perspective and purpose. In decision-making processes and the strengthening of social networks, the ethics of the relationships and outcomes would then be brought into focus in order to ensure the consequences of insights and actions promote social and personal wellbeing.

### **1.2.4. Transparent**

- *Transparency in relation to values and purpose is maintained, despite the possible risks.*

It is important to include transparency in the overall understanding of the educational programme in order to provide clarity and to promote trust and open debate amongst all stakeholders and participants in the educational programme. Such transparency can provide liberation for those often 'kept in the dark', while at the same time producing the risk of backlash from power-holders. Transparency assists the process of risk management.

### **1.3. Experience and practical wisdom**

#### **1.3.1. Experience**

- *The experience of participants is acknowledged as a significant starting point and source for learning.*

This Deweyan perspective empowers adult students and undergirds student-led learning. It also provides the foundation for an action/reflection learning process, especially relevant for community-oriented education.

#### **1.3.2. Engagement with context**

- *Practical theology is engaged in in-situ, with local neighbourhood or learning group needs and issues providing the primary text.*

Working within a neighbourhood to increase social participation and the capacity of residents to engage in shaping their own lives, provides the experience necessary for the critical supervised reflection that is at the heart of the education of the practical theologian. Direct engagement ensures that relevant contextual data is able to provide a starting point for reflection. It also ensures that the inherent spirituality of both place and people are attended to.

#### **1.3.3. Holistic**

- *The whole person of the student is seriously attended to: body, mind, spirituality, family, culture, social context.*

This philosophical perspective understands 'person' to be an integrated whole, including body and mind, and shaped by culture and social context. This perspective recognises that a leader able to engage effectively in transformation cannot function on the basis of intellectual knowledge alone, but requires an integration of such knowledge with their actions and spiritual motivations. An holistic approach sees the learning and development of the whole person as significant not only for their individual gain but also in relation to their social context. It attends to the overlapping contexts of student's lives: school, church, family, peer group, other social locations, each of which exert particular pressures and expectations.

#### **1.3.4. Integrated and integrative**

- *Practical theology is understood as bringing together the various disciplines of theology, together with other relevant disciplines.*

Such a perspective ensures that all aspects of theology engage with the issues and contexts of social transformation, and draw on other disciplines such as sociology. Further, it enables transformative ministry leaders to access and work with the full range of theological resources in interaction with each other.

- *Practical theology is understood as a set of integrative processes which enable the various components of both theological education and ministry formation to be brought together.*

This perspective recognises the importance of non-compartmentalised programmes in enabling students to grow into ministry leaders who exhibit holistic awareness of social situations. It enables them to draw on the resources and insights of both theory and practise.

### **1.3.5. Phronesis: practical wisdom**

- *Practical wisdom, rather than abstract knowledge, is understood as the desired outcome of the educational process.*

This marker points to an understanding of the educational process for equipping practical theologians as enabling them to gain the wisdom to act with others in pursuit of social wellbeing. Aristotle's concept of *phronesis* encourages living wisely and seeking happiness in the wellbeing of the whole community of which the individual is a part.

## **2. Pedagogical Approach**

From the research, three motifs - contextual, diverse, and recognition of learning-styles - emerged as significant themes, one as the dominant theme in each of the three projects. Each motif indicates a significant emphasis in the relevant case study, where they influenced the shaping of the pedagogical approach. They contribute to this section as the key pedagogical markers are identified in relation to practical theology. Across each of the cases the significance of a praxis-based approach was evident and fundamental to the design of the project so provides the first marker in this section.

### **2.1. Praxis-based**

- *A pedagogical approach that supports praxis-based learning is evident, and in which theory, action, and reflection are engaged in together, and in which the context and the learning group have central places.*

The inter-relationship of supervised practice with regular opportunities for engagement in reflection within a learning group is a necessary component in the basic approach to the design of practical theological education. Each of the projects reflected this style.

## **2.2. Contextual**

### **2.2.1. Contextual and spiritual openness**

- *The approach is open to its context and those of students.*

Programme design in which students are located in specific social contexts is fundamental to learning that has social transformation as its goal. From specific contexts, issues for research and action emerge and can be taken into the learning group for consideration. This approach enables peers to engage with issues from a wide range of situations and have the opportunity to broaden understanding.

- *The personal spirituality of students is engaged.*

A pedagogical approach that enables students to examine their personal motivations and spirituality – as well as their embedded theology and values – in a supportive non-judgemental peer environment, enhances personal growth and awareness. This provides opportunities that enable a change of heart and mind; a move from embedded theology and values to reflective theology, and a conscious choice of values. It reflects a pedagogical approach that expects active participation from each student in matters of heart and mind.

- *This approach is self-conscious in embodying a concern for community cohesion and social wellbeing.*

When the learning group is seen as a significant experiential context it becomes a setting in which concern for social wellbeing and group cohesion can be explored. It provides a primary environment in which to develop and practice the skills of community building. The group itself provides material for reflection and in this way supports discoveries in interpersonal relationship building, group facilitation and personal growth.

### **2.3. Problem-based**

- *Issues and questions identified by the student arising from their practice context are the basis for research and reflection.*

A programme designed to build on issues and problems raised by students ensures that learning is relevant for the student and to the context from which the issue has arisen. This approach enables the prior learning of peers to be recognised, the expertise within the group to be shared, and the personal learning style of the student to be accommodated. An experiential style of education for the practical theologian ensures that the content and reflective processes demonstrate the dynamics of a mutual discovery process, which undergirds transformative leadership.

### **2.4. Valuing diversity**

- *Difference is valued and respected.*

Formal recognition of the diverse backgrounds of the students and their cultural and wider experiences in relation to gender, ethnicity and church, helps ensure this diversity is responded to sensitively and with relevance. Programme design that explicitly accepts and works with differences in background, ideas and belief structures models a positive attitude toward difference. Social and cultural differences contributed by students promote the personal awareness of embedded attitudes and theological perspective.

#### **2.4.1. Space for diversity**

- *Open 'space' in which difference can be expressed is provided.*

This pedagogical approach sees 'ideational space' for difference as significant, ensuring that differing ideas have room for expression and can contribute to the learning process. The value placed on such space in programme design and teaching, models an open discursive and exploratory approach to learning. A clear educational purpose that provides space for diversity enables

students to explore and evaluate their decisions and values, theology and practice.

#### **2.4.2. Challenging dominant wisdom**

- *Received 'wisdom' is examined and alternatives are actively sought.*

Recognising there is more than one way of doing things, and more than one perspective through which to understand things, facilitates the ability of the student to shape leadership that can uncover the prevailing perspectives that maintain the status quo. Such an approach would include a 'hermeneutic of suspicion' as a default position from which to ask questions.

#### **2.5. Recognising diverse learning styles**

- *Different learning styles are acknowledged.*

This marker indicates awareness that not all students access knowledge in the same way and that there is a need to enable access to information and processes for learning that accommodate differences.

- *The programme provides a range of learning experiences and methods.*

A student-focussed pedagogical approach to design and content would ensure provision of a variety of ways to access knowledge and to demonstrate competencies. The intentional adult-education design of the MTU for example identified clearly that a variety of learning approaches and assessment methods would be used.

#### **2.6. Transparent**

- *The pedagogical aims and programme expectations are transparent.*

Transparency of aims and expectations enables both stakeholders and the student group to orient themselves to the diversity, content and pedagogy of the programme from the outset. Transparency and a critical reflective feedback loop produce a high level of group ownership reflecting the weight

of the social capital present. The ethos, in each case study, was communicated to incoming students prior to their arrival in the formal learning group. However, it can also be seen from the case studies that such transparency makes programmes vulnerable to institutional fear and a consequent need to control the accountability, design and content of programmes more closely.

### **3. Educational Practice**

While the educational practices used in practical theology are not unique to this process of education, they are basic to such education in that they provide for the philosophical perspectives and pedagogical approaches to be coherently expressed in concrete terms within a learning programme designed to support the education of practical theologians.

#### **3.1. Flexible and holistic**

- *The educational practice shows flexibility and diversity.*

Educational practice that is creative and flexible in the ways material is presented enhances the quality of the learning experience. It also meets students' diverse needs for ways to access learning and to demonstrate competencies. It thus establishes the bases for reflective practice and life-long learning.

- *There is integration of diverse subject-matter, and also of subject-matter, skill development and personal growth.*

An integrated and integrative approach to the various components of an educational programme helps create an awareness of and ability to use knowledge that brings together informational material with personal insights and specific skills, integral to the formation of transformative leaders. The integration of process and content is core to practical theology.

- *There is active engagement of the whole person in the educational process.*

Development of the wisdom to act is facilitated by the engagement of all facets of the person in the learning process. Students are thus expected to engage mind, body and spirituality in considering formal learning and practice outcomes, in ways that demonstrate their development as transformative leaders who are deeply reflexive thinkers.

- *There is an expectation of excellence.*

The expectation of excellence supported by a high level of investment of time in one-to-one tutorials ensures that practical theology programmes cannot be relegated to 'lesser' models of education. Pacific students in the MTU, for whom a self-directed discovery model was a different educational experience, attributed their success in achieving both their personal goals and the institutionally established levels of competence, to the expectation of achievement and to support this.

- *Learners are expected to take responsibility for their own learning.*

The expectation of personal responsibility for the way students access the models, tools and insights of practical theology, and the way they develop these to meet their personal situations, make them accessible in subsequent practice. Students in each programme reported that it was the attention to them as whole persons and the expectation that they would take responsibility for their own learning that resulted in high levels of participation and ownership of the learning process.

### **3.2. Learners are teachers too**

- *Students' prior learning and expertise is recognised.*

Recognition of prior learning and experience shows respect for the adult learner and their ability to contribute to the learning experience. It enables students to work from their strengths and to experience mutuality in expertise and knowledge-sharing.

- *There are opportunities for role exchange between teacher and learner.*

For adult learners, the ability to participate actively in a mutual learning process enhances their sense of engagement and so deepens their learning. Providing opportunities for students to research their own projects, enables them to become 'experts' in that project topic and thus to present their material to peers and teachers in a mutual role exchange of teacher and learner. This produces growth in confidence, and develops skills in presentation and group facilitation.

- *Opportunities are provided for members of communities of practice to be involved directly in the formal learning group.*

When people from communities of interest are included from time to time in the formal learning group, accountability issues become transparent, and the mutual development of knowledge is supported.

### **3.3. Action-reflection**

- *An action-reflection cycle is employed.*

A key marker for the education of the practical theologian is the use of an action-reflection cycle that engages and develops reflective skills. This cycle creates a process of integration between the various components of theory and practice.

### **3.4. Engaging with cultural difference**

- *Awareness of significant dynamics in multicultural education is demonstrated.*

Where the context is multicultural (and especially where the cultural mix is represented in the student body), an educational practice that promotes awareness of cultural differences enables effective engagement with that context. An educational practice that respects difference and honours different learning styles will provide opportunities for cultural sub-group work. It will

provide artefacts in the learning environment that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds.

- *The significance of the group for learning in multicultural situations is acknowledged.*

Acknowledging the significance of the group in multicultural learning situations ensures supportive learning group cohesion, while allowing for sub-group interaction that allows expression of difference. Carefully designed space and facilities support the life of different groups. Recognising the significance of cultural sub-groups acknowledges accountability for learning and its transmission to a specific 'community of interest' or 'community of practice'.

### **3.5. The learning group**

- *The 'group' functions as a learning community.*

'Ownership' of the group and its identity, builds group cohesion, enhancing the learning of skills and personal awareness in ways that sustain effectiveness as transformative leaders. Understanding the 'group' as a primary learning community with group accountability beyond accountability to the educational institution alone, demonstrates the layers of accountability. Time and attention to the development of the learning group, are integral to the design and practice of educational programmes which support the education of the practical theologian.

- *The development and health of the learning group is attended to.*

Time spent at the outset of each learning cycle on the formation of the group enables group members to build significant bonds of trust that last beyond graduation and provides peer support for ongoing work. The understanding of personality styles and other differences in the group helps group members in learning to work with others, different from themselves, in wider social contexts.

### **3.5.1. Mutual respect and support**

- *Mutuality is shown in regard to concern for growth and development.*

The development of learning groups builds mutuality of concern for the growth and development of each member as a person, along with their ability to access skill and knowledge. Mutuality is expressed in exchanges of roles between the members of the group according to experience, skill, knowledge and past learning.

- *There is active concern for each other's success within the learning group.*

When students learn to share information, to critique and commend each other and to challenge personal behaviours, they develop concern for each others' personal growth and goal achievement. Such mutual concern helps develop cooperation and shared responsibility for learning, rather than competition and personal gain.

## **3.6. Clear learning goals**

### **3.6.1. Accountability**

- *Two-way accountability is evident – to both the relevant communities of practice and the student's personal learning goals.*

Two-way accountability provides an opportunity for students to take responsibility for developing and managing the multiple relationships and interactions occurring in relation to the various communities of practice and institutions with which they are engaged.

- *Personal boundary setting is considered important and is monitored effectively.*

Awareness of personal boundaries provides a safe environment for students in which the edges of competence and knowledge can be explored. Regular student attention to boundaries, monitored in supervision alongside personal learning goals, assists the development of safe practice.

### **3.6.2. Encouraging the practice of personal responsibility**

- *Individual students take responsibility for personal goal setting and supervision.*

Setting personal goals, and selecting issues and questions that are relevant to the student personally, have significant advantages in developing a sense of responsibility for learning, for the manner of engagement and for the outcome. The effectiveness of supervision in overseeing students' progress on learning goals is enhanced when students are enabled to take responsibility to prepare well for supervision.

- *A flexible skeleton for learning outcomes guides student goal-setting.*

Student goal setting is enhanced when a flexible outline of learning goals is provided, indicating course learning outcomes and core components.

### **3.7. Attention to the learning environment**

- *The learning environment supports a multicultural and holistic approach.*

Such factors as providing a variety of gathering spaces, care about the style of food, and attention to the furnishing of the space, show an awareness of cultural needs and reflect a holistic concern for the health and wellbeing of body, mind and spirit. This awareness and concern facilitates students' capacity to engage in the learning opportunities.

- *There are ongoing opportunities for learning-group members to socialise and relate informally.*

Social celebrations and events to mark successes, beginnings and endings in the group life encourage ownership of the programme and enhance student commitment to each others' success.

- *Openness to a range of ritual and spiritual expressions in theology and faith is clearly shown.*

Ensuring a relevant range of expressions for spirituality is provided for. Encouraging students to take responsibility for group centring time, prayer and other relevant rituals, broadens their capacity to be expansive in relation to spirituality and theology.

### **3.8. Critical reflection and thinking**

- *A critical hermeneutic shapes the processes of reflection.*

A 'hermeneutical circle' provides a basis for the interpretation of biblical and other 'texts' in relation to action and reflection for the contemporary context, as a central component in developing the analysis and reflection process central to the work of practical theologians. This 'circle' developed into a 'spiral' during the Glendowie Project so as to more adequately reflect the ongoing pattern of social change. Observation, analysis and reflection (OARs) provide a model for a learning process appropriate to the social justice concerns of practical theology.

#### **3.8.1. Employing a hermeneutic of suspicion**

- *A hermeneutic of suspicion is used as a core tool throughout the programme.*

The use of a 'hermeneutic of suspicion' enables a focus on issues of power, which encourages transformative leaders not to accept the status quo without question. A hermeneutic of suspicion uncovers dynamics of truth, power, authority, essentialist concepts and role-stereotypes, which are core components in the work of social transformation.

#### **3.8.2. Generative questions**

- *Generative questions are elicited*

Education with the purpose of social transformation recognises that a significant step in enabling change in social power-structures is to identify the core questions which generate insights into what needs transforming and into the energies required to engage that process. In each project, the process of

identifying and testing questions for their capacity to support change was a significant practice.

#### **4. Transformative Leadership**

Leadership development is a goal for all ministry formation (Chapter 1, Section 1, p. 6). Practical theology, as a process of both theological education and ministry formation as explored in this thesis, has the more specific goal of developing and equipping leaders who can engage with others in the transformation of social contexts. Leadership which is effective in transformation will be able to engage with communities in ways that facilitate processes of change.

- *A facilitative leadership is expressed through curriculum design and educational practice.*

For a facilitative approach to leadership to be developed in the practical theology programme, the curriculum design will have explicit components and processes that explore the theory and practice of facilitation in relation to leadership. The learning group provides opportunities to develop skills in facilitative leadership that can be transferred into other communities of practice.

- *Transformative leadership is a clear outcome goal of the practical theology programme of theological education.*

A clear and transparent goal to shape a transformative leadership supports student aspirations towards becoming practical theologians. A clear outcome goal, emphasising leadership able to mobilise community participation in the identification of social issues, supports a community in developing trust in the programme.

- *Skills and knowledge for leadership in social transformation are inherent components in the practical theology education programme.*

The education of the practical theologian appropriately draws together both theory and practice so as to develop knowledge and skills that support sustainable engagement in processes of social and personal change. Such a programme works to develop awareness and skills that are transferable between contexts. The curriculum and the associated educational practices that delivered the MTU DipPTh, for example, were specifically designed with the skills and knowledge for transformative leadership in mind.

## **5. Pulling It All Together**

My research into the three projects identifies each of them as projects in what I am now calling integrative practical theology. The research into these projects, together with intentional reflection on my engaged experience of the projects, identify that practical theology as an educational process weaves together a set of philosophical perspectives, a pedagogical approach, and specific educational practices. This weaving together integrates not only the various disciplines of theology, or theory with practice (Chapter 2, Section 2.5, pp. 28-30), but both of these together, plus diverse modes of educational practice. I argue therefore, on the basis of this research, for an understanding of practical theology that integrates theological and related disciplines, theory and practice, and educational modes. As such, it also functions in an integrative way to bring all these components together as theological education. This study identifies practical theology, not as a discipline or component in theological education, but rather as a specific way of undertaking such education. As theological education, practical theology is not the application of theory but engaged praxis (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2, pp. 20-23; 2.5, pp. 28-30; and 3.3, pp. 35-37). Also built into practical theology, as I am arguing here, is the goal of producing ministry leaders who have the wisdom to act as socially transformative leaders.

The research shows that core to the integrative practice in each of the projects was the learning group. The study identifies that the learning group constitutes a community of participation and as such contributes to developing 'wisdom from below' (Chapter 2, Section 4.2, pp. 38-40). In this, the members of the group are able to learn directly from the people with whom they are deeply engaged in a feed-back loop that builds capacity for change in both the community and the individuals. Knowledge in practical theology is obtained not only from traditional theory or empirical research but also arises from within the contextual experience of the learning group. From this group, and from the communities of practice in which students are located outside the formal learning group, students are able also to develop extensive networks that can be drawn on in the future as social capital (Chapter 2, Section 5.3, pp. 46-47).

The role for the 'teacher' in this integrative learning environment is identified as holding the group space safe. This space is both physical and conceptual. It is space in which self-disclosure and discovery can take place in relation to personal perspectives on theology, power, politics and interpersonal relationships (Chapter 2, Section 4.3, pp. 40-43). The research also shows a need for the 'teacher' or tutor to act as the interface between the student and the institution, and be responsible for ensuring that the expectations of the institution are sufficiently met to hold back demands that will restrict the exploratory learning of the student and the goals which they have set.

From an examination of the three projects that provide the case studies for the research, and from consideration of the developing literature, I would now state clearly that practical theology is a form of theological education, that combines both content and process and is concerned to equip transformative leaders who can act with others in the interests of justice and social-wellbeing.

## Chapter Ten

### Conclusions

'Wisdom to Act', the short title of this study, was chosen to reflect the purpose and goal of the education of practical theologians as transformative ministry leaders. The term 'wisdom to act' signifies that wisdom is the capacity to learn in community, employing reflective processes that motivate a desire for wellbeing and action for social change toward the achievement of that wellbeing.

From a study of three educational projects, I argue that practical theology, when it becomes both the content and the process for the design of theological education programmes, can provide the vehicle for the equipping of ministry leaders as practical theologians. The study points toward the development of leaders who can engage with the spiritual motivations and aspirations of specific communities, their intrinsic as well as extrinsic knowledge about their social circumstances, and work with them in ways that promote change toward social and personal wellbeing. The aim of such practical theology is to produce reflective practitioner, with the capacity to respond to diverse situations and dynamics.

The case-study based research, together with the researcher's own experience and reflection on constructing and developing the three education projects over a period of thirty years, has produced a series of markers which indicate the emphases, style, and practice of educational programmes that can equip transformative ministry leaders. These markers relate to the component aspects of philosophical perspectives, pedagogical approach, educational practices and transformative leadership. In practical theology, the markers are

woven together to provide the integrated and integrating mode of education that I am arguing for.

The study shows the significance of disquiet and dissatisfaction with the status quo in providing a climate for change, the importance of people and structures willing to respond in creative ways to the dissatisfaction, and the risk that change holds for those engaged in that process when the status quo is challenged.

This study researches an area of theological education in the changing social context of Aotearoa-New Zealand that has not previously been the subject of such research. It thus contributes to both an understanding of this context and of theological education issues within that context.

I contend also that the approach to practical theology as a form of theological education, developed from the research, contributes a significant perspective into the field of practical theology itself. This perspective shows practical theology to be a way of engaging the content and the process of theological education, rather than acting as one component in a broader structure of theological education. This understanding of practical theology includes an integration of the traditionally discrete sub-disciplines of the discipline of theology, together with resources from related disciplines (such as sociology, psychology, and political studies), in order to ensure that all the interconnected strands and insights of theology are brought to bear in the formation of ministry leaders.

The research has shown some distinct challenges to the developing of such programmes. So I am left with the question, "how can a purposefully designed practical theology education programme, that aims to equip transformative leaders for church and community, be sustained beyond the

initial development phase?" I consider this question opens up some topics for further research.

One area for further research could investigate how teaching staff for such an integrated educational process might be equipped, so as to ensure that continuity and development of such a practical theology programme could be sustained over a longer period of time. Traditional programmes have relied on staff with specialist expertise in either a discipline area or formational training. A weakness in the projects studied here is the reliance on the experience, broad expertise, and educational and theological perspectives of the designer and developer of the programmes. This approach to practical theology as theological education and ministry formation presents a critical challenge to prevailing understandings of education, especially of higher education.

Another area for possible research asks how church ministry leadership, trained as transformative leaders, can take that expertise into wider community leadership. This study indicates the possibility and desirability of such a move, but the particular circumstances and supports that make the move effective and sustainable in many contexts are as yet unclear. For many of the Pacific ministry leaders being trained today in Aotearoa-New Zealand, church leadership and wider community leadership are still entwined. However, in other settings the church is often uneasy about its leaders becoming engaged in the community leadership and the community at large is suspicious of the relevance of church leadership for wider community life.

Yet a further area for potential research on the sustainability of intentional programmes to equip transformative ministry leaders lies in relation to the attitudes and structural priorities of churches. As identified in relation to the case studies considered here, the contemporary attitudes of many churches find the challenges of both different forms of educational practice and

ministry leaders who are engaged in social action uncomfortable. This raises, for example, how transparent such intentional programmes can be if they are to survive.

The research thus points toward several possible avenues for fruitful further research in practical theology. The threads from the research of this thesis have loose ends that can enable ongoing weaving of further new patterns in practical theology.



**Photograph 6:** A cross-cultural group and ‘talking mat’

The ‘talking mat’ illustrated above in photograph 6 is both a conceptual motif for practical theology and a place of practice. In Pacific style, the edges of the mat, woven from many strands, are left unbound, and diverse patterns and designs are incorporated into the mat, each with their own story to tell. Those who sit and talk on the mat are respected as equals, and what is shared is debated, discussed, challenged and critiqued: all learn from one another.

As with the talking mat, though the edges of this study are unfinished, patterns are discernable and a focus is provided for ongoing discussion and reflection across differences as we seek to better understand how practical theology and those who are committed to social wellbeing can link the

resources of spiritual motivation that have deep roots in Christian tradition with the desire to live well in society. As the edges of the mat are continually being woven, ongoing exploration in integrative practical theology will continue to enhance the wisdom to act.

In summary, the research engaged in for this thesis leads to my core argument that practical theology can enable the equipping of leaders in social transformation in the context of the Christian community's interaction with its social environment. I contend that this study contributes to the field of practical theology by repositioning practical theology as a mode of theological education and not as one component in it. It contributes to the field also by re-framing practical theology as integrating theological and related disciplines in a total educational programme characterised by a praxis approach that brings theory and practice together in a dialogical interaction.

I argue from the research into and experience of the three educational projects examined in this study, that an approach to practical theology as an integrated process of theological education aiming to equip transformative ministry leaders, makes a significant contribution to the fields of practical theology and education. I am arguing for a view of 'integrative practical theology' that can promote and resource the 'wisdom to act'.

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# GLOSSARY

## Acronyms:

ACTE	Auckland Consortium of Theological Education
AMSS	Anglican Methodist Social Services
BTheol	Bachelor of Theology
CCANZ	Conference of Churches of Aotearoa-New Zealand
DipPTh	Diploma in Practical Theology
DTP	Diocesan Training Programme
EIDTS	Ecumenical Institute for Distance Theological Studies
ESOD	Ecumenical Secretariat on Development
IAPT	International Academy of Practical Theology
ICM	Inner city Ministry
INODEP	International Institute for the Development of Peoples
LSM	Local Shared Ministry
LTh	Licentiate of Theology
MCD	Melbourne College of Divinity
MTU	Ministry Training Unit
NZ	New Zealand
NZQA	New Zealand qualifications Authority
PAR	Participatory action research
POR	Programme on Racism
PTE	Private Teaching Establishment
SJC	Saint John's College
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
WCC	World council of Churches
UNITEC	Institute of Technology

## **Maori Words** (the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa-New Zealand)

Aroha	A generous expression of loving compassion
Minita a iwi	Ministry of the people - a local, non-stipendiary ministry
Mihi	A formal greeting
Pakeha	European person
Tauiwi	People other than indigenous Maori
Te Taha Maori	The Maori section of the Methodist Church of NZ
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 as a covenant between Maori tribes and the British Crown
Tikanga rua	Two cultural systems; bicultural

## **Tongan Words**

Palangi	European person
Malo e lelei	A greeting

# APPENDICES

## **Participant Information Sheet**



**Date Information Sheet Produced:** 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006

### **Project Title**

Wisdom to Act: The pedagogical and philosophical theory and practice for the education of 'Practical Theologians'.

### **An Invitation**

My name is Susan Adams. Most of you who receive this invitation will know me personally. As part of my PhD studies and am looking at three innovative theological 'education for ministry' training programmes in which I have had responsibilities as teacher and designer. As a person associated with one of these programmes in Auckland, I am inviting you to participate in the collection of primary data. This involves reflection on, and evaluation of, the design process for my research.

### **What is the purpose of this research?**

The overall purpose is to gather data from current students, graduates and other stakeholders of each of three programmes: the Glendowie Project (1978-1983), the Auckland Diocesan Ministry Training Programme (1989-1998) or the Trinity Methodist Theological College Ministry Training Unit (2000 - )

The objective of this part of the project is to evaluate the contribution of each programme to understanding the pedagogy and philosophy of relevant, contextual theological and ministry education for ministry leaders. I expect this will help shape the design and content of future programmes.

### **How was I chosen for this invitation?**

I have selected participants from current students and graduates from all three programmes. Governors and staff from all 3 programmes and congregations and community groups amongst whom some graduates are working are also invited to participate. As you were either a student, graduate or associated stake holder in I am inviting you to express your interest in participating in the process of critical reflection and evaluation.

### **What will happen in this research?**

The research will take place over the next 12 months and involve participation in one focus group conversation with your peers. There is also the opportunity for one to one conversation with me if it is not possible for you to participate in the focus group. I anticipate that together we will assist each other to recall key features, hopes and expectations of the programmes we were engaged in. It is intended that the focus group conversations will provide an opportunity for some to engage in a continuation of the 'action reflection' process the programmes were designed around. During the focus group sessions I will make notes of our conversation on flip charts. From time to time to help my analysis I may also request a session be tape-recorded for later transcribing. The transcribing will be done by a confidential typist.

### **What are the discomforts and risks?**

I do not anticipate any discomfort or risk.

### **How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

If however you feel discomforted because of the conversation you may withdraw from the group at any time without prejudice.

### **What are the benefits?**

For theological education - these conversations will help shape the design and content of future programmes so that they more effectively reflect the needs of Practical Theology in a multicultural context.

For Social transformation - this is an opportunity to reflect on the potential contribution of Practical theology to 'Public Theology' and social change.

For you individually and collectively – this is an opportunity to continue your reflective practice around which the programmes were designed.

**How will my privacy be protected?**

If what you wish to say is uncomfortable for you to share in a group situation I can arrange to have a one to one conversation with you. While comments by participants will not be attributed to particular persons, the general data gathered in a group session will form the base data of the group and used in relation to other material gathered. If at the end of a session you wish your personal reflections withdrawn that can be requested without prejudice.

**What are the costs of participating in this research?**

There are no costs to you except your time. We have scheduled the focus groups to meet for up to three hours during which there will be a 30 minute break with morning or afternoon provided.

**What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

I would appreciate you responding to this invitation within 2 weeks of receiving it. That date will be DD MM YY. Please let me know as soon as you have decided. If I do not hear from you during this time I will contact you again and ask if you have made your decision. I will respect your decision either way.

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**

If you have made you decision please let me know either by email to Susan Adams [susanadams@clear.net.nz](mailto:susanadams@clear.net.nz) or letter to Susan Adams: PO Box 68 184, Newton, Auckland 1011

**Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

Yes. At the end of the group session in which you participate you will be aware of the themes and comments that have emerged and the initial analysis of the data which will be contributed to the overall project.

At the conclusion of the study all participants will be given a summary of the research findings if requested.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Love Chile, [Love.chile@aut.ac.nz](mailto:Love.chile@aut.ac.nz) or phone 9219999 ext 8312.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, [madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz](mailto:madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz) , 921 9999 ext 8044.

**Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

***Researcher Contact Details:***

For further information contact the researcher: Susan Adams, [susanadams@clear.net.nz](mailto:susanadams@clear.net.nz) or phone her on 09 3584123

***Project Supervisor Contact Details:***

Project Supervisor, Dr Love Chile, [Love.chile@aut.ac.nz](mailto:Love.chile@aut.ac.nz) or phone 9219999 ext 8312.

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics  
Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2006, AUTEK Reference number 06/159.**

Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.



*Project title: Wisdom to Act: the pedagogical and philosophical theory and practice for the education of Practical theologians as community leaders for social transformation.*

*Project Supervisor: Dr Love Chile*

*Researcher: Rev Dr Susan Adams*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 19th July 2006.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that the interviews may be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, that relate to me will be removed from the study.
- I am aware that if I should become distressed in the process of the interview I may withdraw and request up to 3 free counselling sessions from the AUT Counselling Services.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the summary of findings (please tick one):  
Yes  No

Participants' signature:

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Participants' name:

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Participants' Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

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*Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 9<sup>th</sup>*

**October 2006, AUTEK Reference number 06/159.**

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

**Consent Form**

For use when focus groups are involved.



*Project title: Wisdom to Act: Wisdom to Act: the pedagogical and philosophical theory and practice for the education of Practical theologians as community leaders for social transformation.*

*Project Supervisor: Dr Love Chile*

*Researcher: Rev Dr Susan Adams*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that identity of my fellow participants and our discussions in the focus group is confidential to the group and I agree to keep this information confidential.
- I understand that the focus group may be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I am aware that if I should become distressed in the process of the focus group I may withdraw and request up to 3 free counselling sessions from the AUT Counselling Services.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, that relate to me will be removed from the study.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the summary of findings (please tick one):  
Yes  No

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participants Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:.....

*Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 9<sup>th</sup>  
October 2006, AUTEK Reference number 06/159.*

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*

**Letter of invitation**

2007

PERSONAL NAMES TO BE ADDED

Greetings All,

I am currently enrolled in a PhD programme with the Auckland University of Technology Institute of Public Policy in order to focus my reflection on my engagement in theological education over the past 30 years. One to the case studies that I hope to develop is in relation to Diocesan Training Programme that you were involved in. I am hoping that you will be willing to meeting with me in order to talk through your memories of that programme and you subsequent reflections on the effectiveness of its design. I am hopeful that together we can identify those aspects of the programme that you think need to be taken into account in any useful reflection.

There are a number of documents that I am required by AUT to send to you, I enclose the first of these as it gives more information on the purpose and process that I am inviting you into.

At this stage I am seeking from you an expression of willingness to be a participant in this project and to meet either as part of a group or if that is not possible in a one to one situation. Once I know who is able to participate we can set a mutually convenient date to meet. It will be great to catch up with you all again and hear what you are doing these days.

If you would like to talk with me about this my home number is 3616245 or my mobile 021 522231. I am available on 358 4123 during office hours.

Looking forward to your response.

Kind regards

Susan Adams

## FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATION STARTER GUIDELINE QUESTIONS

*Project title: Wisdom to Act: the pedagogical and philosophical theory and practice for the education of Practical theologians as community leaders for social transformation.*

*Project Supervisor: Dr Love Chile*

*Researcher: Rev Dr Susan Adams*

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### **For use with graduate students as starter questions/prompts**

**Some or all may be used.**

1. To engage in a critical reflection and evaluation of the XXX programme, what aspects do you think we need to consider?
2. What is the dominant memory that comes to mind when you recall your engagement in the ..... programme?
3. What is the most important thing you consider you learned from your engagement with the programme?
4. What phrases or words emerge for you as representative of the emphasis of the programme for
  - Theology?
  - Social Change?
  - Leadership?
5. How would you describe the outcome expectations of the programme for
  - Students personally?
  - Theological competence?
  - Ministry?
  - Community engagement?
5. Describe occasions when you believe you have been engaged in processes of ‘transformaiton’.

6. Can you describe ways in which you continue to use learnings from your engagement in the programme?
7. Share with us some aspect of your ministry that you consider reflects your learnings from the programme.
8. What did not work well for you?
9. Talk about your understanding of
  - Leadership
  - Transformation
  - Salvation
  - Reflective action
  - Theological reflection.
10. If you were shaping
  - the content
  - the pedagogical style
11. What changes would you make?
12. With hindsight, do you think the programme you were engaged with equipped you well for your current ministry?

**Glendowie Project.**

**Items/Issues Identified by participants for Discussion:**

1. Macro      theological Education and how it connects with the community/secular society
2. Micro      How does transformation happen in a place where the church is absent?
  - i.    \*\* what `does God look like in ‘Mad Av’?
3. How did ‘Mad Av’ convert us?
4. Images that come to mind
5. Dominant Memories
6. Long term impact
7. Words: Transformation, place, culture (gender as a culture) leadership, poverty, hope, power
8. Stories
  - i.    Libby and the beauty consultant
  - ii.   Rosemary and the car (stories about transformation/the presence of God)

A SUMMARY OF THE THREE YEAR CYCLE FOR THE DTP

Topic	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Being a Theologian</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What is Theology, how do we do it?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To discover the resources for doing theology and considering how they can be applied to Christology. To use a methodology involving dialogue between contemporary issues, biblical roots, historical development and contextual factors.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> An exploration into the theology of 'God'.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To consider what the Christian tradition has said about the nature of 'God'. To explore some contemporary influences in framing a theology of 'God' Today. To articulate a personal perspective.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> A consideration of the theologies of salvation.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To consider major theologies of 'salvation' which are present in the Christian tradition. To explore some contemporary influences in framing a theology of salvation today. To discuss personal perspectives in the light of the contemporary context.</p>
<b>Contemporary Theological Emphases</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> How do we construct our theological perspective?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To examine our context for theology. To identify our context for theology. To identify the features which contribute to personal theologising and the effects for ministry.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What are the influences which are shaping contemporary theological method?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To examine our context for doing theology. To identify the features of post-modernism and their historical links. To open a discussion of deconstruction and reconstruction as theological method. To look at the influence of e.g. Don Cupitt on contemporary theology.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Contemporary theologies and their challenge to the church.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To overview key contemporary theologies: e.g. liberation, feminist, creation, political. To consider the key features and influences of liberation and context in contemporary theologies (e.g. in relation to Latin American, feminist, indigenous theologies). To look at the influence of e.g. Sally McFague or Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza or Leonardo Boff.</p>
<b>Bible in Its Context</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> How can we understand the social situation within which the Gospels were written?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To introduce some tools for Biblical criticism, reflection and interpretation. To explore the social situation of the Gospels. (Mark)</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> To introduce features of the cultural context of the Epistles which shaped their purpose.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To introduce the socio-historical context of the Epistles. To examine this context and its influence through one Epistle e.g. Galatians.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The First Testament: features of the cultural context of the chosen literature, e.g. Psalms, (or prophets/creation stories) and their major characteristics.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To introduce the socio-historical context of the Psalms and their role within that context. To introduce contemporary exegetically and critical tools for working with FT literature. To consider the role of the Psalms within the liturgical and pastoral contexts of today</p>

THREE YEAR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME C LINE

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<b>Being a Priest/Deacon/ Lay Minister</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What are the key features of ministry in the NZ Anglican Church</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To consider NZ Anglican order and expectations To look briefly at the theology of the NZPB re: Ministry To discuss Auckland Diocesan models for ministry.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The role of priesthood in the orders of ministry. To consider the nature of ministry today. <i>Aims:</i> A look at the relationship of lay ministry to ordained ministry. To look briefly at the changing theology of 'priest'. What does the bible say about 'priesthood'? To discuss our emerging personal theology of ministry. A sharing of expectations.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The development of the orders of ministry 0-500 and the development of Anglican orders in relation to the Reformation.</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To consider the basis upon which contemporary expressions of ministry are founded. To review the historical development of ministry orders. To look briefly at the changing theology of 'priest'. What do we learn from history to assist us shape our theology of 'priesthood'? To discuss our emerging personal theology of ministry. A sharing of expectations</p>
<b>Being an Anglican</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What does it mean to be Anglican? <i>Aims:</i> To explore what it means to be an Anglican (our Ethos) To consider a brief sweep of the historical context - early English origins - Lambeth Quadrilateral - the place of the prayer book in Anglicanism</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What does it mean to be Anglican? <i>Aims:</i> To explore the origins of the Anglican Church. To consider the implications of the English Reformation. To look briefly at the contribution of a key figure to the Anglican Church eg. Richard Hooker or F D Maurice.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Anglican origins in Aotearoa/NZ. <i>Aims:</i> To explore the origins of the Anglican Church in NZ. To consider the significance of Bishop Selwyn and the first constitution. To look briefly at the Revised Constitution.</p>
<b>Being Christian in Aotearoa</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The Anglican Church's bicultural journey and Pakeha awareness. <i>Aims:</i> To track the history of our bi-cultural journey To understand the historical motivators for Maori and Pakeha responses To be able to discuss Pakeha responsibilities in a bicultural situation noting the three tikanga constitution.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The Mission of the Church today. <i>Aims:</i> To understand the contemporary social context for the Church's mission. To explore theology which supports social concern. To discover personal attitudes to and resources for mission today.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Analysis of contemporary NZ society. <i>Aims:</i> To analyse key aspects of NZ life. To explore theological and ideological undergirding for social and economic policy. To develop skills of social analysis and ideological critique.</p>

THREE YEAR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME CURRICULUM

		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<b>Bible in Our Context</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> In what ways can we use the bible today as a tool in preaching and in ministry?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To explore different approaches to the place of the Bible in ministry and preaching. To discuss the sermon and develop some skills in preparing to preach.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Approaches to Bible Study. <i>Aims:</i> To explore a variety of Bible Study approaches relevant for the contemporary church. To identify key issues for adult learning. To discuss the place of 'hermeneutics' when working with the Bible today. To become aware that there are a number of approaches to the bible being used in the Church Today.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Evangelism and the Bible today. <i>Aims:</i> To explore evangelism in the mission of the contemporary church. To identify the key different approaches to the Bible used today. To discuss the significance of these approaches for ministry.</p>	
<b>Being a Pastor</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> What is pastoral care and how is it exercised appropriately in ministry?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To explore the nature of pastoral care To reflect on the role of the minister/priest To develop an awareness of the need for boundaries and effective self care</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> The place of pastoral care in parish ministry. <i>Aims:</i> To explore ways of attending to the pastoral responsibilities of a parish. To reflect on the role of the pastor. To consider the responsibilities of the minister in relation to marriage.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Grief and Bereavement and the role of the pastor. <i>Aims:</i> To reflect on the nature of grief. To explore personal attitudes and theology of death in the light of the church tradition. To consider the responsibilities of the pastor in the face of bereavement and death.</p>	
<b>Christians and Ethics</b>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Is there such a thing as Christian ethics?</p> <p><i>Aims:</i> To explore the idea of ethical decision making To discover whether there are any distinctive features of "Christian Ethics" To examine the Diocesan Guidelines To consider a case study</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> Biblical perspectives on ethics. <i>Aims:</i> To explore perspectives presented in First Testament and new Testament material. To consider the relevance of these for a contemporary issue.</p>	<p><i>Issue:</i> An historical overview of ethics, and approaches to moral decision-making. <i>Aims:</i> To outline the historical development of ethics and moral decision-making. To analyse contemporary issues in ethical decision-making today. To develop an awareness of attitudes and approaches to personal moral decision-making.</p>	

**A SUMMARY OF A THREE YEAR CYCLE FOR THE MTU  
2007**

**Title: TR 101; Theological Reflection and Practical Theology**

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the processes and tools for theological reflection, and to explore a range of models for reflection on practice.

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this course students should be able to:

1. use a model for theological reflection
2. reflect theologically on a current life experience
3. analyse the relationship between life experience and Christian belief.
4. describe the effect of one theological perspective on a contemporary social issue affecting the lives of people.

**Title: TR 102; Theological Reflection and the Exercise of Power**

**Purpose:** To enable students to develop familiarity with using the tools of theological reflection in relation to selected contemporary issues of power and pastoral contexts and to enable them to discuss pastoral implications resulting from selected different perspectives.

**Learning outcomes:** On completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Use and extend a model for theological reflection
2. Identify contemporary social issues and discuss the pastoral implications
3. Discuss their personal theological perspective, and the pastoral implications, in relation to a selected contemporary issue.

4. Research and explain a range of Christian perspectives on peace, just war, violence and social revolution noting historical roots and contemporary views.

### **Title: TR201; Theological Reflection and the Human Community**

**Purpose:** To consider selected features of contemporary New Zealand society and develop the capacity to explore a theological response to a selected contemporary issue

**Learning outcomes:** On completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Discuss the character of a 'human community'
2. Reflect theologically on selected social issues affecting a human community within NZ society and develop a response.
3. Identify personal theological responses to a contemporary life experience within a selected community.
4. Show awareness of the impact of Christian beliefs and theological perspectives on human communities.

### **Title: TR 202; Theological Reflection and Current Issues**

**Purpose:** To develop the ability to reflect theologically on issues of social justice

from selected theological perspectives in ways which show the relationship of theology to current philosophical themes.

**Learning outcomes:** On completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Develop and use a model of theological reflection with a selected contemporary issue.
2. Analyse perspectives on a contemporary theological issue and defend a preferred perspective
3. Research a current contextual social justice issue and develop a
4. Christian response showing awareness of the significance of theological perspective.

5. Discuss themes in modern philosophy and assess their significance for current issues in Christian theology.

**Title: MP 101; Community Development and Social Change.**

**Purpose:** To enable students to develop an awareness of issues of social injustice and of practices of community development in relation to a specific context where they can explore principles and practices of social change

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students will be able to:

1. Identify issues of social injustice and a range of social attitudes to the issue.
2. Discuss principles and processes of social change in relation to Christian social values.
3. Develop a plan for an action to contribute to social transformation in a specific instance of social injustice.
4. Participate with a group engaged in an action of social transformation in a specific context
5. Reflect on an action for social transformation in relation to a specific theological perspective.

**Title: MP 102; Leadership and Management**

**Purpose:** To develop an awareness of leadership functions within a Christian Ministry context and an understanding of how theological perspectives influence the shape of leadership

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students will be able to:

1. explain the governance and management structure of a selected organisation
2. analyse the leadership model of an organisation in relation to specific identified contextual and theological factors and

3. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the model in relation to a personal preferred model
4. exercise relevant leadership in a specific context and reflect on personal contribution to the ministry goal
5. analyse a management philosophy in relation a selected theological perspective
6. discuss leadership styles in relation to specific situations and tasks
7. work collaboratively with others towards a ministry goal

**Title: MP 201; Pastoral Practice .**

**Purpose:** To explore the role of preaching within Christian worship, developing

competence as a preacher and communicator and to assist students to plan and deliver 'age and stage' appropriate educational events in selected situations to support growth in faith and theology.

**Learning Outcomes:** On the completion of this component the student will be able to:

1. Identify different stages of faith development and relevant learning styles
2. Prepare and deliver appropriate 'age and stage' educational events
3. Analyse and discuss the theology presented in selected services of worship
4. Prepare and preach appropriate sermons in different situations
5. discuss sermon type and presentation styles in different situations
6. Prepare and preach sermons relevant to a post-modern Congregation

**Title: MP 202; Preaching and Education**

**Purpose:** To develop an understanding of Pastoral practice within the broader context of social issues while establishing 'safe' practices for work

and developing responses appropriate for diverse forms of spirituality.

**Learning Outcomes:** on completion of this component students will be able to:

1. Establish and monitor personal goals
2. use supervision effectively
3. analyse the distinctive features of pastoral situations
4. apply an appropriate model of support and intervention
5. Offer appropriate spiritual support
6. Be able to identify and work with different personality types
7. Identify potential unsafe situations.
8. Discuss the theological perspective inherent in a particular approach to pastoral practice

### **Title: TC101; Bible as Text**

**Purpose:** To enable students to develop an understanding of the Bible and its development and to introduce students to exegetical methods.

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students should be able to:

1. Describe the establishment of the canon and evaluate understandings of the nature of the Bible as 'scripture'.
2. Discuss theological issues related to the concept of 'text'.
3. Describe and apply a range of tools and methods for exegesis.
4. Explain key factors in clarifying biblical texts and defend preferred readings of selected texts.
5. Analyse the literary features, context, and possible meanings for selected First Testament passages.

### **Title: TC102; Developing the Church's Tradition**

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the movement of theological ideas over time, especially in relation to understandings of God, and to enable an appreciation of the church's role in the development of tradition.

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students should be able to:

1. Discuss the concept of theological change over time.
2. Analyse the factors involved in the development of the church's tradition.
3. Identify and discuss the role of selected sources and models for doing theology.
4. Discuss the historical development of selected theological ideas, including those relating to God.
5. Analyse selected theological models and evaluate their implications.
6. Analyse differing views of the nature of theological language and outline their view of theological language in relation to God.

### **Title: TC201; Christian Community: Beliefs and Actions**

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the development of ideas about Christ and the nature of Christian community, and to explore how these interact with contemporary contexts for Church.

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students should be able to:

1. Identify key Biblical sources of Christian beliefs about Jesus as Christ and about the Church and analyse their impact on the developing theology.
2. Discuss major factors in the development of Christology, including the impact of key figures and of contextual pressures.
3. Analyse Christological issues and their implications for the contemporary Church and societal context.
4. Outline traditional theological understandings of 'Church', and analyse their implications for ministry and liturgy/ritual.
5. Discuss contemporary issues in relation to theology of Church and the nature of Christian community in today's world.
6. Explore and develop ways of thinking theologically about Church, ministry, and liturgical or ritual practice in the contemporary context.

## **Title: TC202; Bible and Context**

**Purpose:** To introduce students to the historical and cultural context of the Bible, and to ways of using the Bible in our own contexts.

**Learning Outcomes:** On completion of this component students should be able to:

1. Describe key characteristics of the Judaic and Greco-Roman contexts during the biblical period and discuss their relevance for biblical study.
2. Analyse the nature of 'context' and its role in understanding interpreting, and using biblical materials.
3. Outline a range of critical tools for biblical exegesis and interpretation.
4. Exegete a range of biblical passages.
5. Relate the insights of selected biblical passages to contemporary life and in the context of congregational ministry.
6. Develop principles for contextually-based Christian life from biblical exegesis and reflection.

## **Title: MP 301: Worship and Liturgy**

**Purpose:** To deepen understanding of the development and practice of Christian worship and its role in the Christian community today and providing opportunities for increasing competencies in creating relevant liturgies for specific communities of faith

**Learning Outcomes :** On completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Prepare and lead church services relevant to a selected congregation
2. show knowledge of the origins of Christian worship
3. explain the historic and contemporary significance of selected special occasions in the church calendar
4. Analyse and compare the current theology and practice of sacrament in different Christian faith communities.
5. Analyse and discuss the theology presented in selected services of worship.

6. Outline and defend a theology of worship.

### **Title: MP 302: Mission and Evangelism**

**Purpose:** To explore contemporary theologies and practice of mission with opportunities to consider evangelism relevant for specific contemporary contexts.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Discuss selected key themes in contemporary theologies of Mission, e.g. Christ and culture, individual v structural sin, justice and salvation, interfaith dialogue
2. Describe and analyse the influence of the work a contemporary theologian on mission eg Rolland Allen, John Cobb, Lesley Newbigin, Steven Bevans, Bosch
3. Critique the influence of colonial missionary activity on a selected contemporary church culture in Aotearoa-NZ
4. Outline a preferred mission strategy for a local congregation
5. Discuss contemporary perspectives on evangelism

## SUMMARY OF CATEGORY INDICATORS: DTP FOCUS GROUPS AND STUDENT INTERVIEWS

### Philosophy:

- Significance of learning group
- Critical questioning
- Reflection
- Ethics
- Structural
- What does it mean?
- Theological reflection process – taking a given situation in daily life
  - Where is there hope?
  - Who will give her hope
  - Healing comes with hope
  - More real, less romanticised
  - More open
- Learned to unpack words
- Feminist/Liberation theology giving words to what I felt was 'right'
- allowing for change
- Integrity
- resilience; stood me in good stead
- Learned sacrament of acceptance
- Sometimes you have to speak out and name things that are unjust [known in plunket as a straight shooter
- Adult learning group – acknowledged everyone had something to contribute (not banking)
- research – learned I could do it
- Integrated academic and personal experience
- experiential tasks and reflecting learning from each other – peers think for themselves
- you can do it.

- Reinforcement – ministry leaders in the future.
- SA – confidence in participants
- always open Opening up new things to self and others – openness
- Could achieve
- social change – towards justice and equality
- Asking questions
- Expectation of people/adults – will choose
- People deserve to have access to data/information to think about
- personal lifestyle model
- want to be real Offering hospitality
- Encouraging women to dare to do something they think is scary
- community facing
- Must be involved in community
- What is ‘truth’
- Change is ‘good’
- Claiming voice & place
- Are no absolutes
- connecting, inclusive, co-operative venture
- keep telling the story of where we have come from
- Empowering people
- Vision of possibilities

**Pedagogy:**

- Friday night – gin! transition, bonding
  - Anticipation, excitement
  - Tight time management
  - Learning to cope with group dynamics
- Finding a safe space to explore – people become friends
- Learning to articulate feelings
- Planning for new members (especially adding males)
- Challenge
  - personal } theology

- faith }
- Finding language – voice
- Reflection Sat – important part of process
- Staying over – huge;
- Ordination/Non ordination – tension
  - Structured life
  - Absolutely
  - So good
  - Slice of life marrying it with gospel
  - Asking what does this say about being Christian, ministry
  - Feedback contract – request specific feedback
- Transferable skills
  - Group dynamics – self awareness and process
- Journal/Theological reflection – getting input from others on day-to-day stuff
- What does it mean?
- Encouraging people to talk
- Learning to reflect
- Theological reflection process – taking a given situation in daily life
- Asking
  - Where is there hope?
  - Who will give her hope
  - Healing comes with hope
  - Where is God in this?
- Talking about ethics including with people not part of the church
- And why do you say that?
- Found voice – freedom
- Liberalisation re theology
- Started asking questions
- Learned to unpack words
- Awareness of feelings
- Gained confidence

- Feminist/Liberation theology giving words
- Always in a cycle, need to keep contextualising ideas for 'now'
- Allowing for change
- Integrity
- Bonding
- More church leadership in society
- Learned from what I did experientially and then reflected and talked about that
- Pausing to try and understand what people were thinking differently really meant
- Tremendous friendship and support
- developed lots of resilience
- Sometimes you have to speak out and name things that are unjust
- Developed skills - research, presentation
- Guest on specific topic - input
- we learned to be assertive;
- research - learned I could do it
- Adult learning group - acknowledged everyone had something to contribute (not banking)
- Clear contractual rules/expectations set at outset
- people expected to measure up
- Ok to disagree
- Integrated academic and personal experience
- environment supportive while doing hard work alone
- experiential tasks and reflecting learning from each other - peers
- creative experimenting in a safe place
- you can do it.
- Ordered
- encouraging others to think for themselves
- attention to entries & exists
- Action/Reflection
- Information

- Theological reflection good; still do it re current issues
- Opening up new things to self and others – openness
- Students would get on with it
- Could achieve
- Re social change – towards justice and equality
- Asking questions
- opening new opportunities
- Expectation of people/ adults – will choose
- hospitality
- being with people where they are
- by network and example
- Joining in community organisations
- People deserve to have access to data/information to think about
- community facing
- Confidence building – positively affirming
- Community facing
- Confidence building – positively affirming
- inclusive
- Liberation – social justice
- Inclusive
- Change
- No absolutes
- What is ‘truth’
- Partnership
- Empowerment
- Stand and be counted
- Must be involved in community
- Justice making
- Non-hierarchical empowering
- Transforming: church structures; role of women; place of laity

### **Educational Practice:**

- Friday night – gin! transition
- Tight time management
- Group dynamics
- Self disclosure; early period with group
  
- people become friends
- Learning to articulate feelings
- Planning for new members (especially adding males)
- Challenge
  - personal } theology
  - faith }
- university papers; 1 per semester
  
- Staying over – huge: Things changed when we didn’t stay at St S H anymore
  - No space to relax in
  - Dynamic changed when we moved around
- Reflection Sat – important part of process
- Ordination/Non ordination
- Structured life
- Asking what does this say about being Christian, ministry
- critiquing colleague’s sermons on Sundays hard
- Feedback contract – request specific feedback
- Transferable skills
- Journal/Theological reflection – getting input from others on day-to-day stuff
- Group dynamics – self awareness and process
- Talking
  - And why do you say that?
  - What does it mean?
- Encouraging people to talk
- Learning to reflect

- Theological reflection process – taking a given situation in daily life
- Asking
  - Where is there hope?
  - Who will give her hope
- Asking questions
- Real, less romanticised
- To unpack words
- Awareness of feelings
- Gained confidence
- Giving words to what I felt was ‘right’
- Always in a cycle, need to keep contextualising ideas for ‘now’
- Renegotiating friends – allowing for change
- Theologies were different in the group
- Pausing to try and understand what people were thinking differently really meant
- Learned from what I did experientially and then reflected and talked about that
- Always had good meals
- Feeling comfortable
- Ritual
- Table fellowship
- Bonding
- Speak out and name things that are unjust
- Facilitator- ‘went home’ on Friday night
  - Left group to talk – debrief
  - Safety valve
- Presentation of topic research
  - Developed skills – research, presentation
  - Remember material
- Guest on specific topic – input
  - Group processed later

- People have different presentation styles; we learned to be assertive; learned to give feedback → to be critiqued
- Loved to research - learned I could do it
- Adult learning group - acknowledged everyone had something to contribute (not banking)
- Clear contractual rules/expectations set at outset - people expected to measure up
- 3-year programme set out - knew what was coming; Saturday night energy low for some
- Everyone contribute
- Ok to disagree
- Did not lead to personalised dislike
- Integrated academic and personal experience
  - Remember this and pass it on
  - Environment supportive while doing hard work alone
- Experiential tasks and reflecting learning from each other - peers
- Liked presentations we each gave
- Strict boundaries
- Limited parish work
- Colleagues 'chat'
- Creative experimenting in a safe place
- Experiencing difference
- Encouraging others to think for themselves
- Not to be spoken down to
- Ordered
- Others included
- Feedback - work groups really well; get everyone talking
- A sense of pride that they had measured up and in some instances exceeded their own expectation
- SA expectations - high; you can do it.
- Not wanting to let group down - they want info from us.
- SA - confidence in participants

- Not static
- Always open
- Attention to entries & exists
- Action/Reflection
- Information
- Opening up new things to self and others – openness
- Theological reflection good; still do it re current issues
- Students would get on with it
- Could achieve
- Re social change – towards justice and equality
- Squeezed over thinking about social justice; brought us round to thinking about this
- This is the gospel
- Roles of women
- Opening up
- Asking questions
- Offering alternatives – opening new opportunities
- Expectation of people/adults – will choose
- Joining in community organisations
- Mission by network and example
- Being with people where they are
- Be real – one human to another
- Offering hospitality
- Being part of the solution
- Naming abuse
- Empowering mothers
- Confidence building – positively affirming women
- Changing received messages
- Encouraging women to dare to do something they think is scary
- Community facing
- Gave opportunities no one else could have
- Non-hierarchical empowering

- Translators: still aware of 'the fight'
- Transforming:
- Must be involved in community
- Stand and be counted
- Women in leadership
- Inclusive – looked at the spectrum

### **Leadership:**

- Planning for new members (especially adding males)
  - Now am absolutely scrupulous about what I say – have good notes
- Talking about ethics including with people not part of the church
- And why do you say that
- What does it mean?
- Encouraging people to talk
- Learning to reflect
- Asking
  - Where is there hope?
  - Who will give her hope
  - Healing comes with hope
- Aware re church politics/structure/systems
- Always in a cycle, need to keep contextualising ideas for 'now'
- Integrity
- Relearning how to be more in church leadership society
- Learned to live with criticism – developed lots of resilience; stood me in good stead
- Sometimes you have to speak out and name things that are unjust
- Developed skills – research, presentation
- Research – learned I could do it
- Clear contractual rules/expectations set at outset – people expected to measure up
- Everyone contribute
- Ok to disagree

- Did not lead to personalised dislike
- environment supportive while doing hard work alone
- experiential tasks and reflecting learning from each other – peers
- strict boundaries
- Colleagues ‘chat’
- Encouraging others to think for themselves
- Not to be spoken down to
- Others included
- Attention to entries & exists
- Re social change – towards justice and equality
- Asking questions
- Offering alternatives – opening new opportunities
- Expectation of people/adults – will choose
- People deserve to have access to data/information to think about
- want to be real – one human to another (painting nails all different colours)
- Joining in community organisations
- Offering hospitality
- Being part of the solution
- Naming abuse – in lives of women in the community
- Augment with transformation
- Empowering mothers
- Confidence building – positively affirming women
- Changing received messages
- Encouraging women to dare to do something they think is scary
- Non-hierarchical empowering
- Women in leadership
- Must be involved in community
- Justice making
- Stand and be counted
- Translators: still aware of ‘the fight’
- Who benefits
- Where is the power

**SUMMARY OF CATEGORY INDICATORS:  
MTU, STUDENT FOCUS  
GROUPS/INTERVIEWS**

**Philosophy:**

- Linking between gospel and possibility: “what does this mean in the circumstances in someone’s life”
- Theologically open - willing to engage with youth and their life issues no matter what Tongan teaching about the Bible might be
- No judgement of what was being said
- Relevance of everything
- Be the best I can be
- Encouraged to find out for oneself
- Questioning belief
- Everything subject to questioning
- Responsible for co-creating knowledge not just being “told information”
- Feeling “at home” led to increased learning capacity and this very important for Tongans
- Meals were a reflection of Pacific hospitality and important for social bonding and the conversations challenged our thinking
- Didn’t learn a theology - one that fits all situations or one to apply
- Taking the world seriously - expected to be interested
- Some words- Embodied

Provisional

Liberation

Deconstruction

“Green”

Justice

Perspectival

Humanistic

- flourishing of humanity and creation
- Conversational – dialogue
- transformation
- Social change
- Social change *is* our business
- Gifting resources/prestige of institutional Christianity to social change
- Embodiment of God’s option for the poor
- Living differently
- Putting broken pieces back together in a new life-giving way
- Finding the spirit of life again in brokenness and pain
- Being what we proclaim
- Building and using social networks
- Embodiment of theology
- Church is a voice amongst many voices rather than *the* normative voice
- Be open
- Do theology not regurgitate it
- Be clear and willing to declare your core beliefs
- To promote ethical and equitable ministry
- To be engaged with the wider community as well as church

Transformation is

- Changing personal theological perspectives
- Reconceptualising how I think about the Bible and other things
- Redemptive outcomes – a process of bringing about positive change

Theology helps the next generation shape a new identity –

- Salvation:
- On earth, not in heaven after death.
- Here and now, about the quality of life here.
- Helping people be aware of saving money for living expenses and not giving it all away at church *missionale*. (Some people lost their homes because they couldn’t pay the mortgage. It is important they budget and plan for family expenses.)
- Not just personal, also environmental; affects cultures and communities. People are not saved “out of” their communities or culture.

- Holistic change
- Turning around from broken to whole
  - Darkness to light, hopelessness to hopefulness
  - Unhealthy to healthy
  - Unsustainable to sustainable

**Pedagogy:**

- Focus on “doing theology” – having a go
- Learning to be inclusive
- Tongan experience brought into the theological reflection process
- Linking between gospel and possibility: “what does this mean in the circumstances in someone’s life”
- Where was our learning edge?
- The process was so important
- Challenges
- Relevance of everything
- Exploring the interface between theology and context
- Inclusive
- Learning to use analytical questions – I am still using them
- Always feedback: commendations and recommendations
- Asking why
- Responsible for co-creating knowledge not just being “told information”
- Taking responsibility/working at my optimal learning level and not just to course expectations
- Meals were a reflection of Pacific hospitality and important for social bonding and the conversations challenged our thinking
- Feeling “at home” led to increased learning capacity and this very important for Tongans
- Positive small group trust – the centripetal force holding it all together
- The social events were empowering and very important for community-building that increased our informal learning
- Owning our own passions
- To look for the growing edge

- Didn't learn a theology - one that fits all situations or one to apply
  - A critical approach
- Continuous reflection
- Facilitating groups..not teaching people - listening
- Being a therapeutic community concerned for the whole person
- Taking the world seriously - expected to be interested
- Theological reflection and supervision enabled us to be brave and encouraged us to think outside the square
- Sharing what we've learned and having something to say about it was encouraging and the questioning challenged us to think more
- Some words:
  - Flexible
  - Doing
  - Liberation
  - Perspectival
  - Don't make assumptions
  - justice who benefits
  - context,
  - praxis
  - going down another level
  - change and vision
  - why?
  - transformation
  - who is present/who is not present
  - Conversational - dialogue
- Providing a reflective function in community
- Invited to join protest march from church to town square on anniversary of invasion of Iraq
- [peace]
- Coordinating the activities of other active groups - mediating between CoP
- Building and using social networks

- Make alliances with other groups to achieve particular goals
- Important to explore the context of the church in a community to see how they can link and work together, e.g. Northcote, Kingsland Business Assn
- Providing leadership – being a catalyst for networking
- Don't go apply the “answers”, rather to help “answers” emerge
- Taking theology to the community to enhance networking, developing something new, searching for a “now” approach perspective will be more effective today
- Reflecting on activities such as in the action/reflection spiral (pastoral cycle)
- Establish own goals
- Contribute to one another's learning – work collegially
- To be a flexible thinker
- To be a thorough and reflective practitioner, linking tradition, present, and possibility
- Theology to be embodied in a specific context
- Move from embedded to reflected
- Be open
- Connect traditions with context
- Do theology not regurgitate it
- Create a contextually relevant model
- To be engaged with the wider community as well as church
- Be clear and willing to declare your core beliefs
- Working *with* others not dictating to them.

**Educational Practice:**

- Laughing and story telling
- Challenges
- Thinking for my self
- Well resources
- Fantastic environment – chairs spaces decor
- Encouraged to find out for oneself
- Always feedback: commendations and recommendations

- Sitting in a circle
- My own research in my own time, choosing the topic I am interested in
- “We did a fair amount of finding and sharing”
- Positive small group trust – the centripetal force holding it all together
- Small group trust allowed us to challenge each other and grow in self awareness
- The social events were empowering and very important for community-building that increased our informal learning
- Meals were a reflection of Pacific hospitality and important for social bonding and the conversations challenged our thinking
- Feeling “at home” led to increased learning capacity and this very important for Tongans
- Importance of supervision – a discipline I’ve carried on
- *OARRS. Not jumping in, life in conversation – dialogue. How can the church serve you?*
- Learned to be in ministry relevant to a particular situation
- Developed good working tools that are still useful
  - Tools of analysis
  - Asking questions
  - Respecting people
  - Self awareness
  - Continuous reflection
  - Leadership that calls out other people
  - Empowering others – receiving phone calls telling me what has been done not telling me what to do
  - Looking at things with a question – what, why , who? Where is the pain coming from
  - Digging beneath the surface
- Time for reflection built in
- Mind mapping
- The opportunities to discuss our experiences led to growth
- Sharing what we’ve learned and having something to say about it was encouraging and the questioning challenged us to think more

- Theological reflection and supervision enabled us to be brave and encouraged us to think outside the square
- Some words:
  - suspend judgement
  - who benefits
  - Adult education
  - 'see me' / talk more about it!
  - reflection
  - setting boundaries
  - why?
  - who is present/who is not present
  - hermeneutical tools

- Led from the margin
- Finding a vocabulary for social change for the church
- Create models to help with social change – we explored this through our presentations and explorations
- Invited to join protest march from church to town square on anniversary of invasion of Iraq [peace]
- Encouragement
- Set own priorities
- Establish own goals
- Contribute to one another's learning – work collegially
  - That we would recognise the skills we needed for the years ahead
  - That we would be adult about our own learning needs – take responsibility for reading and asking questions and getting the help we need
- Do theology not regurgitate it
- No need to know everything

**Leadership:**

- Asking why
- conversations challenged our thinking

- hospitality and important for social bonding
- social events were empowering and very important for community-building
  - Tools of analysis
  - Asking questions
  - Respecting people
  - Self awareness
  - Leadership that calls out other people
  - not telling me what to do
- Taking the world seriously - expected to be interested
  - Digging beneath the surface
  - Looking at things with a question - what, why , who? Where is the pain
  - coming from
  - Empowering others - receiving phone calls telling me what has been done
- Social change *is* our business
- Providing a reflective function in community
- Invited to join protest march from church to town square on anniversary of invasion of Iraq [peace]
- Encouragement
- Putting broken pieces back together in a new life-giving way
- Being what we proclaim
- Coordinating the activities of other active groups - mediating between CoP
- Building and using social networks
- Church is a voice amongst many voices rather than *the* normative voice
- Make alliances with other groups to achieve particular goals
- Reflecting on activities such as in the action/reflection spiral (pastoral cycle)
- Don't go apply the "answers", rather to help "answers" emerge
- Providing leadership - being a catalyst for networking
- To develop a sense of self and presbyter

- To think openly about church, theology, and community, using imagination
  - To develop leadership skills
  - Exercise respect
  - Set own priorities
  - Establish own goals
  - Contribute to one another's learning – work collegially
  - Ask for help
  - To be a flexible thinker
  - To ask questions
  - Be open
  - Create a contextually relevant model
  - To promote ethical and equitable ministry
  - To be engaged with the wider community as well as church
  - To reach all ages
  - Is transformative
    - Changing personal theological perspectives
    - Reconceptualising how I think about the Bible and other things
    - Redemptive outcomes – a process of bringing about positive change
- 
- Contemporary leadership is contextual, present, paying attention to what I see and experience and to what is appearing in the local context.
  - Focus is here, now,
  - Not about meeting leaders' ego needs, rather creating the situation for people and for places to become the best they can be.
  - Working *with* others not dictating to them
  - Modelling “working with” and not hierarchical leadership
  - Delegate, trust others
  - Relinquish power accepting feed back
  - Respect others, be open to diversity
  - Be prepared to work with others

- empowering others, calling from them, discerning roles, skill of others, discerning others potential
- Taking initiative when required, consulting then deciding clearly
- Taking responsibility
- Knowing when to be directive use situational leadership

This newspaper article, retrieved from the microfish archives of Auckland City Library, provides an excellent example of the concerns and priorities of Change agents during the early 1980s.

Auckland Star 15.10.83

# Arming to bridge the rich-poor gap

**A dynamic, globe-trotting little Catholic priest from Mauritius in sweater and jeans is going to be "significantly instrumental" in improving the lot of the Maori people.**

By ANN ELDER

This is the belief of some influential figures on the Auckland Maori scene. Maori activists keep quiet about Filip Fanchette, however.

And he doesn't care for publicity. It can spoil his work, he feels.

"What is there is say?" activists ask. "He's just a trainer giving people the tools to work more clearly rather than in confusion."

What Filip does is hard to talk about, best experienced. News isn't made of seminars where people analyse where they stand, piece together a vision, see where they can go if they work together collec-

tively, in solidarity.

But Maori and Church groups throughout New Zealand value Filip's influence and methods. At their invitation, he has just ended his fourth annual visit here since 1980.

In essence, he practises an intensive, group-based way of raising people's awareness of problems facing them in society.

"Things are bad," he says. "Everywhere they are getting worse. Development projects are just putting plaster on things."

In urbanised countries of the West, 35 million are jobless — a sacrifice of lives unprecedented in

history. The gap between rich and poor grows. Militarisation intensifies.

Critical awareness of the causes of the problems may lead to creative solutions. "It is when people suffer and don't understand that they revolt," says Filip.

"They feel as if they are hitting their heads against a brick wall. So the young form gangs. Or there is revolution."

"People can spend their whole lives revolting and falling into more and more trouble as they kick against the system."

"But if they understand their situation, if their awareness is raised, there

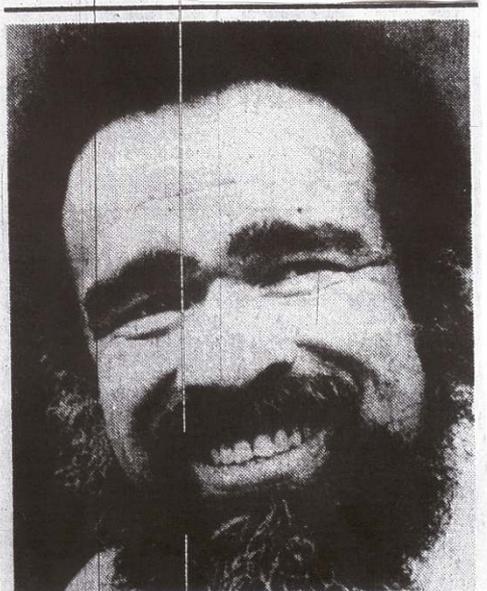
can be a creative process, building a new society."

Popular opposition to the Marcos regime in the Philippines gives an inkling of what his methods can lead to.

"The approach was developed in the Philippines. Workers were reached through the Church, in slum areas in town, in rural areas."

The formula is that if you want to understand society, you start with yourself. You analyse how you think, if you are an intellectual. If not, you begin with how you feel, what makes you happy or sad each day.

"You must find out



Filip Fanchette ... group-based raising of awareness.

Continued from previous page

where you are. Get to your roots. We've all been conditioned. Unless we look at the conditioning and distance ourselves from our situation, we can't see where to go," he says.

Filipinos have thought through their situation. People in the streets are aware of the unfair distribution of wealth in their country, with the worst gap between rich and poor in Asia.

Armed with this critical awareness, they organise themselves to work for change. Previously, conditioning meant they accepted their situation.

The same is now happening among Maoris.

Some Church people in New Zealand declare Filip is too political. The

Catholic weekly the *Tablet* criticised him for being a Marxist Jesuit, he says.

"I'm not a Marxist. I'm not even a Jesuit. Just an ordinary grassroots priest."

But he is political, an activist, an agitator.

"You have to be if you are Christian. That's what being a Christian is all about. You are called on to stand up and not be apathetic."

Since 1975 he has been one of 10 priests and nuns in the Ecumenical Institute for the Development of People.

Members have a single, simple goal — to get rid of the gap between rich and poor in the world.

To that end, they have

parcelled the world out among them, each with a region where they work among developing groups.

Filip thinks the work will succeed. He quotes an Old Testament prophet: "Lift up your eyes to the mountain. There your hope comes from."

He rephrases it: "Put your ear to the ground. There your hope comes from."

With his ear to the ground round the Pacific, South-East Asia, India, West Africa, this migrant worker says he hears a great rumbling.

Being Creole — French colonial — is a special asset in his work among ethnic minorities. He has African, Chinese, Indian

blood, Christian, Hindu and Buddhist forbears; speaks Creole — the French colonial dialect — French and English.

His own struggle to find his roots gives him sympathy with Maoris bred in pakeha society or Filipino Moslems in a Spanish-speaking Catholic country suffering cultural identity problems.

Filip laughs at the outcry in March this year when the National Council of Churches was criticised for allegedly funding Maori activist Rebecca Evans' visit to the institute.

Like many others, she spent time in Paris swapping ideas and taking part in seminars heightening awareness of the causes of conflicts.

## APPENDIX 12

Vaitu'ulala Naghe is a graduate student of the MTU who has redeveloped a dying church in a local community in response to the needs of the community.

The Centre hosts a community exercise programme supported by the District Health Board

A community garden supported by Lifewise, tai-chi, a kava club, and a youth rugby league team amongst other activities.

[nzherald.co.nz](http://nzherald.co.nz)

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# New role as community hub saves church from closure

4:00AM Friday May 01, 2009

By [Vaimoana Tapaleao](#)



Vaitu'ulala Ngahe almost closed his Avondale church. Photo / Brett Pibbs

Don't forget your Bible – and your maths, English and history books – when you head to Rosebank Peninsula Church in Avondale.

The Methodist church, on the corner of Rosebank Rd and Orchard St, recently faced closure because too few people attended Sunday services.

But instead of shutting the doors, its minister, Vaitu'ulala Ngahe, rallied churchgoers, community groups and students to renovate the building to be used by the community.

"I didn't want to see the church closed down. It had another purpose," Mr Ngahe said.

"It's a new phase of ministry – using the facilities to outreach to the community so that others, especially the children, can benefit."

Organised working bees carried out in the past few months – making renovations to the church – have turned the building slowly into a communal hub, which is near several schools.

Mr Ngahe said a number of community groups helping with the renovations had already signed up to use the church on various days, including a deaf support group, tai chi class and a local church youth group.

The Homework Club – which runs two days each week – will provide youngsters with free tutoring and help from parents and volunteers within the area.

Intermediate and high school students are already turning up after school to work on their homework projects together.

Mr Ngahe said providing a place for children to safely and efficiently do their homework was something that was desperately needed in the community.

"I love to see kids achieve in themselves and their education – I love to see them coming in to do their homework [and] achieving their goals," he said.

"It's not only preaching the good word, it's about actions – how can you put that to action? It's important to preach in a practical way too."

The church – which is part of the Avondale Union Parish – is continuing to fundraise to help pay for the renovations.

Mr Ngahe said the church was over 100 years old and was a building that had served the Avondale community long and proud.

Finding ways to continue to use it for the benefit of locals was the priority rather than destroying a building that had long been a part of the community, he said.

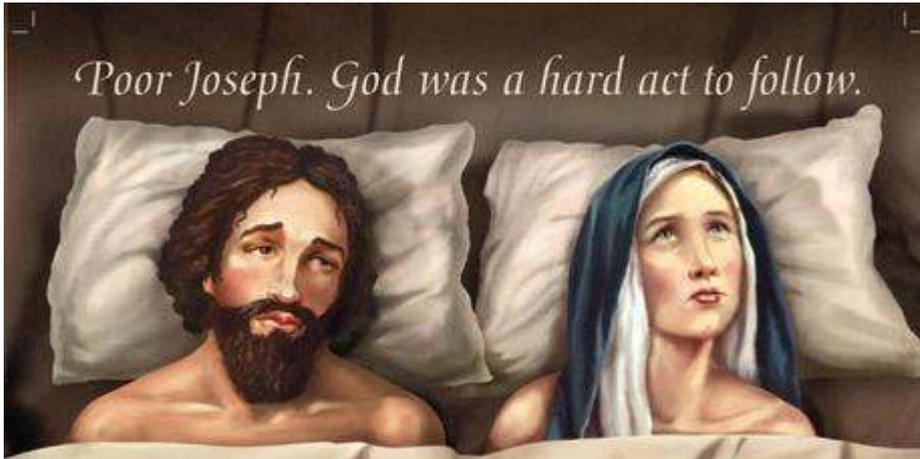
"It's something for the community, by the community – something that will benefit and help make our community better.

"We can't stop the history of this place – we're trying to write another story."

## APPENDIX 13

The Billboards, St Matthews in the City  
Raising debate in the wider community.

December 2009



March 2010



## Anticipates debate on ministry training

To the editor,

The item in the February issue of Touchstone regarding the closure of the Ministry Training Unit increases the dismay and concern I felt when President Brian Turner advised the Connexion in December of the decision.

I am puzzled by the statement "The critical issues he [the commissioner] considered include the inability of MTU to attract sufficient students..."

My understanding, supported by a statement on page 12 of the 2008 Ministry Education Handbook, is that the principal and the Board of Studies advise successful candidates for ministry which training stream they will be directed to. In addition, I have heard anecdotally that the MTU had been discouraged from accepting private fee paying students into the programme. It would seem therefore, that it was not the function of the MTU to "attract" students.

At the 2007 Conference, the commissioner assured those present there would be wide consultation with the church before any major decisions were made. His understanding of wide consultation and mine are clearly different. The Conference was further told that we would be advised as to the means of communication with the commissioner.

In fact, that advice was not given until after the decision to close the MTU was notified to the church. At best, this suggests untidy processes. At worst, it suggests that minds had already been made up about the future of the MTU. While the commissioner consulted with "leaders of Tauwiwi", there seems to have been a fairly narrow definition of who is a leader of Tauwiwi. If, for example, synod superintendents are considered to be leaders of Tauwiwi, then the consultative process was flawed, and would not have given a broad picture of the opinions of Tauwiwi.

The decision of Conference 2006 to consolidate all ministry training to one site was only that. It did not place a value on any aspect of the programmes that were currently available, nor did it express a preference for site. Rather it recognized the economic challenges in the delivery of a range of programmes intended to prepare candidates for ministry in a diverse and ever-changing church and society.

There may well be sentimental reasons for locating all programmes in the leafy green and pleasant environment of the Meadowbank site. However, it seems a little nonsensical when any theological education needed by Methodist students for ministry is delivered either through the Auckland University School of Theology or by distance education. A central city site for all programmes would surely have greatly

reduced the time and cost spent in staff and students travelling across the city.

There seems implicit in the decision to close the MTU the view that theological education and ministry training are synonymous. While a level of knowledge and expertise in the traditional disciplines of church history, biblical studies, systematic theology, and practical theology is a useful resource for ministry, it is not the only useful and necessary resource.

It is time that our candidate requirements and our ministry training reflected the smallness of the church, and the fact that we now live in the 21st century. There have been few changes in the candidacy requirements in the last 20 years. I am of the view that candidates for ministry should already have gained some theological education before candidating. Training for ministry then provides the tools for applying that knowledge to the practice of ministry.

Church resources should not be used to enable ministry students to gain a tertiary qualification, but rather to equip them with such tools for ministry as structural analysis, ability to critique the interface of gospel and culture, understanding of the bicultural commitment and multicultural nature of the church, ability to develop and sustain human relationships and safe, respectful, intimate community.

It is not clear to me how such developmental programmes will be met within the current framework.

I do not doubt the high levels of competence that the remaining Trinity College staff members have in their respective disciplines, and I appreciate the significant contribution each makes to the broader canvas of theological education. However, I would like to know how students for ministry will now acquire the skills of community development, of critiquing and applying the knowledge they gain through theological education, and how they will be equipped with tools for ministry in the diverse context of Te Haahi Weteriana in the 21st century.

It seems to me that with the closure of the MTU and the termination of the employment of the director, the church has lost a creative, dynamic, contemporary critical edge, and has retreated to a more formal, academic and increasingly outmoded model of preparing individuals for ministry.

I hope that Conference will be given the opportunity to establish high level policy about candidacy, ministry training, and continuing education before any further decisions are taken in that regard. It is surely the task of the Board of Ministry to implement rather than determine the policy of the church. I look forward to vigorous debate at every level of the church.

*Rev Lynne Frith, Wellington*

## Learning Hope

I learned about hope amongst people called 'hopeless'.

I was with them as minister and priest.

'God' was my trade.

I was peddling 'hope', selling shares in the future, insuring li  
So I thought!

Convinced I was that hope in Jesus  
The Way the Christ the Bread of life  
Was their answer.

An invitation to banqueting tucked in my briefcase,  
An answer to need in my prayer.

I had seen breakfast, and lunch and dinner:  
Poverty and powerlessness and disappointment the meals served up.  
Hopelessness was fluffy slippers, was pink candlewick, was gas oven.

I learned about hope from people called 'hopeless'.  
No Jesus dying - too much pain, we've seen it before.  
No promised future - too long, too costly, no return, we're forgotten.

Here, now, today is what matters!  
Chips, sausages, taro, chop-suey  
Rent for the flat, dollars for shopping, 'A' grades at school  
A 'yes please' and 'thank-you'  
Children at school, partner home sober, a yard clear of wrecks...  
What was I hearing!

I learned about hope amongst people called 'hopeless'.  
Hope here and now, seen in daily achievement  
Hope found in shoes in trousers and jersey  
In pot on the stove and in food on the table  
In voiced invitation to eat.

Now, hope's in our listening, our anger, our tears.  
No Bible, no prayer, no pious assurance.  
    And God?  
    The bread on the table  
    The hope for today.

Susan Adams

August 26, 2005

The reflections of a community priest on lessons learned from the poor about where to find God and about 'hope'. Susan was responsible for a group of theological students working in a disadvantaged multicultural neighborhood in Auckland, Aotearoa-New Zealand